

1. Plans to commemorate the storming of the Bastille in 1793 were doomed when news of a shocking murder committed on July 13, 1793 swept through Paris and prompted a massive public outpouring of grief the next day. Who was murdered?
 - a. the Count de Mirabeau, a popular monarchist
 - b. Jacques Hébert, the salty « Father Duchêne » of newspaper fame
 - c. the Duke d'Orléans, otherwise known as Philippe-Égalité (famous for voting the execution of his own cousin, Louis XVI)
 - d. Jean-Paul Marat, journalist and deputy

2. To be a *sans-culotte* (literally “without-breeches”) during the Revolution meant to be:
 - a. a man who refuses to wear underwear
 - b. a woman who only wears skirts
 - c. a militant populist
 - d. a hermaphrodite

3. Although this man is widely held responsible for the brutality of the Terror, he opposed the de-Christianization of France, detested atheism (seen as an indulgence of aristocrats), and spoke eloquently on behalf of “any consoling doctrine that elevates the soul.” His name?
 - a. Louis Antoine de Saint-Just
 - b. Charles Henri Sanson, the executioner
 - c. Maximilien Robespierre
 - d. Joseph Fouché, the “Butcher of Lyon”

4. Despite great wealth and celebrity, this person was characterized as a “firefly in a whirlwind” (une libellule dans un tourbillon), whose fragile light was too bright to last. Who is it?

- a. the Dauphin
- b. the Queen, Marie-Antoinette
- c. the Duke d’Orléans
- d. Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen, the Princess de Lamballe

5. In the drawing by Jacques-Louis David of “Marie-Antoinette on the Way to the Guillotine” (1793), the Queen looks much older than her 37 years. Her hair was prematurely grey, and she was robbed of what accessories:

- a. her false teeth
- b. her wig
- c. her corset
- d. all three

6. In the biographies and “black legends” published after the death of Robespierre, authors consistently emphasized his peculiar appearance, and took pains to describe:

- a. the way he habitually clenched up his hands and grimaced spasmodically
- b. his pale and sickly complexion
- c. his poor skills as an orator
- d. all three

7. What modern-day artist has generated a small fortune and world-wide fame by copying Jacques-Louis David’s portrait of *Marat* (1793), using garbage instead of oil paints?

- a. Vik Muniz
- b. Justin Gignac

- c. Sayaka Ganz
- d. Cindy Sherman

8. What French presidential candidate made “storming the Bastille” a central focus of his far-Left agenda in spring 2012?

- a. François Hollande
- b. Nicolas Sarkozy
- c. Dominique Strauss-Kahn
- d. Jean-Luc Mélenchon

9. The French national anthem, *La Marseillaise*, dates from what year ?

- a. 1789
- b. 1791
- c. 1792
- d. 1799

10. In 1789, France was on the edge of bankruptcy. The nation was saved, for a while, by the creation of a new currency: *l'assignat*. This new currency was launched and backed up by what resources?

- a. The wealth of France’s ancient aristocratic families
- b. The holdings of the Catholic Church
- c. The personal fortune of the Bourbons (Louis XVI and his brothers)
- d. New taxes on the peasantry

11. Who said, “Revolutions have terrible arms and righteous fists; they choose their targets well and rarely miss”?

- a. Maximilien Robespierre
- b. Georges-Jacques Danton
- c. Olympe de Gouges
- d. Victor Hugo

12. Which deputy at the Convention government spoke out against the vague definition of plotter (*conspirateur*) in the midst of the Terror, and pleaded for measures that would protect the innocent?

- a. Robespierre
- b. Saint-Just
- c. Hébert
- d. Danton

13. What author was guillotined in November 1793 on the grounds that her writings aimed to re-establish a counter-revolutionary regime?

- a. Charlotte Corday, assassin of Jean-Paul Marat
- b. Mme de Genlis, Duchess de Sillery
- c. The Princess de Lamballe, former intimate of Marie-Antoinette
- d. Olympe de Gouges, author of *La Déclaration des droits de la femme*

14. The official celebration of July 14 as the French national holiday dates from what era?

- a. 1790
- b. 1880
- c. 1804
- d. 1946

15. What author penned a 1791 document that explained the reasoning behind the actions of King Louis XVI on those days when military intervention could have reversed the course of events (such as July 14, 1789 or October 5-6, 1789), and stressed the king's *sensibilité* and sacrifices towards the misguided people (*la multitude égarée*)?

- a. Monsieur, Count de Provence (brother of King Louis XVI)
- b. General Lafayette, leader of the National Guard
- c. Sylvain Bailly, mayor of Paris
- d. King Louis XVI

16. Which public figure described himself as a *martyr* to the French people?

- a. Robespierre
- b. Marat
- c. King Louis XVI
- d. All of the above

17. Which revolutionary event is today considered the turning-point in the fate of the French monarchy?

- a. July 14, 1789 : the taking of the Bastille
- b. October 5-6, 1789 : the Women's March on Versailles
- c. January 21, 1793 : the execution of Louis XVI
- d. October 17, 1793: the execution of Marie-Antoinette

18. Which author penned these prescient words about the Revolution's legacy: "Thus the truth of history, on this point as among others, will probably not lie in what happened, but only in what continues to be told"?

- a. Robespierre
- b. Hugo

- c. Napoléon
- d. Chateaubriand

19. What pop idol is currently the star of a music video that relays the history of the French Revolution on YouTube?

- a. Lady Gaga
- b. Madonna
- c. Beyoncé
- d. Taylor Swift

20. What is the most important legacy of the Revolution for France today?

- a. The system of representative government
- b. The commitment to universal rights
- c. Free, public education
- d. All of the above

Answers

1. d. Jean-Paul Marat. Marat's murder by Charlotte Corday was made into a beautiful portrait, *Marat assassinated*, by Jacques-Louis David and remains one of the most recognizable symbols of the revolutionary legacy still today.

2. c. a militant populist

3. c. Maximilien Robespierre.

4. b. the Queen, Marie-Antoinette. According to the Prince de Ligne, she never had a perfectly happy day in Versailles and was imprisoned from day one in the ceremonial of the French court 'like a firefly in a whirlwind'." Cited in Catriona Seth, "Marie-Antoinette, la femme aux mille visages," *Marie-Antoinette : Anthologie et dictionnaire* (Paris : Robert Laffont, 2006), xviii.

5. d. All three. However, she reportedly met her end with great composure, even apologizing to the executioner for accidentally stepping on his foot.
6. d. All three. Robespierre's weird appearance at morn, and his abrupt mood swings suggest that he may be the inspiration for other great villains, such as Dr. Jekyll / Mr. Hyde and Dorian Gray.
7. a. The Brazilian-born New Yorker Vik Muniz's garbage portrait, *Marat (Sebastião)* (2008), was featured in the award-winning documentary by Lucy Walker, *Wasteland* (2010).
8. d. The Front de Gauche sponsored a hugely popular demonstration in honor of Mélenchon on March 18, 2012 with the slogan, "Reprenons la Bastille!" (Let's take back the Bastille!). Exploiting the unease (*morosité*) of the current situation in France, Mélenchon gambled on the notion of a radical break with business-as-usual. He did not win, but the populist outrage he generated may have paved the way for Socialist François Hollande's surprise landslide on May 6, 2012.
9. c. 1792. The song, originally titled "Chant de guerre pour l'Armée du Rhin" ("War Song for the Army of the Rhine") was written and composed by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle in 1792. It has been featured in many films, notably *Casablanca*, as a symbol of French national pride.
10. b. The holdings of the Catholic Church, which were seized by edict beginning in fall 1789 and auctioned off, with the proceeds going to the state coffers. This move formed part of the campaign of "de-Christianization."
11. d. Victor Hugo, "Les révolutions ont le bras terrible et la main heureuse; elles frappent ferme et choisissent bien," *Les Misérables*, ed. Rosa, 2 :1125.
12. a. "Il est important de bien définir ce que vous entendez par *conspirateurs*; autrement les meilleurs citoyens risqueroient d'être victimes d'un tribunal institué pour les protéger contre les entreprises des contre-révolutionnaires," Maximilien Robespierre, speech at the Convention on March 11, 1793.
13. d. Olympe de Gouges, condemned and executed for being : "Femme de lettres, âgée de 38 ans, native de Montauban, convaincue d'être l'auteur d'écrits tendans à l'établissement d'un pouvoir attentatoire à la souveraineté du peuple" (*Journal de Paris National*, 3 novembre 1793).
14. b. 1880.
15. d. King Louis XVI, in *Déclaration du Roi adressée à tous les Français à sa sortie de Paris*, a 16-page manuscript left behind in the Tuileries castle on June 20, 1791, when the royal family tried to flee.
16. d. All of the above

17. b. The Women's March (or October Days) is today considered the most important event for symbolic, material, and political reasons, as it revealed the people's power over the monarch and re-placed the royal family in the capital city. Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette never saw Versailles again.

18. c. Napoléon Bonaparte

19. a. Lady Gaga (aka "The History Teachers")

20. d. Vive la démocratie!