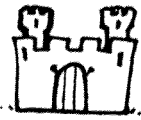




Noble Lord

You are a member of the French nobility. Your king, Louis XVI, has the legal power to make decisions without your agreement. He sometimes requires you to stay at his palace for long periods of time, far away from your family. But the king needs the support of lords like you to collect taxes and protect the nation. Also, you control a manor in the countryside—complete with a castle—where peasants produce food for you. In return, you provide the peasants a place to live and protection from harm.

- Step 1:** Read this background information about France during the reign of King Louis XVI: King Louis XIV ruled France from 1638–1715 and built the enormously extravagant Palace of Versailles. The king invited nobles to stay at the Palace and showered them with parties and royal attention. At the same time, Louis XIV transferred all political power into his own hands. From 1754 to the late 1780s, Louis XIV’s grandson, King Louis XVI, ruled the French nation. Louis XVI married Marie Antoinette, a member of the royal family in Austria, who became Queen of France. The noble lords of France owned much of the farming land, which they allowed the peasants to use in exchange for food. Nobles had the privilege of not being taxed and the duty to protect their peasants. The Catholic clergy provided religious support and social services for the poor. The clergy were not allowed to be taxed by the government, and they also collected a tithe, a 10 percent tax on all income.
- Step 2:** Listen to the questions your teacher asks about France during the reign of Louis XVI. Use the information you just read in Step 1 to help you answer the questions.
- Step 3:** As the peasants work to produce food, chat with the other lords, relax, quietly watch, and/or provide words of encouragement.
- Step 4:** Collect all food tokens from your peasants. Count them. When the clergy arrives at your manor, give 10 percent of the food tokens to them for the Church’s tithe. Then recount them. When the Controller-General arrives, give 50 percent of the tokens to her or him for the government tax. Keep half of the remaining tokens (to represent your peasant’s payment for protection), and evenly distribute the remaining tokens to the peasants.
- Step 5:** Listen carefully to the Controller-General’s announcement.



Member of Second Estate

You are a member of the Second Estate, the French nobility, preparing to attend the meeting of the Estates General in 1789. Due to the urgent financial crisis facing France, the king has decided to assemble the Estates General, a group that serves as representatives for the people of France. When last used 175 years ago to advise the king, the Estates General met as three separate Estates, or orders, with one vote each. The First Estate is the clergy, the Second Estate is the nobility, and the Third Estate represents the rest of France (peasants, workers, and other commoners). Now, in the 1780s, some people question whether the Estates General should be changed to have all the Estates meet together and allow each representative one vote.

Step 1: Kneel and listen carefully to the king's speech. Applaud respectfully when he finishes.

Step 2: Work with the other members of the Second Estate to complete the tasks described below. In doing so, you must protect the privileges and interests of the Second Estate. Seek advice from the king and queen, who are very supportive of the noble class.

- Decide whether you think the separate Estates should vote by order (each Estate, one vote) or by head (one person, one vote) during the meeting of the Estates General. Explain why.
- Write suggestions for how to solve the current financial crisis. For example, who should be taxed? Why? How much should they pay?
- Choose a spokesperson to present and read your proposal to the king and queen.
- Create banners with a slogan and a visual symbol representing the ideas and interests of the Second Estate.
- Display your banners.

Step 3: Listen as a spokesperson from each Estate kneels before the king and queen and presents the Estate's proposal. If you are the spokesperson for your Estate, kneel in front of the king and queen and read your proposal when instructed by your teacher.

Step 4: Listen silently to the king's proposal.

Step 5: Discuss with the other members of the Second Estate whether to vote for or against the king's proposal. When your teacher instructs you, have your spokesperson announce the Second Estate's vote. Listen to see how the other Estates voted.

Step 6: Listen to your teacher's announcement.

Step 7: Listen carefully to the class discussion. Respond honestly when called upon.



Member of National Assembly: Noble

The French Revolution has begun. You are one of the nobles who joined the revolution and are now a member of the National Assembly, the new governmental body. King Louis XVI reluctantly accepted the Constitution of 1791 because he had no other choice. The king no longer has absolute power to rule France, but he remains the head of France and can still veto (reject) laws passed by the National Assembly. France is still in a worsening financial crisis.

- Step 1:** Listen silently as King Louis XVI makes an announcement. Applaud respectfully at the end.
- Step 2:** Listen carefully as the Controller-General describes the financial crisis.
- Step 3:** Discuss with the members of the National Assembly possible ways to raise money to save France from financial ruin. (Ideas include selling all church lands, taxing all French citizens, and declaring bankruptcy.) Afterward, if you have a proposal for the National Assembly to consider, kneel before the king and queen and announce your plan. The National Assembly will vote on it. If it passes, the king will announce whether he approves it or vetoes (rejects) it.
- Step 4:** Listen to the new proposal.
- Step 5:** Listen to and participate in the debate of the National Assembly.
- Step 6:** Work with the members of the National Assembly to create a new constitution.
- Step 7:** Discuss the question your teacher raises.