

5.1 Contextualizing 18th-Century States

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to write the **context** for the crisis of the late eighteenth century.

You must be able to:

- name the fiscal, intellectual and social conditions of the crisis
- explain how war debt produced political conflict
- state what the Enlightenment supplied to critics of the state
- avoid narrating the Revolution instead of contextualising it

1 Worked examples

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

■ The conditions

Debt from prolonged war, a tax system that exempted the wealthiest, a body of theory grounding authority in consent, and a commercial class with wealth and no political standing.

■ Debt into conflict

Servicing war debt required new revenue; new revenue required either taxing the exempt or obtaining consent. Both routes forced a political question the crown had avoided.

■ What theory supplied

4.3's social contract gave critics a standard by which the existing arrangement could be judged illegitimate rather than merely inconvenient.

2 Practice

2.1 Name three conditions of the late eighteenth-century crisis.

[3]

2.2 Explain how war debt forced a political question. [2]

2.3 A crown must raise revenue and cannot tax the exempt.

(a) State its remaining option. [1]

(b) State the risk of taking it. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A tax system exempting the wealthiest makes new revenue [1]

A	B
C	D

A easy to raise

B obtainable only by taxing the exempt or seeking consent

C unnecessary

D automatic

3.2 The social contract supplied critics with [1]

A	B
C	D

A an army

B a standard of legitimacy

C revenue

D a monarchy

3.3 A context paragraph lists three conditions with no consequences.

(a) State the fault. [1]

(b) Explain the fix. [2]
