Guided Reading on “The French Revolution”

1) Describe the social conditions of France at the beginning of the French Revolution including the three “estates” or social classes: their characteristics and their relative power. How much of France’s population was made up by peasants? What problems did they face on the eve of the French Revolution? (648-649)

3) Why did France face a fiscal crisis during the reign of Louis XV and Louis XVI? After Louis XVI assumed the throne in 1774 what did he do to worsen the crisis? (649)

4) Why did Louis XVI call a meeting of the Estates-General in 1788-1789? What was unusual about this meeting? Why was it unlikely to succeed in solving France’s financial problems? (649)

5) Why did the Third Estate establish a National Assembly? How did it signify its determination to meet in the face of royal opposition? (649)

6) What was the reason for the uprising in Paris on July 14, 1789? Why do you think July 14 is still celebrated as the national holiday, “Bastille Day”, in France? What was significant about these events? (650)

7) Which famous declaration was passed by the National Assembly at the beginning of the French Revolution? How was it similar and different from the American “Declaration of Independence”? (650)

8) Why did market women of Paris march on Versailles on October 5, 1789? What was the result? (651)

9) Which major legislative reforms did the National Assembly institute between 1789-1782? (651)