The Three Estates in Pre-Revolutionary France

French Social Classes
- Majority of all are Commoners - 98%
  - Non-land owners
  - Peasants
- City Classes
  - Bourgeoisie - Upper Middle Class
  - All 3rd Estate
- Only ones that pay taxes
  - Most of 3rd Estate can't afford to pay the taxes
- 1st + 2nd Estate
  - 1st - Clergy - Priests - 0.5%
  - 2nd Estate - Nobility - 1.5%
- Both pay no taxes
  - Own most of the land - more space
- All of 3rd Estate decide to work together to push for better conditions
- King is at top of social class system
**Group Task**

*Handouts B, C, D, & E*

- Read the document assigned to your group: C, D, or E
- Answer the question on the handout.
- Identify on the chart in Handout B whether your reason for the French Revolution was Social, Economic, or Political.

**Group Roles**
- Reader - All
- Recorder - All
- Reporter - 2
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Social</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Political</th>
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Problems in France 1789

Doc E

Justin
France

- King

Louis XVI & Queen spent $ on war - helped finance American Revol.

- King is broke.

- Queen spends $ on luxuries & mistresses.

- People had no say.

- Can imprison people without reason.

Doc D

- Common woman says too many taxes - can't afford.

- All $ goes to nobles.

- Worked too hard.

- Only 1 horse + cow + little land.

- Starving.
8. ...the nation should hereafter be subject only to such laws and taxes as it shall itself freely ratify [approve].

9. The meetings of the Estates General of the kingdom should be fixed for definite periods...

10. In order to assure to the third estate the influence to which it is entitled in view of the number of its members, the amount of its contributions to the public treasury, and the manifold[many] interests which it has to defend or promote in the national assemblies, its votes in the assembly should be taken and counted by head.

11. No order, corporation, or individual citizen may lay claim to any pecuniary [financial] exemptions. ... All taxes should be assessed on the same system throughout the nation.

12. The due [tax] exacted from commoners holding fiefs [land] should be abolished, and also the general or particular regulations which exclude members of the third estate from certain positions, offices, and ranks which have hitherto [until now] been bestowed on [given to] nobles either for life or hereditarily [based on family relations]. A law should be passed declaring members of the third estate qualified to fill all such offices for which they are judged to be personally fitted.

13. Since individual liberty is intimately associated with national liberty, his Majesty is hereby petitioned not to permit that it be hereafter interfered with by arbitrary orders for imprisonment . . . .

14. Freedom should be granted also to the press, which should however be subjected, by means of strict regulations to the principles of religion, morality, and public decency...