

2C LAC Drama Topic: The French Revolution

Scene 1: the rule of Louis XVI

Narrator: In the 17th century, France was a powerful country in Europe. However, when Louis XVI became the king of France, the situation began to change. He was not a strong leader and had no interest in politics. He was weak and often controlled by his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette.

(Louis XVI and Queen Marie in a party, music playing)

Queen Marie: King Louis, I love to party every day. I can wear beautiful clothes and enjoy expensive food. My life is so happy.

Louis XVI: It makes me so happy to dance with you in parties. Actually, being a king is boring. I just want to enjoy my life and have a luxurious lifestyle.

Official: Your Majesty, I have some bad news for you. Our country is running out of money. We have spent too much money on foreign wars and your entertainment.

Louis XVI: Oh my goodness! What can we do? *(think for a long time, then turn to Queen Marie)*
hmm....Can you give me your advice?

Queen Marie: Why don't we collect more taxes from people?

Louis XVI: Yes, you're right. Let's collect more taxes from people.

Scene 2: the social inequality

Narrator: In the French society, there were three social classes called "estates". The first estate was the clergy. The second estate was the nobles. These two estates were the top classes in society. They only made up a small percentage (i.e. only 1% and 2%) of the French population, but they enjoyed many political and economic privileges.

Clergy: I'm a clergyman. I belong to the first estate. I'm very rich because I own a lot of farmland. I can spend a lot of money on luxuries, so my life is happy!

Noble: I'm a noble. I belong to the second estate. I have an important position in the government, so I'm rich and have a lot of power.

Clergy and noble: (together) The BEST thing is! WE DON'T HAVE TO PAY TAXES!!

Narrator: The third estate was the common people, including poor city workers and farmers. Most of the French population (i.e. 97%) belonged to this class. They had a very low social status. They were poor and their lives were very difficult.

Common people (peasant A,B): We are farmers. Our lives are very hard. We have very little land to farm, so we have very little money. However, we have to pay heavy taxes to the landlords and to the Church. That's so unfair! (*Holding a plough*)

Common people (city worker A,B): We are city workers. Our lives are very difficult, too. We have to work very long hours, but get very little money. That's totally unacceptable! (*Holding a hammer*)

Common people (bourgeoisie A): We're called bourgeoisie, we're mainly doctors and lawyers.

(Bourgeoisie B): However, we have money, but we don't have power!

(Bourgeoisie C): That's absolutely unfair to us, so we are eager to change the current situation

Common people (all): We need to pay a lot of taxes! That's unfair!

Scene 3: calling of the Estates-General

Narrator: Louis XVI tried to collect taxes from the clergy and the nobles, but they refused to pay taxes. In order to solve the national financial crisis, the king called a meeting of the Estates-General.

(*Louis XVI, all common people, noble and clergy go on stage*)

Louis XVI: Our country does not have enough money. That's why we have a meeting today to discuss how to collect tax. Shall we have a vote to decide which estate has to pay tax?

Common people (bourgeoisie A): Wait, wait, wait! The voting method is unfair to the common people.

Louis XVI: Why do you think the voting system is unfair?

Common people (bourgeoisie B): We have the largest percentage of population, i.e. 97%. However, we have only one vote. I think we should have more votes.

Common people (bourgeoisie C): Besides, we have more representatives than the first and second estate, but all three estates just have the same number of vote. I suggest that each representative should have one vote.

Clergy: No way! Your third estate has 610 representatives. If each representative had one vote, your estate would have 610 votes.

Noble: 610 votes? Then your number of votes would be larger than ours!

Louis XVI: (to the third estate) Sorry, third estate. Your suggestion was not accepted.

(*Common people became unhappy and shouted*)

Scene 4: Tennis Court Oath

Narrator: The third estate's suggestion was not accepted, so the common people became very angry. They formed the National Assembly but Louis XVI closed their meeting hall. They met in a tennis court nearby and took an oath that they would draw up a constitution in France.

Common people: (all people together, very loudly) **We will keep fighting. We will never give up until we have a constitution!**

(Louis XVI and Queen Marie go on stage)

Queen : The common people want to fight against us! They want to have a revolution!

Louis XVI: Listen, soldiers. Go to the tennis court and break up their meeting! *(Army leave)*

Scene 5: Fall of the Bastille

Narrator: On 14 July 1789, many angry people in Paris attacked the Bastille, which was a prison for political prisoners.

Common people (city worker): Let's attack the prison and kill the king's soldiers. **ATTACK!!**

(Common people bring lots of weapons and attack the prison, the king's soldiers die)

Scene 6: The end of the French revolution

Narrator: The fall of the Bastille started the French Revolution. In 1791, France became a constitutional monarchy. Louis XVI then joined other countries to fight with the revolutionaries, but he lost the war.

(The common people gather around the guillotine.)

Louis XVI: Can somebody help me? I don't want to die!

Common people: (together, loudly) Bad king! Kill him! Bad king! Kill him!

(Louis XVI is beheaded.)

Common people: (clap hands loudly) Hurray!!

Narrator : After the death of Louis XVI, a republic was set up in France and the French Revolution ended.

From that time onwards, all citizens in France are equal before the law.