3.1 Contextualizing State Building

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 24 marks**

KEY WORDS absolutism • constitutionalism • divine right • balance of power • bureaucracy • Fronde

Objective

Build the skills to set the **context** for Unit 3 (about 1648–1815): how rulers built stronger states after the wars of religion, either as **absolute monarchies** or as **constitutional** states, and how trade and war shaped them.

You must be able to:

- describe the two main models of state building after 1648
- explain why rulers wanted more central power
- write context for a question about state building

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

The broad picture

development	what was true
after 1648	the wars of religion ended; rulers wanted order, taxes and armies
absolutism	the monarch holds all power, claimed by **divine right** (Louis XIV of France, Peter the Great of Russia)
constitutionalism	the ruler's power is limited by law and a parliament (England after 1688, the Dutch Republic)
trade and empire	mercantilist policies; Atlantic trade; rivalries over colonies
war	larger, permanent armies; wars to keep a **balance of power** (no single state dominates)

Why rulers wanted central power

The wars of religion and revolts (the Fronde in France, 1648–1653; the English Civil War, 1642–1651) taught rulers that weak government meant disorder. Bigger armies

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needed more taxes, so states built larger bureaucracies.

Worked example. Question: why did Louis XIV build Versailles? Context: "As a boy Louis lived through the Fronde, a revolt of nobles and Paris courts, so he wanted to keep nobles under his eye and away from Paris."

Answer shapes: a context sentence names a broad development, gives one example and links it to the topic.

2 Practice

2.1 Identify one difference between absolutism and constitutionalism. [2]



2.2 Explain why the wars of religion encouraged rulers to build stronger states. [3]



2.3 Explain how war led states to build larger bureaucracies. [3]



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3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Read the source.

> "Kings are justly called gods, for they exercise a manner or resemblance of divine power upon earth."

James I of England, speech to Parliament, 1610

(a) Identify the claim James I makes about kings. [1]

"Kings are justly called gods, for they exercise a manner or resemblance of divine power upon earth."

James I, 1610

(b) Explain how this idea supported absolute monarchy. [1]

(c) Explain why this speech caused conflict with Parliament. [1]

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3.2 The timeline shows key events from 1648 to 1740.

(a) Identify the year of the Glorious Revolution. [1]

(b) Explain why the Fronde mattered for Louis XIV. [2]

(c) Explain one result of the Peace of Utrecht (1713). [2]

(d) Explain one way Peter the Great built a stronger Russian state. [2]

(e) Explain one reason England developed a constitutional system. [3]



(f) Write a context paragraph for the question: "Why did many European rulers build absolute monarchies after 1648?" [3]

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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

under absolutism the monarch holds all power and answers only to God; under constitutionalism the ruler's power is limited by laws and a parliament

2.2

the wars caused great disorder, destruction and revolts by nobles; rulers and many subjects wanted peace and order; so rulers built bigger armies, collected more taxes and reduced the power of nobles and local groups

2.3

states kept large permanent armies, which cost much more than before; so they needed regular taxes, collected every year; and they hired more officials to collect taxes, supply armies and keep records

3.1

(a) kings are like gods, with a kind of divine power on earth

(b) if a king's power comes from God, subjects and parliaments have no right to limit or resist him

(c) Parliament believed it had rights, such as agreeing to taxes, that the king could not ignore

3.2

(a) 1688

(b) Louis lived through this revolt of nobles and courts as a child; so he was determined to control the nobles, for example by bringing them to Versailles

(c) Louis XIV's grandson kept the Spanish throne, but France and Spain could never be united; and Britain gained Gibraltar and trading rights, which kept a balance of power

(d) he built a large modern army and navy; and made nobles serve the state through the Table of Ranks (1722)

(e) Parliament had a long tradition of agreeing to taxes; conflicts with Stuart kings led to civil war and then the Glorious Revolution; so the Bill of Rights (1689) set limits on the monarch's power

(f) a first development, for example: the wars of religion and revolts like the Fronde left rulers fearing disorder; a second, for example: large armies needed regular taxes and officials; linked: so rulers such as Louis XIV and Peter the Great claimed divine right and built central states

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