Napoleon
Essential Question:

- None, you’ve got a question sheet!
Dispelling the Myth

- Most people believe Napoleon to have been a short man
  - Spread by the English
  - 5’ 2” using the French inch
  - Gives rise to term “napoleon complex” to mean aggression in small people

- By the English measurement he was actually nearly 5’7”
  - Above average height for the time
Napoleon’s Early Life

Attended a French military school from ages 9 to 16.

He does well, and is fascinated with the use of artillery.

Upon graduation he is made second lieutenant.
Revolutionary Connection

- Napoleon sided with the Jacobins in the Revolution
- Friends with Robespierre’s brother.
- Imprisoned briefly after Robespierre’s death.
A Friend of the Revolution

Napoleon commanded the defense of the National Assembly from royalist forces in 1795.

Using cannons filled with grapeshot, Napoleon turned back the attackers and became a national hero.
The Italian Campaign

- 1796: Napoleon led a successful invasion of Northern Italy
- Increases French Territory and his own reputation
The Egyptian Campaign

- invaded Egypt in order to disrupt British trade in the area.
- His army won several victories on land, but the fighting was very brutal.
Battle of the Nile

- Napoleon was soundly beaten at sea by a British fleet commanded by Horatio Nelson.
- However, Napoleon was able to keep news of his defeat out of French newspapers through censorship and a network of spies.
Napoleon Comes to Power

- Napoleon returned to France, and was able to take over in a coup d'état
  - The Directory was corrupt and weak
- Created a 3-man Consulate but soon took the title of First Consul for life
Napoleon Comes to Power cont.

- To establish legitimacy Napoleon put his rule to a vote (plebiscite)
- the French people were overwhelmingly in favor
  - Democratic Despotism
- Established idea of popular sovereignty in Europe
  - Rule by the people
Reforms

Napoleon was a popular leader because he helped reform France

- Created new tax code
- Set up public schools
- Brought back the Church
  - Concordat of 1801
- Fired corrupt officials
- Created a national bank
The Napoleonic code

- Napoleon felt that his greatest reform was that he finally brought order to France by the rule of law.
- The Napoleonic code stresses Order, Security, and Efficiency over liberty, equality, and fraternity.
- Established the principle of equality under the law
  - Equality before the law, religious toleration, abolition of feudalism
  - Elements still exist in modern law codes
However, women lost most of the rights gained during the revolution.
Napoleon declared himself emperor in 1804.
Conquering Europe

Napoleon wanted to create a European Empire.

By 1812 the only free European countries left were Britain, Portugal, and Sweden.
The Battle of Trafalgar

- October 1805: A combined French and Spanish fleet set out to crush the British Navy.
- Though outnumbered, British Admiral Horatio Nelson was able to capture or destroy 21 ships while losing none himself.
- Napoleon was forced to give up invasion plans for Britain.
- Established Britain as the world's dominant navy for the next 100+ years.
Beginning of the End

Napoleon’s endless quest to crush the British and to expand the French Empire led him to make several costly mistakes.
The Continental System

In order to destroy the British economy and make his Empire more self-sufficient, Napoleon set up a blockade of Europe....it failed

Britain set up their own blockade...it worked
During the blockade, Britain seized US ships, sparking the War of 1812.
The Peninsular War

Napoleon sent troops through Spain to force Portugal to comply with the Blockade.

Spain protested and Napoleon replaced their king with his Brother.

For years Spanish Guerillas picked at the French Army.
The Invasion of Russia

Czar Alexander of Russia refused to stop selling grain to the British.

Napoleon sent 420,000 troops into Russia to make an example of him.
Napoleon’s Advance

Napoleon set out for Russia in June of 1812.

The Russians refused to fight a decisive battle.

Instead they kept retreating.
Scorched Earth

As the Russians retreated they destroyed everything of use to Napoleon.
Capture of Moscow

When Napoleon finally reached Moscow the city was in flames. The Czar had burned the capital city.

He stayed until October
Retreat From Moscow

Napoleon’s army was picked off by Russian raiders, extreme cold, hunger, and exhaustion.

Of his original 600,000 troops, only 10,000 made it out.
Europe Smells Blood

With Napoleon weak, all the major European powers joined together and invaded France.

Paris was taken by the Spring of 1814 and Napoleon’s generals gave up.
Abdication and Surrender

Napoleon surrendered and was banished to the isle of Elba.

Louis XVIII was made King.
The new King was the brother of Louis XVI. He was immediately unpopular with poor people.
The 100 Days

Napoleon escaped from Elba and was welcomed back warmly by crowds of French people.

He ruled for 100 days before he fought the British at Waterloo.
Napoleon’s new army was no match for the British and Prussian forces. Napoleon was exiled again to the remote island of St. Helena.
Congress of Vienna

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