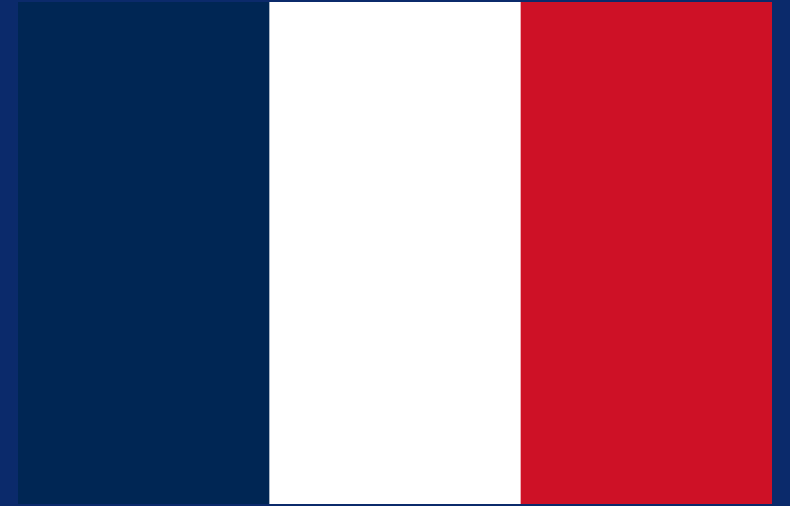




Bastille Day

La Prise de la Bastille • 14 July 1789



“If your country was running out of food, you paid the highest taxes, and your government had no money left — what would you do?”

A whole-class classroom game for MFL, survive the French Revolution while learning French.



ROUND 1 · THE KINGDOM BEGINS

Welcome to France, 1789

Each team is a kingdom trying to survive a time of growing unrest. Today you will earn and lose money, food and popularity depending on the decisions you make. Your first task: build your kingdom, and spend wisely, because you'll need your money later.

10 minutes



Build Your Kingdom

Each team begins with:



Using the Kingdom Record Sheet, choose what to buy, you must design it and pay for it. Everything costs money.

Item	Cost (livres)
Kingdom name	FREE
Flag (simple)	5
Fancy flag	10
Motto	5
Royal crown	8
Palace	10
Coat of arms	7

Now record all spending on your Kingdom Record Card.



Luxury and Poverty

Many members of the French nobility lived in great luxury, spending vast sums on palaces, clothing and entertainment, while ordinary people struggled to afford basic food.

This growing contrast between wealth and poverty was one key reason why so many people became unhappy with the monarchy.



Mini-Plenary

- Why might people become angry if their rulers spend lots of money while others struggle?
- Was it sensible to spend all of your money at the very start of the game? Why, or why not?



ROUND 2 • THE BREAD CRISIS

The Bread Crisis

Historical focus: Why did food shortages contribute to the French Revolution?

10 minutes



Disaster Has Struck

"Poor harvests have caused a serious shortage of bread across France. Bread is becoming expensive, families are struggling to eat, and people are growing angry."

Each team has different food supplies. Your challenge is to trade with other teams so that everyone can survive.

Remember, you may only speak French while trading!"

STUDENT ACTIVITY



Trade to Survive, in French

Each team receives one Bread Crisis Card with a different selection of food and drink. Using only French, negotiate with other groups to collect enough to survive. Trade as often as you like in the 5-minute window.

SURVIVAL TARGET

By the end of the round every team needs at least:

2

Bread

1

Drink

1

Protein



Running the Trading Round

- Give each team one Bread Crisis Card.
- Display the French Survival Phrase Book around the room.
- Start a 5-minute timer.
- Circulate, encouraging students to negotiate in French.
- If English is used during trading, announce “Tax!” that team immediately loses 2 livres.
- When time is up, stop all trading and have teams check whether they have enough food to survive.



Mini-Plenary

- Why do you think bread was so important in eighteenth-century France?
- How did it feel when your team didn't have enough food?
- Did using French help or slow down your negotiations?



ROUND 3 • FRANCE GOES BANKRUPT

France Goes Bankrupt

"You survived the Bread Crisis, but France now faces a new problem. Years of expensive wars, royal spending and a failing economy have left enormous debts. The government has announced that France is bankrupt, and everyone must share the consequences."

10 minutes



EN FAILLITE !

FRANCE IS BANKRUPT!

Every team must lose HALF of its remaining money.



Debt and Unfair Taxes

By 1789 France owed huge sums after years of war and government spending. The King needed more money, but the tax system was unfair, many wealthy people paid little or no tax, while ordinary people carried most of the burden. This financial crisis became one of the major causes of the French Revolution.

DISCUSS

- What does it mean if a country is bankrupt?
- Was it fair that everyone lost money?
- How might ordinary people react if life suddenly became even harder?



ROUND 4 • THE REVOLUTION BEGINS

Should the King Remain?

"France is bankrupt. Many people cannot afford bread, taxes are unfair, and trust in the King is disappearing. Across the country people are asking one question... Should the King remain in power, or is it time for a Revolution? Your team must now decide."

Why did people decide change was necessary?



Choose Your Side

Your team has 2 minutes to discuss and choose ONE side. Be ready to explain one reason for your choice. Write your answer on a mini-whiteboard and reveal it on the signal.

Support the King

Vive le Roi !

Keep order, tradition and the monarchy.

Support the Revolution

Vive la Révolution !

Demand fairness, bread and change.



2 minutes

The Third Estate & the Bastille

- The Third Estate made up almost the entire French population, yet had the least power.
- Many people believed the tax system was deeply unfair.
- On 14 July 1789, crowds in Paris attacked the Bastille, a prison that had become a symbol of royal authority.
- Although very few prisoners were inside, the event became a powerful symbol of challenging the King's authority.



FINAL CHALLENGE

Storm the Bastille

"The Revolution has begun. Your team has one final challenge before history is decided." Complete ONE of the three challenges, choose the one that best suits your class.

8 minutes



Choose ONE Challenge

A • Build the Bastille

Using paper, exercise books or classroom materials, build the tallest free-standing Bastille you can in 3 minutes.

B • Revolutionary Poster

Design a poster backing the King or the Revolution. Include a slogan, a picture, and 2+ French words.

*Liberté • Vive le Roi ! • Vive la
Révolution ! • Liberté, Égalité,
Fraternité*

C • Convince the Nation

Prepare a 30-second speech on why people should support your side. Use at least one simple French phrase.

*Je pense que... • Nous
soutenons... • Vive...*

SCORING



Award Popularity Points

Award each team up to a maximum of 10 popularity points for their final challenge:

Good teamwork

+2

Historical understanding

+4

Use of French

+4

10

MAX POPULARITY



The Storming of the Bastille

The Storming of the Bastille became one of the defining moments of the French Revolution. Although only seven prisoners were inside, the attack showed that ordinary people were prepared to challenge royal authority.

Today, 14 July — Bastille Day — is France's national day.



MINI-PLenary · 2 MINUTES

Reflect

- Why do you think the Bastille became such an important symbol?
- Did your team support the King or the Revolution?
- **Can you justify your decision?**

Vive la République !