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Marie Antoinette, now the Queen of France, was a foreigner married to the French King. Although they initially welcomed her into their country, many French people began to resent the Queen. Among other things, they mocked her type of hairstyle (which was also fashionable for other royal women). This contemporary French political cartoon makes the point.

Soon after Louis XV's death, Marie Antoinette began to change long-established customs at [Versailles](#):

- She did not like doing everything in public.
- She did not want a huge entourage to accompany her everywhere she went.

But implementing the kind of lifestyle she knew as a child—at the Austrian court—was problematic. Her actions caused resentment. As Madame Campan [notes](#) (scroll down 60%):

All the changes made by Marie Antoinette were of the same description; a disposition gradually to substitute the simple customs of Vienna for those of Versailles was more injurious to her than she could possibly have imagined.

During the early years of their reign, Antoinette enjoyed parties, gambling, clothes and spending time at [Petite Trianon](#), the smaller Versailles palace. (Follow the link to see [its salon](#).) Although rumors were already circulating about her outrageous spending, Madame Campan observed otherwise:

Henceforward she amused herself with improving the gardens, without allowing any addition to the building, or any change in the furniture, which was very shabby, and remained, in 1789, in the same state as during the reign of Louis XV. Everything there, without exception, was preserved; and the Queen slept in a faded bed ...The charge of extravagance, generally made against the Queen, is the most unaccountable of all the popular errors respecting her character.

She had exactly the contrary failing; and I could prove that she often carried her economy to a degree of parsimony actually blamable, especially in a sovereign. She took a great liking for Trianon, and used to go there alone, followed by a valet ...

Talk on the street grew increasingly negative against Antoinette. Envious courtiers, who were not part of her inner circle, began to call Trianon "Little Vienna." Members of the nobility resented the foreign-born queen since, among other reasons, so many Frenchmen had died in wars with Austria.

Chief among her problems was the failure to produce an heir. (Unknown to members of the public, the king and queen were having physical difficulties conceiving a child.) As rumors turned into "facts," an Antoinette-bashing industry developed. Cartoons, pamphlets and other salacious materials helped to spread growing resentment

of “the Austrian.”

After seven years of marriage, the queen became pregnant with her first child. She had a daughter, named Marie-Theresa-Charlotte, referred to as Madame Royale.

Courtiers, and other spectators, were present at the birth since the kings and queens of France had no privacy:

It was impossible to move about the chamber, which was filled with so motley a crowd that one might have fancied himself in some place of public amusement. (Madame Campan, *Memoirs of Marie Antoinette*, Book 3, Chapter 9 - scroll down 80%.)

Three years later the queen had a son, named Louis-Joseph, and Louis XVI had an heir. Madame Campan:

The birth of the Dauphin appeared to give joy to all classes. Men stopped one another in the streets, spoke without being acquainted, and those who were acquainted embraced each other. In the birth of a legitimate heir to the sovereign every man beholds a pledge of prosperity and tranquillity. (Campan, Book 3, Chapter 10 - scroll down 25%.)

The new dauphin was the second of four children. Only one would reach adulthood.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-GROWING-RESENTMENT-Marie-Antoinette>

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Media Stream



Petite Trianon

Image online, courtesy [GreatBuildings](#) website.

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Petite Trianon - Salon

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Petite Trianon - Gardens

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Marie-Theresa-Charlotte

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Louis-Joseph - Dauphin of France

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Louis XVI

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