



History & Geography

For this session's History & Geography, we have included a biography of France's national saint, Joan of Arc, for you and your family to study!

We also recommend reading *Home Geography* by C.C. Long, Lessons 33 - 42. Additionally, you can learn about Marie Antoinette, Napoleon Bonaparte, the Louvre, and more on the website (they are not included in the PDF).

For bonus reading, we have included a link to *A History of France* by H.E. Marshall on the website if your family would like to take a deeper dive into France's rich history.

*"Hope in God. If you have good hope and faith in Him,
you shall be delivered from your enemies."*

~Joan of Arc

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Saint Joan of Arc

Joan of Arc, also known as Jeanne d'Arc, was a remarkable young woman who lived during the 15th century in France. Born around 1412 in a small village, Domrémy, she came from a simple farming family. What makes Joan extraordinary is her role in the Hundred Years' War, a conflict between England and France.

During Joan's life, France was facing difficult times, with the English trying to gain control over French territories. The English believed that their king had a right to France's throne. At the age of 13, she began experiencing visions and hearing voices that she believed were messages from saints. These spiritual encounters inspired her to take a bold step to help her country.

Joan felt a calling to support Charles VII, the dauphin (heir to the French throne). She believed she had a mission from God to help Charles become the rightful king of France. When she was 17, Joan convinced local authorities to allow her to meet with Charles, and she gained his trust by revealing information only known to him and his closest advisors.

With the support of Charles, Joan joined the military efforts to lift the siege of Orléans, a key city under English control. This effort triumphed nine days after she arrived, and she went on to lead troops in several more victorious battles, serving as a symbol of hope for French soldiers. Despite being wounded twice during these conflicts, she persisted. She played a crucial role in the success of the French forces, boosting the morale of the troops and encouraging them to fight on during key battles, which ultimately led to Charles VII becoming the king of France. Joan's bravery and leadership in battles earned her the nickname "The Maid of Orléans," and she was greatly respected and admired by those she served alongside.

Despite her successes, Joan faced challenges. She was eventually captured by the Burgundians, allies of the English, and later handed over to the English for a trial. The trial was an unfair one, and Joan was accused of various charges, including heresy. Unfortunately, she was found guilty and sentenced to death. Throughout her trial and in the moments leading up to her death, Joan acted with remarkable courage, refusing to accuse her king of any wrongdoing or shrink from her faith in God.

On May 30, 1431, at the age of 19, Joan of Arc was burned at the stake. Decades later, a retrial declared her innocent, recognizing her as a martyr who acted in service to her country. Joan was later canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church in 1920, and many people today are still inspired by her legacy of bravery and hope.

Joan of Arc's life is a story of courage, faith, and determination. Despite her humble background and the hardships she faced, she played a pivotal role in shaping the course of history during a challenging period for France. Because of this, Joan was greatly beloved by the people, considered a national heroine, and later declared a patron saint of France. The victories she helped win would pave the way for France's ultimate victory in the Hundred Years' War. Her memory endures, and she continues to be celebrated worldwide as a symbol of inspiration and resilience.