The Trial of King Louis XVI

**Introduction**

* The objective of this web quest is to prepare for an in class re-enactment of the trial of King Louis XVI. Explore the history of this trial, and the men who were involved, in order to create your own arguments and participate in an in class staging of the Trial of King Louis XVI. You will be assigned to one of three roles; the King and his counsel, the moderate Girondins, or the radical Jacobins.
* While it is most important that you understand the political position of your own group it is always valuable to be able to predict the arguments that your opponents will be making, in order to prepare rebuttals to them, so I advise that you spend some time evaluating the positions of your opponents as well.

**Grading Criteria**

Your participation in this assignment will rest upon evidence of research and level of participation during the trial. It will be worth 50 points (25 for evidence of research and 25 for contributions during the trial). Your research should include information from the websites listed below.

**Trial Rules**

The ultimate goal of this project is to re-enact the trial of King Louis XVI. The class rules of the trial are as follows:

The two questions to be decided in this trial are: Is the King guilty of treason (disloyalty to the Revolution)? If guilty, what shall his punishment be?

* Each team will have 5 minutes to provide an opening statement and initial arguments, during which time the other teams should listen respectfully and take notes.
* At the end of the 5 minutes there will be a 3 minute session during which the other teams may ask clarifying questions of the presenting team.
* After all three teams have presented there will be 6 minutes for the teams to gather and formulate rebuttals to their opponents’ arguments.
* Then we will have an open session where each team supplies and responds to rebuttals (8 minutes).
* The King will have an opportunity to make a last appeal to the court and then a vote will be taken, first on the charge of treason then, if necessary, on the method of punishment.

**Access the rest of this document with links on the class web site.**

Webquest Links and Questions

**For Everyone**

The Indictment of King Louis XVI

<http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/louis_trial.html>

What is the King accused of? Which arguments seem strongest/weakest?

**The King and Counsel**

Constitution of 1791

<http://www.historywiz.com/constitution1791.htm>

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/315/>

<http://sourcebook.fsc.edu/history/constitutionof1791.html>

See Chapter II Section 1 of Document

Does the Constitution protect the position of the King?

How may the King be punished?

In his own words

<http://18thcenturyreadingroom.wordpress.com/2007/04/23/item-of-the-day-trial-of-louis-xvi-1793/>

How did the King respond to the accusations of treason?

King’s Lawyers

Malesherbes & De Séze

Search for information on these two men. What arguments might they have made?

**The Moderate Girondins**

Background

[http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/chap6c.html#](http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/chap6c.html)

Who are the Girondins?

Thomas Paine

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/321/>

What does this American Revolutionary hero have to say?

Condorcet

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/322/>

Another moderate speaks.

The September Massacres

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/392/>

How can this event be used to argue against more radical groups?

**The Jacobins**

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/revolution/the_jacobins.shtml>

Who were the Jacobins?

Robespierre

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/biographies/bioframeset_robespierre.htm>

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/324/>

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/326/>

What arguments did Robespierre make about the revolution?

(We have a book with excerpts from his speeches that may be helpful)

Saint Just

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/320/>

Argues against the Constitution of 1791

How does the enlightenment impact Saint Just’s arguments?

Marat

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/323/>

How does Marat argue for the trial of the King?

Brunswick Manifesto

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/revolution/brunswick_manifesto.shtml>

How did radicals use this document against the King?

Armoire de Fer

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/revolution/armoire_de_fer.shtml>

How does this affair shape public perception of the King?

Sans-Culottes

<http://library.thinkquest.org/C006257/revolution/sans_culottes.shtml>

How did this group impact the trial of the King?

These links should give you enough information to make an argument, but this is not a comprehensive list. If time permits, feel free to explore other sites, especially the links from the sites listed above. Good luck!