World History – Weiss  
Political Revolutions

**Warm-Up** (10 min):  
Directions: Work in small groups (2-4ppl) to respond to prompt below. Each group should write the definitions and other ideas you generated a group sheet of paper.

How would you distinguish a revolution from a civil war, an uprising, a coup d’etat, a rebellion or revolt, or a protest or demonstration? What elements do revolutions and other kinds of conflicts have in common? What elements set them apart? Can the word revolution be used to mean different things?

**Background** (15 min):

The slide show [“Unpredictable Uprisings”](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2011/02/06/weekinreview/06revolution-slideshow.html) provides photos and brief overviews of historical revolutions and related events, including the American Revolution. Even the American Revolution took years to arrive at the present Constitution. Here is a historical sampler of the twists and turns of revolutions. Many start out broad-based, but often not for long.

Read and view the entire slide show with a single partner or solo and answer the questions below.

**Slideshow:**

<http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2011/02/06/weekinreview/06revolution-slideshow-1.html>

1. What are the commonalities and differences between and among these uprisings?
2. Without the captions, what story do these photographs tell? If you had not read the captions, what would you think that this slide show was about? Why?
3. What questions do you come away from this slide show with? Which of these events would you like to know more about?

**Activity**   
Directions: In groups of 2-4 people, choose one of revolutions depicted in the slide show with exception of the French Revolution, and collect information based on the bulleted categories below and use the *italic* questions to guide your research. These can be bullet points and single sentences as you will be using the information to produce a visual infographic.

* Who Revolted?  
  *What did most of the people who came together to revolt have in common? Class or caste? Race or ethnicity? Religion?* *Political affiliation? Type of job? Or was it the people as a whole?*
* Why did they revolt?   
  *Why were people unhappy with their government? Why did they believe that revolution was the only way to make the change that they wanted?*
* How did they organize?   
  *Was the revolution planned for a long time? Was it spontaneous? How did people find out about the revolution? Were there leaders who did the organizing?*
* How did the people overthrow the government?   
  *Did they take over government buildings? Did they assassinate leaders? Did they engage in peaceful demonstrations? Did they have the support of the military? Did they engage in acts of warfare?*
* How did the government respond?  
  *Did leaders peacefully give in to the people’s demands? If so, how long did it take for them to give in? Did they fight back using military force?*
* How was the government the same or different following the revolution?  
  *What type of government emerged after the revolution? Why?*