# TEXT › THE THIRD ESTATE

EASY

HARD

CLASS:

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*We ask ourselves three questions: What is the Third Estate? Everything. What has it been up to now? Nothing. What do we ask for? To be something (...). First petition: That the representatives of the Third Estate be elected only by citizens who truly belong to the Third Estate. Second request: That its deputies be equal in number to those of the two privileged Estates. Third request: That the Estates General vote not by Estates, but by heads. (...) What remains for the Third State to do if it wants to see itself in possession of its political rights in a useful way for the nation? The Third Estate must meet separately. We will not meet with the nobility and clergy.*

Abate Sieyès, *What Is the Third Estate?* (1789)