Causes of the French Revolution

1. In the 1780s the **peasants** (farmers) weren't too lucky because the **harvest failed** three times, in 1787, 88 and 89.
2. This also meant that the people in the cities didn't have much to eat; they were **starving** and the prices for bread were **rising**.
3. The **noblemen**, also called the **aristocrats** did not want to pay any more taxes (although they weren't paying much anyway).
4. So the King **ran out of money**, that means he was **bankrupt**.
5. The **three estates** consisted of the **clergy** (1st), the **nobles** (2nd) and the 3rd estate (everybody else, the *Bourgeoisie* and the peasants).
6. The 3rd Estate **made up** 97% of the population.
7. The King **ruled absolutely**.
8. The **parliament** (Estates General) had not come together for 150 years.

Revolutionary ideas

9. The ideals and slogans of the American Revolution were brought to France: **Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness**.
10. Also the ideas of the **Enlightenment** supported *anti-monarchistic* ideas: "Aufklärung ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit."

The Estates General meets

11. In 1789 the **Estates General** met for the first time since 1614.
12. It had 1100 **deputies**, or **representatives**.
13. The peasants wrote a list of their problems and complaints which was called the **cahiers de doleances**.
14. Louis did not *have control* over the meeting.
15. After some time the deputies of the 3rd estate declared a **national assembly** and wanted to draw up a **constitution** showing how France should be *governed*.
16. After their *Tennis Court Oath* the King agreed to their **demands** and the 1st and 2nd estate joined them in the assembly.

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17. In Paris the atmosphere was **tense**. On 14 July the people stormed the Bastille which they believed to have weapons and **ammunition.**
18. The guards *panicked* and fired into the crowd.
19. The king was forced to leave Versailles and had to return to Paris together with his family.
20. It seemed that the revolution **was over**.
21. The **Assembly** now had the right to make laws.

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22. The land was **taken away** from the church and sold.
23. All priests were now **elected** by local people and had to be **loyal** to the state.
24. The nobility was **abolished** in 1790.
25. This followed the idea of **equality.**
26. A new system of **government** was *in the works.* (= was being worked at)
27. Louis XVI simply had to **sign** all new laws, whether he agreed with them or not.

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28. The **Emperors** of *Prussia and Austria* saw that the King was in danger from **revolutionaries**.
29. The revolutionaries wanted to **spread** their ideas of freedom and democracy.
30. They declared war on Austria and Prussia.
31. In September 1792 the French won a **victory** at Valmy against the Prussians.
32. But there were still **revolts** inside France.
33. During the war, with the enemy not far from Paris, **panic set in**.
34. The *mob* killed people which they thought were **traitors.**
35. In September 1792 France was **declared a Republic:** a country without a king.
36. “Louis must to die because France must **survive**.
37. His last words when he was **executed** on 21 Jan, 1793 were: “I die an **innocent** man.”