

'Yellow Vests' protests to continue in France

13th December, 2018



France is experiencing social unrest it has not experienced for generations. The country famous for its revolutions and protests has been rocked by a series of nationwide, violent demonstrations. Hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets for the past four

weekends and have brought chaos to businesses, transport and the French economy. The protests are being led by the Yellow Vests Movement, so called because protestors don high-visibility yellow jackets usually worn by the emergency services. The protests are motivated by rising fuel prices, the high cost of living, and claims that an unequal burden of new tax reforms were falling on the working and middle classes.

France's President Emmanuel Macron has declared "a state of social and economic emergency". The violence has caused over a billion dollars in damages so far. This figure is set to rise as more demos are planned. Paris has suffered the brunt of the protests and authorities are closing famous sites like the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre. To quell public anger, Mr Macron has promised to cancel his proposed rise in fuel prices, deliver tax relief for the poor and cancel a tax on retired people. He called for the havoc and mayhem to end and for calm and order to return. He said: "No anger justifies attacking a police officer...or damaging a shop or public building. When violence is unleashed, freedom ends."

Sources: npr.org / thelocal.fr / liberationnews.org

Writing

People should protest in the streets more for a fairer society. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

social unrest / generation / famous / revolution / transport / chaos / fuel prices / cost economic / emergency / damages / suffer / promise / tax relief / anger / freedom

True / False

- a) The article says France has not experienced such unrest for generations. T / F
- b) The article says over a million people have taken part in the protests. T / F
- c) Many protestors are donning high-visibility yellow jackets. T / F
- d) Protestors are unhappy with having to pay more tax. T / F
- e) The protests have cost the French economy around \$100 million. T / F
- f) The port city of Marseille has seen the worst protests and damage. T / F
- g) France's President called for mayhem to start. T / F
- h) France's President said when violence is unleashed, freedom begins. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. unrest | a. succession |
| 2. rocked | b. let loose |
| 3. series | c. liability |
| 4. don | d. proclaimed |
| 5. burden | e. disruption |
| 6. declared | f. calm |
| 7. brunt | g. planned |
| 8. quell | h. shaken |
| 9. proposed | i. full force |
| 10. unleashed | j. put on |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about the Yellow Vests protestors?
- b) What do you think of revolutions?
- c) What do you think of protesting in the streets?
- d) What would make you take to the streets to protest?
- e) How can France avoid the chaos brought by the protests?
- f) How concerned are you about rising fuel prices?
- g) How should the tax burden be shared in a country?
- h) What would happen if people in your country protested like this?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. France is experiencing | a. mayhem to end |
| 2. a series of nationwide, violent | b. by rising fuel prices |
| 3. brought chaos | c. of the protests |
| 4. protests are motivated | d. freedom ends |
| 5. reforms were falling on the working | e. demonstrations |
| 6. declared a state of social and | f. to rise |
| 7. This figure is set | g. to businesses |
| 8. Paris has suffered the brunt | h. and middle classes |
| 9. He called for the havoc and | i. economic emergency |
| 10. When violence is unleashed, | j. social unrest |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What should the rules of protesting be?
- What happens in "a state of social and economic emergency"?
- What will happen to the protests?
- What do you think of visiting Paris during the protests?
- Does freedom end when violence is unleashed?
- How might the protests change France?
- What questions would you like to ask Emmanuel Macron?

Spelling

- unrest it has not experienced for nesnroeigat
- famous for its ioluvotrens
- brought ocash to businesses
- protestors don high-vsiiiblytji yellow jackets
- tmedoavit by rising fuel prices
- an unequal nbdeur
- suffered the brtnu of the protests
- uelql public anger
- deliver tax elefri
- the avohc and mayhem
- No anger eisstfuji attacking a police officer
- When violence is uenelahds

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. a	4. j	5. c
6. d	7. i	8. f	9. g	10. b

Role Play

Role A – War

You think war is the most important thing to protest against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): rising prices, austerity or corruption.

Role B – Rising Prices

You think rising prices is the most important thing to protest against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): war, austerity or corruption.

Role C – Austerity

You think austerity is the most important thing to protest against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): rising prices, war or corruption.

Role D – Corruption

You think corruption is the most important thing to protest against. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): rising prices, austerity or war.

Speaking – Protest

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things to protest against at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| • taxes | • austerity |
| • corruption | • war |
| • equality | • immigration |
| • student loans | • rising prices |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.