Essential Question:
How did ideas from the Enlightenment and American Revolution influence new policies in France?
How does fear help the leaders maintain control of people?

Instructions:
1. (Packet users) Using the reading packet given to you (Lesson 2: Revolution Brings Reform and Terror) answer the following questions on your own paper. Hold your written answers until time to return all your work.
2. (Google Classroom users) Read the information from the book that is given to you. Answer each question listed below. When you are finished you can submit your work on Google Classroom.
3. If you are using a packet, please put your completed work in a safe place where you can easily find it when the time comes to collect the work.
4. Each question should be answered using complete sentences.

Questions:
Read Section 2 (provided to you here) from the book and answer the follow the questions:
1. What ideas came from the Declaration of the Rights of Man? (2 to 3 sentences)
2. What powers did the new Legislative Assembly have? (1 to 2 sentences)
3. Why did the Austrians and Prussians want France to restore power to the King? (1 to 2 sentences)
4. Who were the enemies of the Jacobins within France? (2 to 3 sentences)
5. Do you agree with Robespierre’s claim that using terror allowed French citizens to remain true to the ideals of the revolution? Explain? (3 to 4 sentences)
6. Describe what caused the downfall of Robespierre. (2-3 sentences)

Revolution Brings Reform and Terror

Setting the Stage
Peasants were not the only members of French society to feel the Great Fear. Nobles and officers of the Church were equally afraid. Throughout France, bands of angry peasants struck out against members of the upper classes, attacking and destroying many manor houses. In the summer of 1789, a few months before the women’s march to Versailles, some nobles and members of clergy in the National Assembly responded to the uprisings in an emotional late-night meeting.

The Assembly Reforms France
Throughout the night of August 4, 1789, noblemen made grand speeches, declaring their love of liberty and equality. Motivated more by fear than by idealism, they joined other members of the National Assembly in sweeping away the feudal privileges of the First and Second Estates, thus making commoners equal to the nobles and the clergy. By morning, the Old Regime was dead.

The Rights of Man
Three weeks later, the National Assembly adopted a statement of revolutionary ideals, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. Reflecting the influence of the Declaration of
Independence, the document stated that “men are born and remain free and equal in rights.” These rights included “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.” Article 4 of the Declaration stated that “Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits, except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.” This language emphasized the equality of all men, promoting the development of human rights. The Declaration also outlined civil rights in order to protect individuals’ freedom. The document guaranteed citizens equal justice, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion. In keeping with these principles, revolutionary leaders adopted the expression “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” as their slogan. Such sentiments, however, did not apply to everyone. When writer Olympe de Gouges (aw•LIMP duh GOOZH) published a declaration of the rights of women, her ideas were rejected. Later, in 1793, she was declared an enemy of the Revolution and executed.

**A State-Controlled Church** Many of the National Assembly’s early reforms focused on the Church. The assembly took over Church lands and declared that Church officials and priests were to be elected and paid as state officials. Thus, the Catholic Church lost both its lands and its political independence. The reasons for the assembly’s actions were largely economic. Proceeds from the sale of Church lands helped pay off France’s huge debt. The assembly’s actions alarmed millions of French peasants, who were devout Catholics. The effort to make the Church a part of the state offended them, even though it was in accord with Enlightenment philosophy. They believed that the pope should rule over a church independent of the state. From this time on, many peasants opposed the assembly’s reforms.

**Louis Tries to Escape** As the National Assembly restructured the relationship between church and state, Louis XVI pondered his fate as a monarch. Some of his advisers warned him that he and his family were in danger. Many supporters of the monarchy thought France unsafe and left the country. Then, in June 1791, the royal family tried to escape from France to the Austrian Netherlands. As they neared the border, however, they were apprehended and returned to Paris under guard. Louis’s attempted escape increased the influence of his radical enemies in the government and sealed his fate.

**Divisions Develop**
For two years, the National Assembly argued over a new constitution for France. By 1791, the delegates had made significant changes in France’s government and society.

**A Limited Monarchy** In September 1791, the National Assembly completed the new constitution, which Louis reluctantly approved. The constitution created a limited constitutional monarchy. It stripped the king of much of his authority. It also created a new legislative body - the Legislative Assembly. This body had the power to create laws and to approve or reject declarations of war. However, the king still held the executive power to enforce laws.

**Factions Split France** Despite the new government, old problems, such as food shortages and government debt, remained. The question of how to handle these problems caused the Legislative Assembly to split into three general groups, each of which sat in a different part of the meeting hall. Radicals, who sat on the left side of the hall, opposed the idea of a monarchy and wanted sweeping changes in the way the government was run. Moderates sat in the center of the hall and wanted some changes in government, but not as many as the radicals. Conservatives sat on the right side of the hall. They upheld the idea of a limited monarchy and wanted few changes in government.

In addition, factions outside the Legislative Assembly wanted to influence the direction of the government, too. Émigrés (EHM•ih•GRAYZ), nobles and others who had fled France, hoped to undo the Revolution and restore the Old Regime. In contrast, some Parisian workers and small shopkeepers wanted the Revolution to bring even greater changes to France. They were called sans-culottes (SANZ kyoo•LAHTS), or “those without knee breeches.” Unlike the upper classes, who wore fancy knee length pants, sans-culottes wore regular trousers. Although they did not have a role in the assembly, they soon discovered ways to exert their power on the streets of Paris.

**War and Execution**
Monarchs and nobles in many European countries watched the changes taking place in France with alarm. They feared that similar revolts might break out in their own countries. In fact, some radicals were keen to
spread their revolutionary ideas across Europe. As a result, some countries took action. Austria and Prussia, for example, urged the French to restore Louis to his position as an absolute monarch. The Legislative Assembly responded by declaring war in April 1792. France at War The war began badly for the French. By the summer of 1792, Prussian forces were advancing on Paris. The Prussian commander threatened to destroy Paris if the revolutionaries harmed any member of the royal family. This enraged the Parisians. On August 10, about 20,000 men and women invaded the Tuileries, the palace where the royal family was staying. The mob massacred the royal guards and imprisoned Louis, Marie Antoinette, and their children. Shortly after, the French troops defending Paris were sent to reinforce the French army in the field. Rumors began to spread that supporters of the king held in Paris prisons planned to break out and seize control of the city. Angry and fearful citizens responded by taking the law into their own hands. For several days in early September, they raided the prisons and murdered over 1,000 prisoners. Many nobles, priests, and royalist sympathizers fell victim to the angry mobs in these September Massacres. Under pressure from radicals in the streets and among its members, the Legislative Assembly set aside the Constitution of 1791. It declared the king deposed, dissolved the assembly, and called for the election of a new legislature. This new governing body, the National Convention, took office on September 21. It quickly abolished the monarchy and declared France a republic. This transition to republicanism meant that the people held popular sovereignty rather than being subjects of a king. Adult male citizens were granted the right to vote and hold office. Despite the important part they had already played in the Revolution, women were not given the vote.

Jacobins Take Control Most of the people involved in the governmental changes in September 1792 were members of a radical political organization, the Jacobin (JAK•uh•bihn) Club. One of the most prominent Jacobins, as club members were called, was Jean-Paul Marat (mah•RAH). During the Revolution, he edited a newspaper called L’Ami du Peuple (Friend of the People). In his fiery editorials, Marat called for the death of all those who continued to support the king. Georges Danton (zhawrzh dahn•TAWN), a lawyer, was among the club’s most talented and passionate speakers. He also was known for his devotion to the rights of Paris’s poor people.

The National Convention had reduced Louis XVI’s role from that of a king to that of a common citizen and prisoner. Now, guided by radical Jacobins, it tried Louis for treason. The Convention found him guilty, and, by a very close vote, sentenced him to death. On January 21, 1793, the former king walked with calm dignity up the steps of the scaffold to be beheaded by the guillotine (GIHL•uh•teen).

The War Continues The National Convention also had to contend with the continuing war with Austria and Prussia. At about the time the Convention took office, the French army won a stunning victory against the Austrians and Prussians at the Battle of Valmy. Early in 1793, however, Great Britain, Holland, and Spain joined Prussia and Austria against France. Forced to contend with so many enemies, the French suffered a string of defeats. To reinforce the French army, Jacobin leaders in the Convention took an extreme step. At their urging, in February 1793 the Convention ordered a draft of 300,000 French citizens between the ages of 18 and 40. By 1794, the army had grown to 800,000 and included women.

The Terror Grips France Foreign armies were not the only enemies of the French republic. The Jacobins had thousands of enemies within France itself. These included peasants who were horrified by the king’s execution, priests who would not accept government control, and rival leaders who were stirring up rebellion in the provinces. How to contain and control these enemies became a central issue.

Robespierre Assumes Control In the early months of 1793, one Jacobin leader, Maximilien Robespierre (ROHBZ•peer), slowly gained power. Robespierre and his supporters set out to build a “republic of virtue” by wiping out every trace of France’s past. Firm believers in reason, they changed the calendar, dividing the year into 12 months of 30 days and renaming each month. This calendar had no Sundays because the radicals considered religion old-fashioned and dangerous. They even closed all churches in Paris, and cities and towns all over France soon did the same.

In July 1793, Robespierre became leader of the Committee of Public Safety. For the next year, Robespierre governed France virtually as a dictator, and the period of his rule became known as the Reign of Terror. The Committee of Public Safety’s chief task was to protect the Revolution from its enemies. Under Robespierre’s
leadership, the committee often had these “enemies” tried in the morning and guillotined in the afternoon. Robespierre justified his use of terror by suggesting that it enabled French citizens to remain true to the ideals of the Revolution. He also saw a connection between virtue and terror:

“The first maxim of our politics ought to be to lead the people by means of reason and the enemies of the people by terror. If the basis of popular government in time of peace is virtue, the basis of popular government in time of revolution is both virtue and terror: virtue without which terror is murderous, terror without which virtue is powerless. Terror is nothing else than swift, severe, indomitable justice; it flows, then, from virtue.”


The “enemies of the Revolution” who troubled Robespierre the most were fellow radicals who challenged his leadership. In 1793 and 1794, many of those who had led the Revolution received death sentences. Their only crime was that they were considered less radical than Robespierre. By early 1794, even Georges Danton found himself in danger. Danton’s friends in the National Convention, afraid to defend him, joined in condemning him. On the scaffold, he told the executioner, “Don’t forget to show my head to the people. It’s well worth seeing.”

The Terror claimed not only the famous, such as Danton and Marie Antoinette, the widowed queen. Thousands of unknown people were also sent to their deaths, often on the flimsiest of charges. For example, an 18-year-old youth was sentenced to die for cutting down a tree that had been planted as a symbol of liberty. Perhaps as many as 40,000 were executed during the Terror. About 85 percent were peasants or members of the urban poor or middle class—for whose benefit the Revolution had been launched.

End of the Terror

In July 1794, fearing for their own safety, some members of the National Convention turned on Robespierre. They demanded his arrest and execution. The Reign of Terror, the radical phase of the French Revolution, ended on July 28, 1794, when Robespierre went to the guillotine.

French public opinion shifted dramatically after Robespierre’s death. People of all classes had grown weary of the Terror. They were also tired of the skyrocketing prices for bread, salt, and other necessities of life. In 1795, moderate leaders in the National Convention drafted a new plan of government, the third since 1789. It placed power firmly in the hands of the upper middle class and called for a two-house legislature and an executive body of five men, known as the Directory. These five were moderates, not revolutionary idealists. Some of them were corrupt and made themselves rich at the country’s expense. Even so, they gave their troubled country a period of order. They also found the right general to command France’s armies—Napoleon Bonaparte.