

It's Bastille Day! (July 14, 2026)

TEACHING GUIDE

What? Bastille Day is France's national holiday! It's a public holiday where we celebrate liberty, equality, and fraternity—the values of the French Republic.

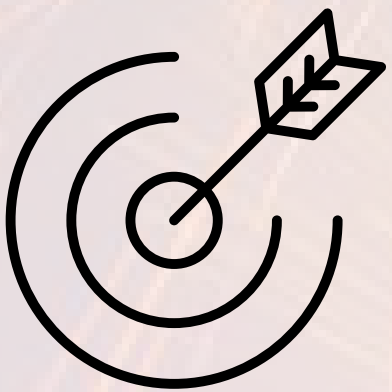
Who? All French people celebrate this day: nearly 70 million of them!

Where? All over France! But the biggest parade is in Paris, on the Champs-Élysées, in the presence of the President of the Republic.

When? Every year, on July 14th, of course! It's been a tradition since 1880, so for over 140 years.

Why is it important? Because France is one of the most important countries in the world.

For this activity, your goal will be to learn a little more about July 14th, and also about France!



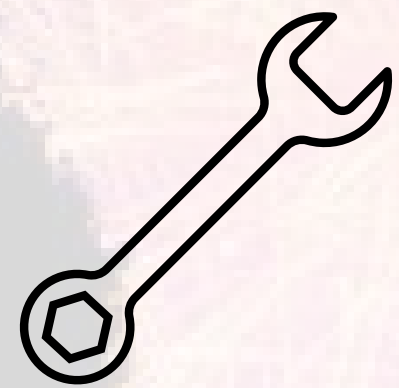
OBJECTIVES

- Discover the origins of July 14th and its connection to the French Revolution
- Understand what absolute monarchy was and why the people opposed it
- Recognize the major symbols of the French national holiday
- Learn about France and its main characteristics
- Discover some of the country's iconic tourist sites
- Write a postcard using the information gathered



SUBJECTS

- **Social Studies / History**
 - The Origins of the French Revolution
 - A National Holiday and its Symbols
- **Geography**
 - Location of France in Europe
 - Capital, Area, Population, Bordering Countries, Currency
 - Iconic Tourist Sites
- **English**
 - Understanding a Documentary Video
 - Researching Information in an Encyclopedia
 - Writing a Continuous Text (Postcard)



COMPETENCIES

- Search for and interpret information (video, text, image)
- Understand a documentary video
- Locate information in an online encyclopedia
- Organize your ideas
- Produce short and precise answers
- Write a continuous text for a specific recipient



DURATION

- Approximately 60 minutes



GETTING STARTED

- Ask the students if they know about France's national holiday.
- Locate France on a map (Western Europe).
- Show an image of the French flag and ask what its three colors represent.
- Ask the question: Why does a country choose a specific date to celebrate?

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STEP 1 — A Little Bit of History. Watching of a video about the origins of July 14th and answers to four comprehension questions.

Q1 — The French Revolution

Q2 — The Bastille.

Q3 — The end of the absolute monarchy: the king no longer made all the decisions alone.

Q4 — A grand military parade.

STEP 2 — A Country Worth Discovering! Consultation of the the Vikidia entry on France and completion of the country's fact sheet.

Capital — Paris.

Area — 551,695 km²

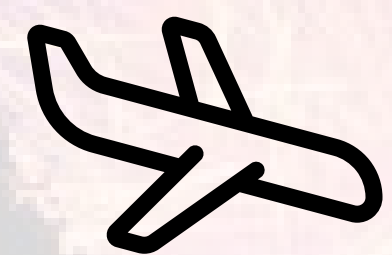
Population — Approximately 68,000,000.

Three bordering countries — Belgium, Switzerland, Italy (choose three from eight: Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Monaco, Spain, Andorra).

Currency — Euro.

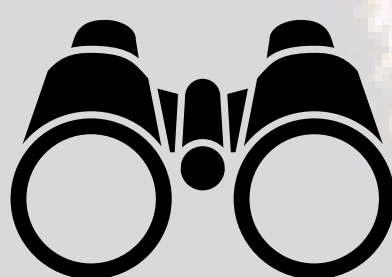
STEP 3 — A Postcard from France! Choice of one tourist site from four options (Millau Viaduct, Mont-Saint-Michel, Arc de Triomphe, Chenonceau Castle), research information, and writing of a postcard of approximately 100 words.

Q5 — Personal Answer.



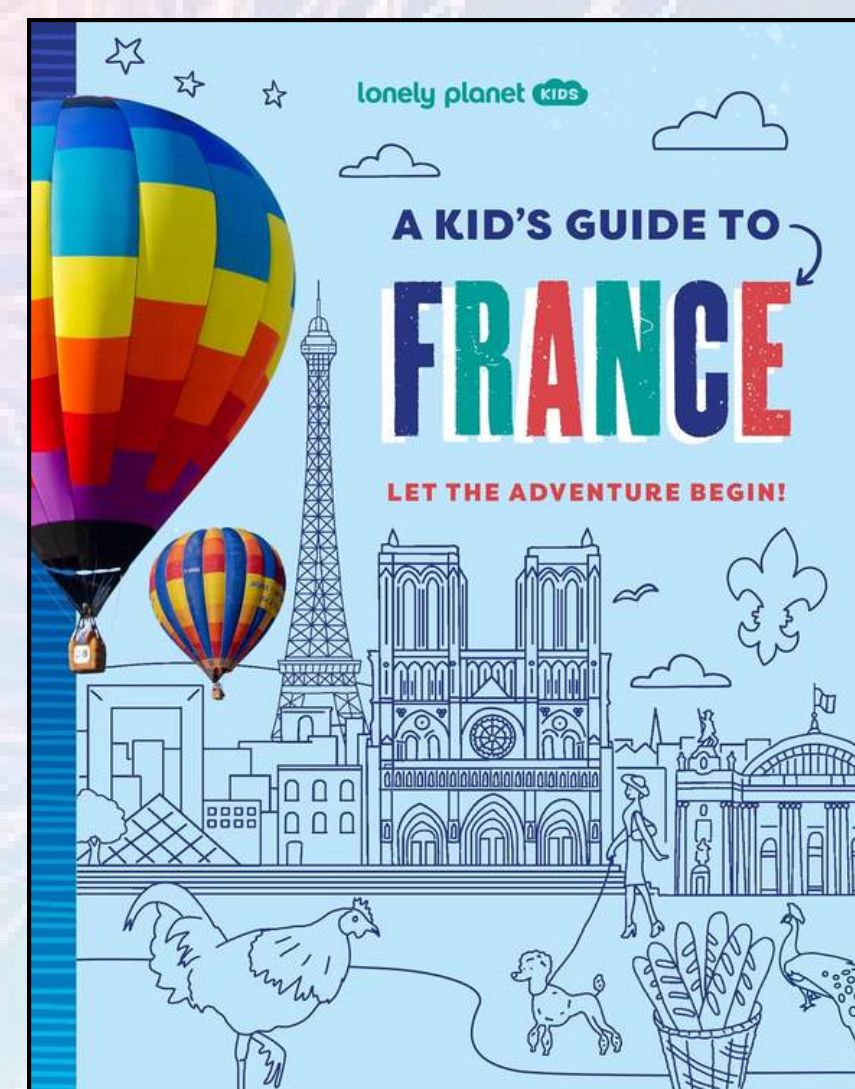
WRAPPING UP

- Conduct a group discussion about what the students have learned.
- Discuss what surprised them (the age of the tradition, the storming of the Bastille, the size of the country).
- Ask: Why do the French still celebrate an event that is over 200 years old today?



FURTHER EXPLORATION

 Paige Towler. *Lonely Planet A Kid's Guide to France.*
 Lonely Planet



The central rectangle: $866 \times 500 = 433,000 \text{ km}^2$
 Each triangle: $(866 \times 250) \div 2 = 108,250 \text{ km}^2$
 The complete hexagon: $433,000 + 108,250 + 108,250 = 649,500 \text{ km}^2$

Are the two areas similar?

No. The hexagon is $649,500 \text{ km}^2$, while metropolitan France is $552,000 \text{ km}^2$: the hexagon is $97,500 \text{ km}^2$ larger, or about 18% bigger. The hexagon is an approximate shape, a practical representation, not an exact measurement.

1. Grand Est → Strasbourg (B)
2. Île-de-France → Paris (A)
3. Brittany → Rennes (S)
4. Pays de la Loire → Nantes (T)
5. Hauts-de-France → Lille (I)
6. Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes → Lyon (L)
7. Centre-Val de Loire → Orléans (L)
8. Normandy → Rouen (E)

Mystery word: BASTILLE





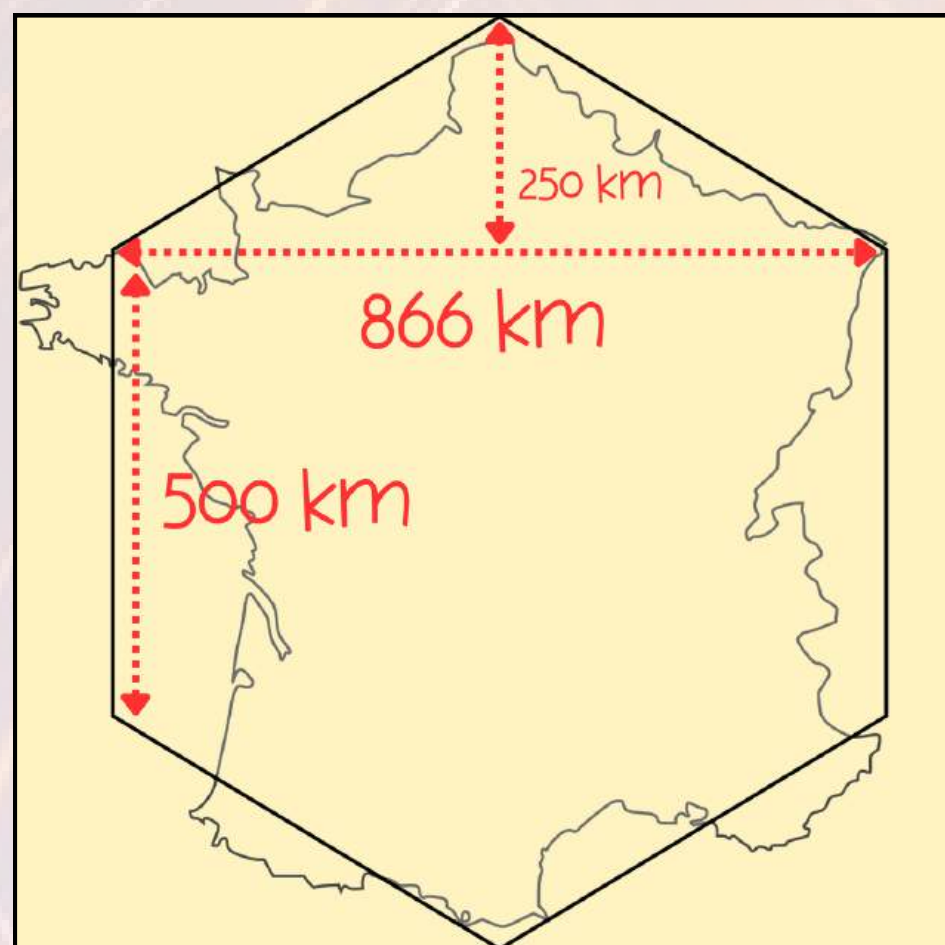
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When we talk about France, we sometimes use the term "hexagon." Why? Look at the picture! The shape of France resembles that of a hexagon!

Let's do a comparison exercise! The area of metropolitan France (the territory of France in Europe) is approximately 552,000 km².

Is the area of the hexagon roughly the same? Let's calculate it.



A hexagon is a rectangle plus two triangles!

You know the formula for calculating the area of a rectangle:

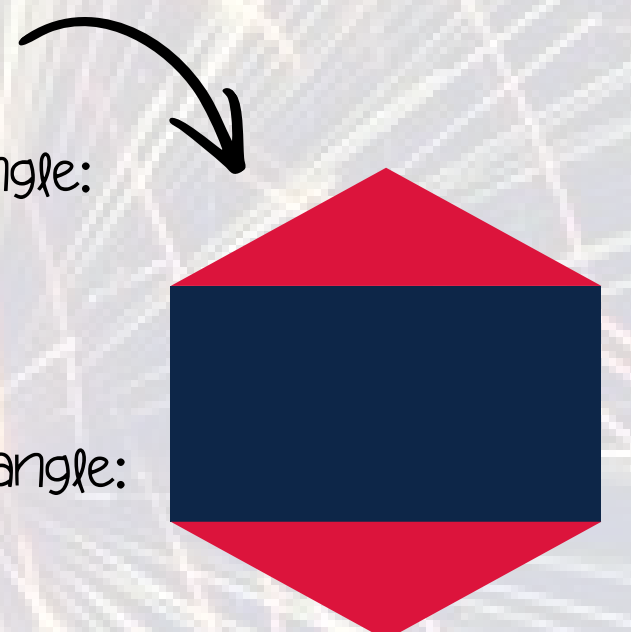
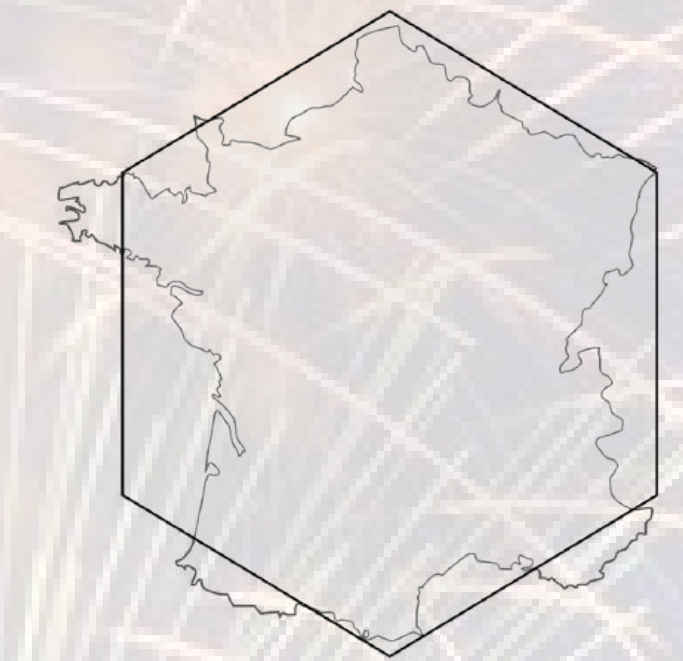
$$\text{Base} \times \text{Height}$$

You also know the formula for calculating the area of a triangle:

$$(\text{Base} \times \text{Height}) \div 2$$

You have everything you need to calculate the area of the hexagon!

Are the areas of France and the hexagon similar?



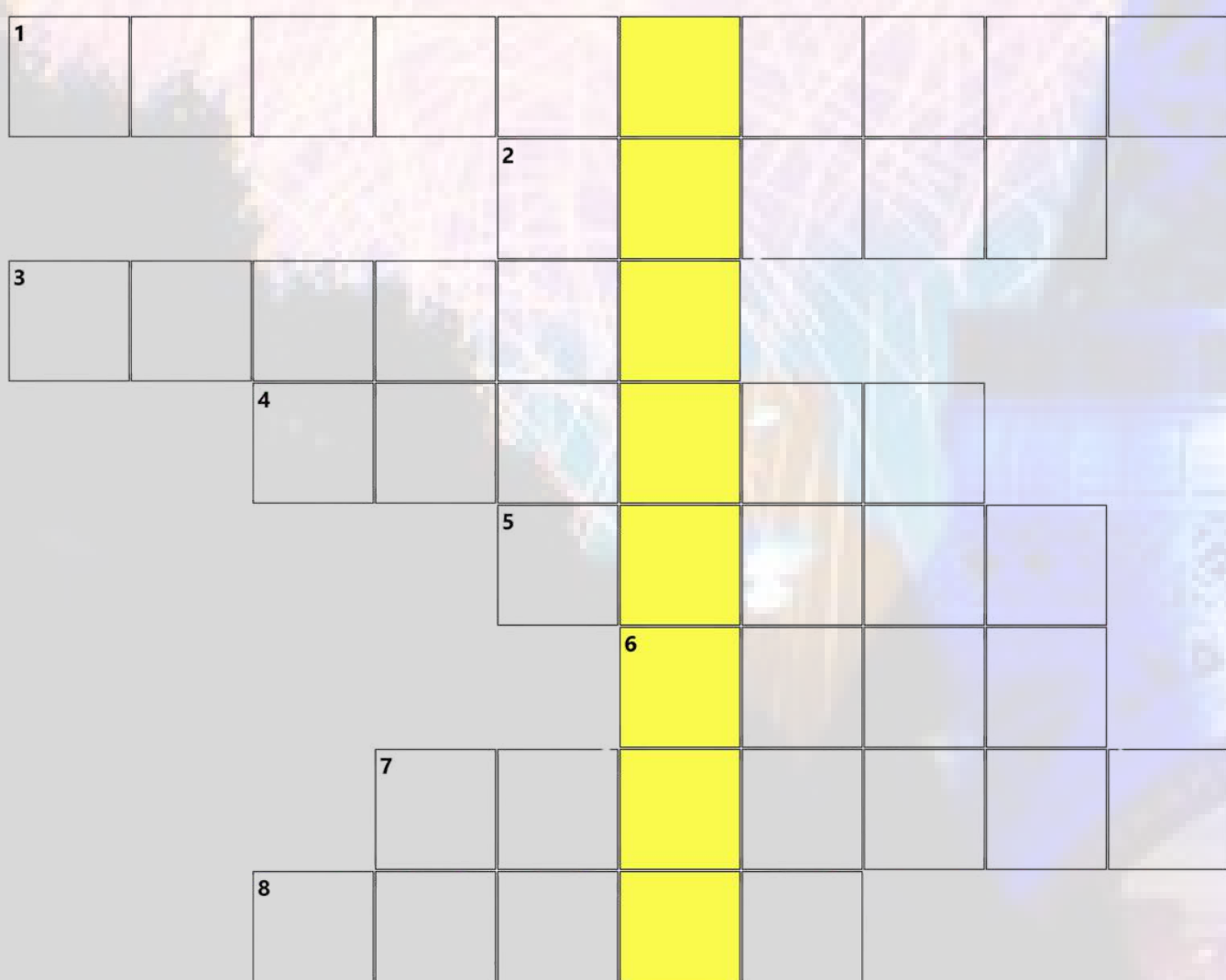
You know its flag, its Eiffel Tower, and its croissants. But do you know how France is organized?

The country is divided into thirteen major regions. Each has its own landscapes, accent, and specialties. And each has a main city, where its administrative offices are located. This is called its capital. 🏛️ Some of these names will sound familiar. Others will be a real discovery!

For each statement, find the capital of the region (you can use an atlas or the internet). Write it in the grid, one letter per square, on the row with the same number.

One letter from each capital falls into a yellow square. When your grid is full, read the yellow squares from top to bottom... they reveal the mystery word! 🟡

(A hint? The word to find is related to July 14, 1789!)



1. I am the capital of the Grand Est region.
2. I am the capital of the Île-de-France region.
3. I am the capital of the Brittany region.
4. I am the capital of the Pays de la Loire region.
5. I am the capital of the Hauts-de-France region.
6. I am the capital of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.
7. I am the capital of the Centre-Val de Loire region.
8. I am the capital of the Normandy region.