Why there was a crisis?

The lords had the power to issue orders and impart justice. Society was divided into three estates: the clergy, the nobility and ordinary people, which included peasants, the urban working classes and the bourgeoisie.

Absolute monarchy is a form of government in which the king had absolute power over his people, he was not subjected to any control and did not share his authority with anyone.

In the late 18th century, most members of the nonprivileged society wanted to end the Ancien Régime and finish with the dominance of the privileged classes and a monarchy that had no interest in them. The economic growth and the aspirations of the bourgeoisie were the main forces of change.

Growth of the economy and the bourgeoisie.

The population increase in the 18th century was caused by a greater agricultural production, a general economic growth and fewer important epidemics. The result of this was a lower death rate and an increase in the birth rate.

The countries where populations grew the most during the 18th century were Russia, Great Britain, France and present-day Germany.

In the 18th century two new systems of production were introduced:
- the domestic system, in which materials and tools were made in the peasants’ workshops.
- factories, where specific products were produced.

These two new systems were introduced in order to produce more craft products and escape the guild’s control over the manufacture and sale of items.

The Ancien Régime’s source of wealth was based on land ownership, but the development of new forms of production and the expansion of trade caused manorial rents to lose economic importance.

The slave trade was the business of transporting and selling slaves, who were taken from Africa to the Americas to be sold and forced to work in appalling conditions on agricultural plantations, which were mostly located in the Caribbean islands, Brazil and the British colonies in North America.
The independence of the United states.

**a-The parliamentary monarchy in England.**

The aspirations of the Stuart dynasty to rule without Parliament led to a conflict that ended with the execution of King Charles I and the proclamation of a republic under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell. In 1660 the monarchy was restored and Charles II accepted the control of Parliament, which approved *Habeas Corpus*.

James II ruled with an absolutist policy; and this caused a second revolutionary outbreak in 1689. Parliament offered the crown to William of Orange, who accepted the Bill of Rights.

**b-The independence of the United States**

The 13 British colonies on the east coast of North America stated in the Declaration of Independence the duty of government to respect the inalienable rights of its people.

After the recognition of independence, they drafted a constitution and named George Washington the first president of the United States.

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**Enlightenment versus the Ancien Régime.**

The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement developed in the 18th century which questioned the authority of the Ancient Régime.

The rising new bourgeoisie adopted these ideas and made them into a revolutionary programme to bring an end to absolutism.

Reason was the only way to understand and explain the world for the Enlightenment thinkers.

They rejected the superiority of any religion, in favor of the freedom of thought and tolerance.

Their optimistic view of nature and of humans in addition to their confidence in the idea of progress characterized the Enlightenment thought.

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**Create a timeline:**

- Treaty of Utrecht, Us independence, war of Spanish Succession, Bill of Rights.
- US constitution, the encyclopedia, free trade with the USA, execution of Charles I of England.

**Enlightened despotism**

Some European sovereigns undertook reforms that linked their absolutist conception with the Enlightenment ideas about progress.

Fredrick the Great of Prussia, Maria Theresa of Austria, Catherine the Great of Russia, Gustav III of Sweden and Charles III of Spain were all enlightened despots.

The Enlightenment thinkers helped by creating a new model of political and social organisation which was the basis of political liberalism and the 19th century liberal revolutions.

They opposed stratified society, mercantilism and defended the separation of powers, popular sovereignty and the need of a parliament were some of their many proposals.