3.5 The Dutch Golden Age

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

KEY WORDS Dutch Republic • fluyt • Bank of Amsterdam • tolerance • regent • decline

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on the **Dutch Golden Age** (about 1600–1700): how a small republic became Europe's leading trading power, its banks and companies, its tolerance, and why it declined.

You must be able to:

- explain the causes of Dutch commercial success
- explain how the Dutch government and society differed from absolute monarchies
- explain why Dutch power declined after about 1670

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ Causes of success

cause	detail
shipping	the *fluyt* , a cheap cargo ship with a small crew; the largest merchant fleet in Europe
finance	the **Bank of Amsterdam** (1609); the Amsterdam stock exchange; low interest rates
companies	the Dutch East India Company (VOC, 1602) and West India Company (1621)
location	the mouth of the Rhine; the Baltic grain trade (the "mother trade")
tolerance	refugees (Protestants from the south, Jews from Iberia, Huguenots) brought skills and capital

■ Government

The **Dutch Republic** : seven provinces, each with its own estates; a States General for shared matters; a *stadtholder* (often from the House of Orange) led the army. Rich merchant families (regents) ran the towns. Power was spread out, not held by one ruler.

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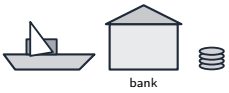
■ **Decline (after about 1670)**

Wars with England (the Navigation Acts) and France (Louis XIV invaded in 1672); a small population; English and French competition in trade and empire. The Dutch stayed rich but were no longer the leading power by about 1715.

Answer shapes: link one cause (shipping, finance, tolerance) to a specific institution or group.

2 Practice

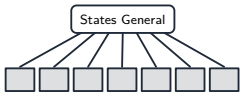
2.1 Identify two reasons for Dutch commercial success in the 1600s. [2]



2.2 Explain how religious tolerance helped the Dutch economy. [3]



2.3 Explain how the Dutch Republic's government differed from an absolute monarchy. [3]



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3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Read the source.

> "In this great town, where I am the only person not engaged in trade, everyone is so busy with his own profit that I could live here all my life without ever being noticed by anyone."

René Descartes, letter from Amsterdam, 1631 (adapted)

(a) Identify what Descartes says about the people of Amsterdam. [1]

"In this great town, where I am the only person not engaged in trade, everyone is so busy with his own profit ..."

Descartes, 1631 (adapted)

(b) Explain why a philosopher such as Descartes chose to live in the Dutch Republic. [1]

(c) Explain one reason the source might give an incomplete picture of Amsterdam. [1]

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3.2 The table shows the estimated size of European merchant fleets about 1670.

country	merchant ships (tonnes)
Dutch Republic	about 570,000
England	about 260,000
France	about 100,000

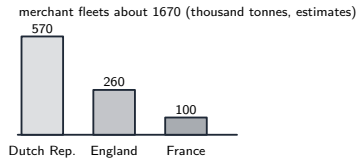
(a) Identify roughly how many times larger the Dutch fleet was than the English fleet. [1]

(b) Explain one reason Dutch ships were cheaper to run than others. [2]

(c) Explain how the Bank of Amsterdam helped trade. [2]

(d) Explain why Louis XIV's invasion of 1672 was a turning point. [2]

(e) Explain why the Dutch Republic declined as a great power after about 1670. [3]



(f) Explain how far the Dutch Republic was a model of a new kind of state. [3]

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