Kingdoms Take Shape

How monarchs strengthened government in Europe

6.C.5 "Define the term nation-state and describe the rise of nation-states headed by monarchs in Europe from 1500 to 1700."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the definition of a nation-state, circle two actions monarchs took to strengthen their rule, and write 1 beside a sentence that shows a limit to national unity.

Ruling a Wider Kingdom

1. In 1600, a traveler crossing Europe might pay a toll at one town and meet a different ruler at the next. A nation-state is a country with its own government and borders whose people share a sense of belonging to one nation. People in a nation-state do not all have to speak the same language or follow the same customs. Between 1500 and 1700, some European monarchs, or kings and queens, drew more power away from local lords. Their kingdoms began to resemble nation-states, though the change was uneven.

2. In France, King Louis XIV ruled from 1643 to 1715. During the years before 1700, he brought nobles to his court at Versailles and used officials to carry out royal orders in the provinces. Nobles still had influence, but the king could direct more decisions across the kingdom. Royal armies also helped him enforce his rule. These changes strengthened a central government over a large territory. Yet France had many regional languages and customs, so a strong monarchy did not mean that everyone shared the same identity.

3. In England, Queen Elizabeth I ruled from 1558 to 1603. Her government used royal officials to carry out laws and collect taxes, but Parliament also had a role in approving taxes. Later English monarchs struggled with Parliament over who would hold power. In Spain, King Philip II, who ruled from 1556 to 1598, governed several lands through councils and royal officials. His subjects spoke different languages. England and Spain, like France, had monarchs who tried to govern wider territories from a center, but these kingdoms did not fit the definition of a nation-state perfectly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What two features does the passage use to define a nation-state?

2. How did Louis XIV strengthen his rule across France? Give two actions from the passage.

3. How did Elizabeth I's government extend its rule, and what limited the monarch's power in England?

4. How did Philip II govern lands from a center, and what detail shows that his subjects did not all share one language?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you advise the monarch of a new kingdom in 1650. In four sentences, propose two actions to strengthen government across the kingdom, explain how people might build a shared sense of belonging, and name one reason it might not yet be a full nation-state.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 6 · 6.C.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the definition of a nation-state, circle two actions monarchs took to strengthen their rule, and write 1 beside a sentence that shows a limit to national unity. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two features does the passage use to define a nation-state?	**It has its own government and borders, and its people share a sense of belonging to one nation.**
2	How did Louis XIV strengthen his rule across France? Give two actions from the passage.	**He brought nobles to his court at Versailles and used officials to carry out royal orders in the provinces. Royal armies are another acceptable action.**
3	How did Elizabeth I's government extend its rule, and what limited the monarch's power in England?	**Royal officials carried out laws and collected taxes, while Parliament had a role in approving taxes.**
4	How did Philip II govern lands from a center, and what detail shows that his subjects did not all share one language?	**He governed through councils and royal officials. His subjects spoke different languages.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Create one court system for disputes across the kingdom and send judges to each district. Establish a postal service so royal orders can reach distant towns. People from different regions could choose a common symbol for public buildings while keeping their own languages. The kingdom might not yet be a full nation-state if many residents feel loyal only to their districts.

For Part 1, accept any two actions in the passage that extend a monarch's rule and any sentence that identifies a limit to shared identity or central power. For Part 3, accept historically plausible proposals that distinguish stronger royal government from a shared national identity.