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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