

17 Analyzing a Primary Source: The Storming of the Bastille

Read the following excerpt from an eyewitness account of the fall of the Bastille, and then answer the questions below. Read Section 3 of this chapter for background information.

“Veteran armies... have never performed greater prodigies [feats] of valor than this leaderless multitude of persons belonging to every class, workmen of all trades who, mostly ill-equipped and unused to arms, boldly affronted the fire from the ramparts and seemed to mock the thunderbolts the enemy hurled at them....

The attackers, having demolished the first drawbridge and brought their guns into position against the second, could not fail to capture the fort....

...One of the [soldiers] opened the gate behind the drawbridge and asked what we wanted. ‘The surrender of the Bastille’ was the answer, on which he let us in. At the same time the besiegers lowered the great bridge....

Those who came in first treated the conquered enemy humanely and embraced the staff officers to show there was no ill-feeling. But a few soldiers posted on the platforms and unaware that the fortress had surrendered discharged their muskets, whereupon the people, transformed with rage, threw themselves on the [soldiers]....

... Several... [individuals] contended for the honor of having arrested the Marquis de Launay [the governor of the Bastille]... and a few others undertook to guard him and succeeded in getting

him out of the Bastille, though he was roughly handled by the people, who were calling for his death....

But the fury of the crowd continued to increase and their blind wrath did not spare de Launay’s escort.... Exhausted by his efforts to defend his prisoner... he had to separate from M. de Launay... Hardly had he sat down when, looking after the procession, he saw the head of M. de Launay stuck on the point of a pike.... The people, fearing that their victim might be snatched away from them, hastened to cut his throat on the steps of the Hotel de Ville [City Hall]....

In the intoxication [excitement] of victory the unfortunate inmates of the dungeons of the Bastille had been forgotten. All the keys had been carried off in triumph and it was necessary to force the doors of the cells. Seven prisoners were found.”

(From The French Revolution by Georges Pernoud & Sabein Flassier, translated by Richard Graves. Copyright © 1960 by Martin Seeker & Warburg, Ltd. Reprinted by permission of Putnam Publishing Group.)

1. What kinds of people stormed the Bastille? _____

2. What turned the mob from fairly reasonable to fierce? _____

3. Why do you think people competed with one another to arrest the Marquis de Launay? _____

4. According to your textbook, why was the Bastille attacked? _____

5. What significance did the attack on the Bastille have as a symbol? _____

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projector. Be sure students understand the meaning of the term. Have a volunteer read each quotation aloud. Encourage students to offer explanations of what each quotation means. You may wish to do this activity orally, using it as a basis for discussion.

To extend this exercise, have students discuss what aspects of United States government reflect the influence of these philosophers.

Answers

1. Governments originated by a social contract—an agreement among people.
2. The purpose of government is to serve the people and protect their rights.
3. They have the right to overthrow it.
4. According to the “divine right” theory, the monarch rules through the will of God, not through the consent of the people.
5. Voltaire believes that a government which rules by force does not deserve loyalty.
6. Voltaire would prefer government with the consent of the governed.
7. Montesquieu believed that there was no liberty under Louis XIV’s government because there was no separation of powers.

ACTIVITY 38

Analyzing a Primary Source: The Storming of the Bastille

This exercise gives students a chance to read a first-hand account of the storming of the Bastille. The answers to the questions are based on fact and inference. To extend this exercise, have students discuss what they would consider the characteristics of a mob.

Answers

1. People of all classes stormed the Bastille.
2. The soldiers, unaware that the fort had surrendered, fired on the mob.
3. Since he was in charge of the Bastille, a certain prestige would be associated with taking him prisoner.
4. The Bastille was attacked in order to obtain weapons.
5. It represented the Old Regime and everything the people hated about it. To capture the Bastille was a symbol of independence and freedom from oppression.

ACTIVITY 39

Distinguishing Fact from Opinion: The French Revolution

The purpose of this activity is to help students distinguish between statements of fact and statements of opinion regarding the French Revolution. To extend this exercise, have students look in current newspapers or magazines to find statements of both fact and opinion. Then, call on individual students to read the statement they have found to the class, and ask them to determine whether it is fact or opinion and to explain why.

Answers

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. F | 3. 0 | 5. 0 | 7. F | 9. 0 |
| 2. F | 4. F | 6. F | 8. 0 | 10. 0 |

CHAPTER 18 (Modern Chapter 5)

ACTIVITY 40

Analyzing a Primary Source: The Japanese Act of Seclusion

Use this activity to reinforce what students have learned about the closing of Japan. The harsh terms of the Act of Seclusion indicate the seriousness with which the Japanese viewed Western “contamination.”

To extend this exercise, ask students to consider what would be some of the short-term effects and long-term effects of such a policy of isolation. Accept any reasonable suggestions.

Answers

1. The decree was issued against Christians.
2. The people were mostly Spanish and Portuguese.
3. Answers should mention prohibitions against ships going abroad and against Japanese traveling abroad.
4. Answers will vary. Some students might suggest that they would comply out of fear.
5. They feared Christians as a source of revolt.

ACTIVITY 41

Sequencing Ideas: Asian Countries in Transition

This activity requires students to put into chronological order many of the events that occurred as the countries of Asia underwent periods of great transition. Use the activity to reinforce their understanding of the events they have studied in this chapter.

To extend this exercise, have students use the information on the activity and in Chapter 18 (Modern Chapter 5) of their textbook to construct a time line.

Answers

- Group One:** The correct order is 3, 2, 4, 1.
Group Two: The correct order is 1, 3, 2, 4.
Group Three: The correct order is 4, 1, 2, 3.
Group Four: The correct order is 2, 1, 4, 3.
Group Five: The correct order is 1, 4, 2, 3.

CHAPTER 19 (Modern Chapter 6)

ACTIVITY 42

Analyzing a Primary Source: Child Labor

This reading gives students a vivid account of what life was like for children working in factories in the 1800s.