'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

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 protests 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?

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
Phrase Match
1. France is experiencing a series of nationwide, violent protests which are motivated by rising fuel prices.
2. The reforms were falling on the working classes, causing public anger.
3. They declared a state of social emergency, which was set to rise.
4. He called for the havoc and mayhem to end.
5. This figure is set to rise to businesses and middle classes.
6. Paris has suffered the brunt of the protests.
7. Demonstrations have brought chaos to businesses and the middle classes.
8. When violence is unleashed, freedom ends.
9. Emmanuel Macron has declared a state of social and economic emergency.
10. When violence is unleashed, economic emergency is set to rise.

Discussion – Student B
a) What do you think about what you read?
b) What should the rules of protesting be?
c) What happens in "a state of social and economic emergency"?
d) What will happen to the protests?
e) What do you think of visiting Paris during the protests?
f) Does freedom end when violence is unleashed?
g) How might the protests change France?
h) What questions would you like to ask Emmanuel Macron?

Spelling
1. unrest it has not experienced for nesnroegat
2. famous for its ioluvotrens
3. brought ocash to businesses
4. protestors don high-ysiibytiit yellow jackets
5. tmedoavvit by rising fuel prices
6. an unequal nbdeur
7. suffered the btntu of the protests
8. vejgl public anger
9. deliver tax elefri
10. the avohc and mayhem
11. No anger eisstfuji attacking a police officer
12. When violence is uenelahds

Role Play
Role A – War
You think war is the most important thing to protest against. Tell the others three reasons why. 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. 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. 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. 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
- corruption
- equality
- student loans
- austerity
- war
- immigration
- rising prices

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

Answers – True False
a T b F c T d T e F f F g F h F

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.