

4.7 Causation in the Age of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 13 marks

Objective

Build the skills to write **causation** for the age of reason.

You must be able to:

- distinguish intellectual from social and political causes
- explain how a method spread from one field to another
- rank causes against a stated criterion
- avoid treating ideas as causes with no mechanism

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Kinds of cause

Intellectual: the content of the arguments. **Social:** literacy, print, the public sphere.

Political: rulers with reasons to sponsor or suppress. A strong answer uses all three.

■ How a method spreads

A method spreads when it visibly succeeds where an older one failed, and when institutions exist to carry it. Say both: the success and the channel.

■ Ideas need mechanisms

"The Enlightenment caused reform" is not an explanation until you name how: who read what, in what institution, with what power to act. The mechanism is the argument.

2 Practice

2.1 Name three kinds of cause relevant to this period.

[3]

2.2 State the two things needed for a method to spread. [2]

2.3 A student writes: "Enlightenment ideas caused reform."

(a) State what is missing. [1]

(b) Write a version with a mechanism. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A method spreads when it [1]

- **A** is decreed
- **B** visibly succeeds where an older one failed and has institutions to carry it
- **C** is kept secret
- **D** is untested

3.2 "Ideas caused X" becomes an explanation once you name [1]

- **A** the date
- **B** the mechanism
- **C** the author
- **D** the country

3.3 Rank intellectual and political causes of eighteenth-century reform.

(a) State your criterion. [1]

(b) Give your ranking and one concession. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **4.7 Causation in the Age of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Scientific, Philosophical, and Political Developments** section of the AP European History handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 intellectual; social; political.

2.2 visible success where an older method failed; institutions able to carry it.

2.3 (a) the mechanism—who read what, where, with what power to act. (b) a version naming a channel and an actor, e.g. "Ministers educated in these arguments used them to justify codification a crown already wanted".

3.1 B. success plus a channel.

3.2 B. the mechanism is the explanation.

3.3 (a) a stated criterion, e.g. which cause the outcome could not have occurred without.
(b) a ranking with a genuine concession to the other cause.