Power After War

How European rulers gained power and where they met limits

SS24.8.14 "Summarize the rise of absolutism and explain how absolute monarchy differed from governing practices in Europe before the seventeenth century. 14a Explain how the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia led to the rise of absolutism..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details showing how kings shared power before the seventeenth century, and circle three actions named rulers took to increase state power. Write 1 beside one sentence that shows a limit on a monarch's power.

Who Held the Power?

1. Before the seventeenth century, many European kings shared power with nobles, church leaders, or assemblies that approved taxes. Rulers still wielded influence, but raising money and armies often required bargaining. The Thirty Years' War (1618 to 1648) devastated central Europe and showed how dangerous divided authority could be during a long conflict. The Peace of Westphalia ended the war and strengthened the authority of territorial rulers within the Holy Roman Empire. It did not create absolute monarchies overnight. Yet war and diplomacy made stronger control over taxes, armies, and religion appealing to some rulers.

2. In France, Louis XIV made royal power visible at his palace of Versailles, where nobles competed for his attention instead of building rival power at home. He appointed officials to carry out his orders and kept a standing army. Louis defended his authority with the divine right of kings, the belief that God gave kings the right to rule. He still faced limits, including money troubles and local customs. Unlike earlier rulers who regularly had to negotiate with powerful groups, Louis tried to make himself the center of major decisions.

3. Other monarchs borrowed parts of this approach, but their choices differed. Peter the Great reorganized Russia's army and government to increase state power. Catherine the Great expanded Russia's territory but depended on nobles to govern. In Prussia, Frederick the Great strengthened the army and managed the state closely while allowing some religious tolerance. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire held territory in southeastern Europe. Its wars and alliances shaped the choices of European monarchs, who planned defenses, fought for land, or sought Ottoman support. Absolute rule was a goal, not unlimited power everywhere.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia help make stronger rulers appealing? Contrast this with how many kings governed earlier.

2. How did Louis XIV use both Versailles and the divine right of kings to strengthen his rule?

3. How did Peter the Great and Catherine the Great each increase Russia's power? What limit on Catherine's rule does the passage describe?

4. How could Ottoman control of territory in southeastern Europe affect a European monarch's decisions?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence advice note to a fictional European ruler deciding whether to concentrate power after a long war. Explain one possible advantage, one danger or limit, and how the Ottoman Empire could shape the ruler's choices; use at least two named rulers from the passage as examples.

ANSWER KEY

Power After War

GRADE 8 · SS24.8.14

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details showing how kings shared power before the seventeenth century, and circle three actions named rulers took to increase state power. Write 1 beside one sentence that shows a limit on a monarch's power. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia help make stronger rulers appealing? Contrast this with how many kings governed earlier.	**The war exposed problems with divided authority, and the peace strengthened territorial rulers' authority. Earlier kings often had to bargain with other groups to raise taxes and armies.**
2	How did Louis XIV use both Versailles and the divine right of kings to strengthen his rule?	**Versailles drew nobles away from building rival power at home. Divine right presented Louis's authority as given by God.**
3	How did Peter the Great and Catherine the Great each increase Russia's power? What limit on Catherine's rule does the passage describe?	**Peter reorganized the army and government, while Catherine expanded Russia's territory. Catherine depended on nobles to govern.**
4	How could Ottoman control of territory in southeastern Europe affect a European monarch's decisions?	**A monarch might plan defenses, fight for land, or seek Ottoman support because of the empire's territory, wars, and alliances.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

After a long war, I would build a reliable army, but I would not try to control every decision alone. Louis XIV used officials and a standing army to strengthen France, which shows how central control could help a ruler act quickly. Catherine the Great still relied on nobles, so ignoring powerful groups could weaken my plans. Because the Ottoman Empire held land in southeastern Europe, I would also plan for defense and consider alliances.

Accept supported comparisons that distinguish rulers' efforts to concentrate power from complete control. For the advice note, check for four sentences, two named rulers, an advantage, a limit, and an Ottoman connection.