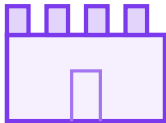


Conflict, Crisis, and Reaction in the Late 18th Century

AP European History ■ Unit 5

AP European History



What we will cover

- 1 Contextualizing 18th-Century States
- 2 The Rise of Global Markets
- 3 Britain's Ascendancy
- 4 The French Revolution
- 5 The French Revolution's Effects
- 6 Napoleon's Rise, Dominance, and Defeat



Contextualizing 18th-Century States

Unit 5 covers the crisis of the old order: global commercial competition, the French Revolution, Napoleon, and the settlement that followed. Three of the course's key concepts converge here – models of political sovereignty, the expansion of European commerce into a worldwide network, and the spread of Enlightenment ideas.

The unit is best held as a single argument: commercial rivalry strained state finances, Enlightenment ideas supplied a language for challenging authority, and where the two met a revolution followed.



The Rise of Global Markets

The expansion of European commerce **accelerated the growth of a worldwide economic network** .

Maritime competition among European states was no longer a side-show to European politics – overseas trade and colonies were now where European power was won and lost.



Britain's Ascendancy

Two consequences follow, and both are examinable. Britain gained commercial and naval dominance that shaped the next century.

And France, having spent enormously on those wars, entered the 1780s with a **fiscal crisis** – which is the direct link between this topic and the next.



Four phases, and what each one changed

- The **first, or liberal, phase** established a **constitutional monarchy** , increased popular participation, nationalised the Catholic Church, and abolished **hereditary privileges** .
- After the execution of **Louis XVI**, the **radical Jacobin republic** led by **Robespierre** responded to opposition at home and war abroad by instituting the **Reign of Terror** .

The Revolution's phases, and Romanticism's answer

why phases matter

the CED divides the Revolution into phases, and **the distinction between them earns marks**

1789–1791

liberal and constitutional – the Estates-General, the Declaration, a constitutional monarchy

1792–1794

radical – republic, war, Terror, and the levée en masse

1795–1799

reaction – the Directory, and the return of propertied control

1799–1815

Napoleon – **some revolutionary gains kept**, and political liberty withdrawn

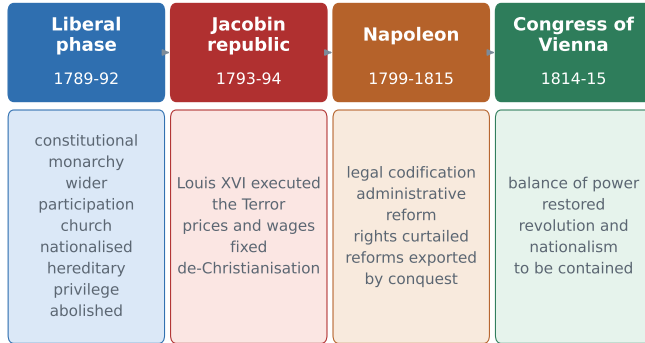
Romanticism

emerged as a **challenge to Enlightenment rationality**: feeling, nature, the nation and the past against reason and universal law

Say *which phase* a document or event belongs to before you characterise the Revolution. The same revolution answers the question differently in each.

Four phases, and what each one changed, in detail

One revolution, four phases - and questions name the phase



What outlasts all four: sovereignty belongs to the nation, not the monarch.

Questions almost always name a phase; knowing which one is being asked about is half the answer

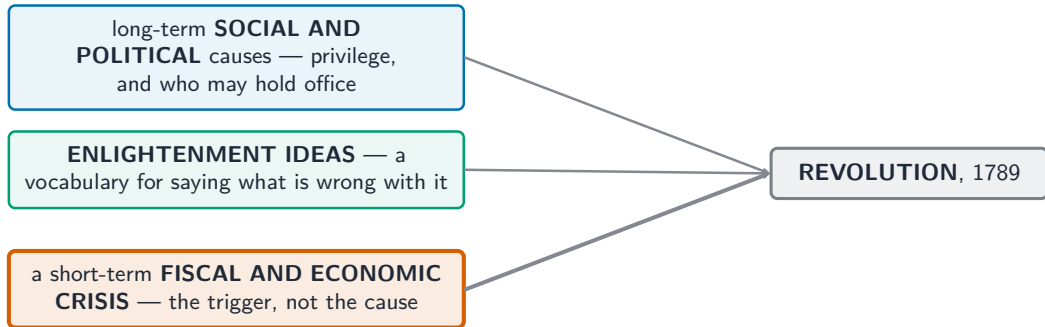
The French Revolution

- The **first, or liberal, phase** established a **constitutional monarchy** , increased popular participation, nationalised the Catholic Church, and abolished **hereditary privileges** .
- After the execution of **Louis XVI**, the **radical Jacobin republic** led by **Robespierre** responded to opposition at home and war abroad by instituting the **Reign of Terror** , fixing prices and wages, and pursuing a policy of **de-Christianisation** .
- **Revolutionary armies**, raised by **mass conscription** , sought to bring the changes begun in France to the rest of Europe.

The French Revolution, continued

Women's participation is examinable and specific: women participated enthusiastically in the early phases, and while there were brief improvements in their legal status, they were later excluded from political participation. Both halves of that sentence are needed.

Conditions, and the thing that set them off



The crisis **exacerbated** conditions that already existed. Treating it as the cause explains 1789 but not why the demands were the ones that were made



The French Revolution's Effects

- Revolutionary ideals inspired a **revolt of enslaved people led by Toussaint L'Ouverture** in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, which became independent Haiti. This is the CED's demonstration that revolutionary principles, once stated universally, could not be confined to Europe.
- While many were inspired by the Revolution's emphasis on **equality and human rights**, **others condemned its violence** and its disregard for traditional authority – the origin of modern conservatism as a political position.

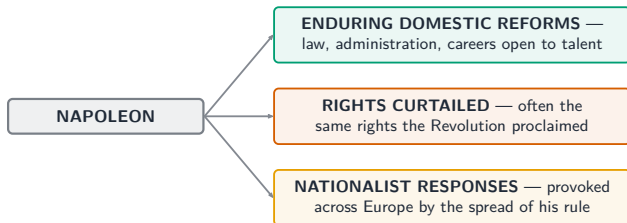


Napoleon's Rise, Dominance, and Defeat

As first consul and emperor, **Napoleon** undertook **enduring domestic reforms** – legal codification, administrative and financial reorganisation, a religious settlement – **while often curtailing rights** and manipulating popular opinion.

His **new military tactics** allowed him to exert direct or indirect control over much of the European continent, **spreading the reforms of the Revolution** to the territories he governed.

Three effects, all at once



Napoleon is a both/and: **enduring domestic reforms** *and* curtailed rights, plus nationalist responses his rule provoked.

What the wars left behind

Britain's ascendancy

The mid-century wars ended with **Britain supplanting France as the greatest European power** – naval, colonial and financial.

Napoleon's spread

The Napoleonic armies carried the Revolution's institutions across the continent: the Code, careers open to talent, the end of seigneurial dues.

The reaction

And they **created nationalist responses throughout Europe** – in Spain, in the German states, in Russia – against the French themselves.

The settlement

Vienna restored the dynasties and could not restore the assumptions.

The Revolution's most durable export was the reaction to it. That irony is worth a sentence in any essay on 1815.



The Congress of Vienna

After Napoleon's defeat by a coalition of European powers, the **Congress of Vienna (1814-1815)** attempted to **restore the balance of power** and **contain the danger of revolutionary or nationalistic upheavals** in the future.

Unit 7 is largely the story of the second aim failing.



Romanticism

That last point is why Romanticism belongs in this unit rather than in an art chapter: the period had just proved that political movements run on feeling as much as on argument.

- Rousseau questioned the exclusive reliance on reason and emphasised the role of **emotions** in the moral improvement of self and society – so the challenge begins inside the Enlightenment itself.
- Consistent with Romanticism, **religious revival** occurred in Europe, including movements such as **Methodism** .
- **Revolution, war, and rebellion demonstrated the emotional power of mass politics and nationalism** .

Romanticism answers the Enlightenment

THE ENLIGHTENMENT CLAIM

reason is the reliable guide
what is universal matters most
society can be designed

THE ROMANTIC REPLY

emotion and intuition are evidence too
the particular — a nation,
a landscape — matters
Rousseau himself doubted reason alone

The Romantics had **evidence**: revolution, war and rebellion had just shown the emotional power of mass politics and nationalism — and Methodism the pull of religious revival

An argument, not a mood – which is what makes Romanticism usable in an essay about the **limits** of Enlightenment confidence



Continuity and Change in 18th-Century States

The unit's reasoning skill is **continuity and change**.

Worked example – a principle carried by armies

“Explain one way in which the French Revolution changed European political life, 1789–1815.”

- **Full marks:** *“The Revolution established that sovereignty belonged to the nation rather than to a monarch, and revolutionary armies raised by mass conscription carried that principle across Europe. Even where French rule was resented, populations began to define themselves as nations owed a government of their own.”*
- The change, and the mechanism that spread it.

The resentment is part of the answer, not an objection to it: opposition to France was itself organised in national terms.

Exam tips

- Use the CED's causes formula: long-term causes + Enlightenment ideas + short-term fiscal crisis.
- Identify which phase a question is about. Liberal, radical, Napoleonic and the Vienna settlement did very different things.
- On women, give both halves – enthusiastic early participation, later exclusion.
- Haiti shows the Revolution's principles escaping Europe. It is high-value and frequently omitted.
- Napoleon is a both/and: enduring reforms *and* curtailed rights. Neither alone is the answer.
- Romanticism's challenge begins inside the Enlightenment, with Rousseau. That connection is more sophisticated than treating it as a simple reaction.



Period 5 – key takeaways

1

Causes

long-term + Enlightenment +
short-term fiscal crisis

2

Phase

liberal, radical, Napoleonic,
Vienna – different jobs

3

Haiti

principles escaping Europe

4

Napoleon

enduring reforms *and* curtailed
rights

Check yourself

- 1 Give the CED causes formula.
- 2 Why identify which phase a question is about?
- 3 Why is Haiti high-value?
- 4 What is the Napoleon both/and?

Answers: long-term + ideas + fiscal crisis ▪ they did different things ▪ principles escaped Europe ▪ reforms and curtailed rights