

Levée en Masse

The Wars of the French Revolution: 1789 to 1802
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Plan 3: The Lessons of the French Revolution

Introduction:

Levée en Masse is a game that simulates the struggles that gripped France beginning with the Storming of the Bastille in 1789 to Napoleon's seizure of power in 1802. The game was designed to be played solo but can easily be adapted for use in a single classroom or with smaller groups of students using multiple copies of the game. In this lesson, students will focus on the events of the French Revolution.

Subject Areas:

World Studies, Military History, and Government classes

Grade Level: 9 – 12

Lesson Objectives:

Students will:

1. Critically analyze their choices and outcomes as they try to save the new French Republic.
2. Make judgments about how different actions would have altered the course of the simulation.
3. Determine the greatest challenges to the French Revolution.
4. Determine the validity of the counter-factual victory conditions.

National Standards:

World History Standard 32: Understand the causes and consequences of the political revolutions in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Working with Others Standard 1: Contributes to the overall effort of a group; Standard 4: Displays effective interpersonal communication skills.

California State Standards: 10.2.4 Explain how the ideology of the French Revolution led France to develop from constitutional monarchy to democratic despotism to the Napoleonic Empire.

Materials Needed:

- Levee en Masse Game
- Levee en Masse Event Cards

Procedures:

(A note on game design: **Levée en Masse** was designed to be played solo and offer enough variation per game to make the player want to play multiple times. This design choice means that an average player will only win 15% of the time. It's a good idea to let your students know this so there is not an anticipation of victory the first time around. As the teacher, you can always modify the game so that students get through more Event Cards or have a better chance to win. The simplest way to accomplish this would be to add more 'Actions' to each card but you have creative license to come up with some of your own.)

1. As you play the game in class, have students keep a journal of the actions taken and their results.
2. Have students review their journals and determine the key events and decisions that led to the games outcome and whether or not they are reflective of the course of the actual events in France from 1789 to 1802.
3. Working alone or in pairs, have students read through the victory conditions and determine their historical viability. This is an opportunity to bridge follow-up content on the Napoleonic Age through the Revolutions of 1848 and beyond.
4. If time does not permit a second or third playing of the game, have students outline how they would have changed their play to score a victory.

Assessment:

1. Collect each student's work at the end of the period to check for comprehension of history vs simulation and evidence of critical thinking in determining key events of the period and predicting how changes in choices would have successfully changed the outcome.
2. Does the student demonstrate an understanding of the fluid nature of history based on the alternate outcomes during the game?