

Marie antoinette assignment

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Queen Marie Antoinette lived in France just over 200 years ago. At the start of her life, she was surrounded by love by the people and luxury. But after many years of heartache and disappear, Marie dies a prisoner. Hatred by millions of ordinary people and deserted by most of her rich friends. We see Marie life change dramatically by a few different decisions made. There were many issues that surrounded the tragic death of Marie, but people fail to recognize what good she brought to France and how she was greatly judged by all the people of France.

There are different attitudes that the public had. This was influenced by many issues including her background being Austrian and the different interpretations that were laid of her, and most importantly, the effect that she had on the French Revolution. As Marie's life was short by dieing at the age of 37 she made a great impact on France and even the world. Marie Antoinette was born in Austria, a daughter of Francis I, Holy Roman Emperor, and Austrian Empress Maria Theresa. She was born on the same day as the famous earthquake of Lisbon.

As with most royal daughters, Marie Antoinette was promised in marriage in order build a diplomatic alliance between her birth family and the family of her husband. Marie Antoinette married the French dauphin, Louis, grandson of Louis XV of France, in 1770. He ascended the throne in 1774 as Louis XVI. Marie Antoinette was welcomed in France at first. Her frivolity contrasted with the withdrawn personality of her husband. After her mother died in 1780, she became more extravagant and this led to growing resentment.

The French were suspicious of her ties to Austria and her influence on the King in attempting to foster policies friendly to Austria. Marie Antoinette, formerly welcomed, now was vilified for her spending habits and opposition to reforms. The 1785-86 Affair of the Diamond Necklace, a scandal in which she was accused of having an affair with a cardinal in order to obtain a costly diamond necklace, further discredited her and reflected on the monarchy. After an initial slow start at the expected role of childbearer, her husband apparently had to be coached in his role in this; Marie Antoinette gave birth to her first child, a daughter, in 1778, and sons in 1781 and 1785. By most accounts she was a devoted mother. The attitude towards Marie Antoinette was very negative for basically for her whole life. It started off with troubles with her family life. Marie Antoinette found her husband and life at court boring. She spent most of her time with her friends and neglected her duties. The French began to say that she was a silly foreigner who spent too much time.

Her popularity increased after her first child was born in 1778. Regardless of these changes, the public continued to blame her for her previous spendthrift lifestyle and accused her of causing the current financial crisis in France. She was called “ Madame Deficit,” and became the subject of pornographic, pro-revolutionary propaganda. While the phrase, “ Let them eat cake” was never spoken by Marie Antoinette, the rumor illustrates the public sentiment for the queen on whom they blamed every unfortunate circumstance.

Likewise, the Diamond Necklace Affair contributed further to the queen’s demise although she had no involvement in the situation whatsoever. In an <https://assignbuster.com/marie-antoinette-assignment/>

effort to increase his status within the French court, Cardinal de Rohan fell victim to “ Comtesse” de La Motte who hired a prostitute to pose as the queen and meet the cardinal in the Versailles garden at night and then told the cardinal that the queen wished for him to purchase an extravagant diamond necklace in her behalf. The necklace was purchased in the queen’s name, given to La Motte by the cardinal, who in turn gave it to her husband who sold it in London.

The scandal became public when the jeweler demanded payment for the necklace from the queen. Though both the cardinal and La Motte were tried for their crimes, the situation spurred on more rumors. When a mob descended on Versailles in 1789, demanding blood, Marie Antoinette faced the crowd alone, going out on a balcony with a bow and curtsy. The family was then moved to the Tuilere Palace in Paris where they were kept on house arrest. The family’s attempt to flee in 1791 was thwarted by the means of transportation chosen by the queen herself.

Refusing to leave her children behind to follow her and the king, Marie Antoinette insisted that the family flee together in a larger, slower coach than originally proposed, which enabled their capture. On August 10, 1792, the royal family was arrested on suspicion of treason and on January 21, 1793, King Louis XVI was executed. After her husband’s death, in July 1793, Marie Antoinette’s son was taken from her. The poor woman begged that her son be allowed to stay but she was powerless to change the will of the ministers.

The boy was put under the care of Simon, a cobbler and one of the Commissaires of the Commune, and died of neglect within two years. In September 1793, Marie Antoinette was separated from her daughter and sister in law. Now called “Widow Capet”, Marie was transferred to months of solitary confinement in the dank Conciergerie prison, where she was under twenty-four hour guard by revolutionaries who from behind their screen watched her every move. The Conciergerie prison was the antechamber to death.

In this dank prison, she lost much weight and her eyesight began to fail, but she did not have long to live. On October 14, she was woken by the Revolutionary Tribunal. The trial was a horror, with the Queen attacked more as a person than as a queen. Her own son was forced to testify that she abused him. The queen bravely replied to all charges and to this she said, “If I make no reply, it is because I cannot, I appeal to all mothers in this audience.” Despite her eloquence, the verdict was never in doubt. Like the king, Marie was found guilty.

When she came to her death on October 16, 1793, many gasped ... for Marie Antoinette was just 38, but the crowd saw (as artist David sketched) an old hag in peasant garb, ragged and grey ??? a stark contrast to elegant and voluptuous Queen of Trianon, the child of fortune, she had been just 4 years earlier. Marie Antoinette’s hair had been roughly shorn, her with hands tied tight behind her back, as she rode in the garbage cart amid the crowd’s whistles and jeers. Yet, the poor woman sat straight and tried to retain her dignity. To the end, Marie Antoinette displayed a queen’s bearing and courage, in the face of all adversity.

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After her final ordeal, the body of Marie Antoinette was harshly pushed on to the guillotine plank, her head placed in the vice and at noon the blade fell to loud cheers all round. “ Never has Piere Duchesne seen such joy as seeing that whore’s head separated from her crain’s neck”. Sanson held her bleeding head high for all to see. Later her head was throne in the cart between her legs. The body of Marie Antoinette was left on the grass before being dumped in an unmarked grave. So ended the life of once the most illustrious and glamorous woman in all Europe.