

Absolutism and Enlightenment Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

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- 1. How did Enlightenment thinkers influence political thought?**
 - A. By supporting the idea of absolute monarchy**
 - B. By promoting the questioning of traditional authority**
 - C. By advocating for feudal systems**
 - D. By emphasizing divine right**
- 2. How is empiricism defined?**
 - A. A belief that knowledge is derived solely from reason**
 - B. A philosophy stating that knowledge comes from experience**
 - C. A doctrine emphasizing intuition and gut feeling**
 - D. A study of moral principles and ethics**
- 3. What was the significance of the palace of Versailles?**
 - A. It was a military fortress**
 - B. It served as a center for trade**
 - C. It symbolized royal extravagance**
 - D. It functioned as a school for nobles**
- 4. What was a key outcome of the reforms made by JB Colbert?**
 - A. Increased public trust in the monarchy**
 - B. Greater national debt due to extravagant spending**
 - C. Enhanced agricultural production**
 - D. Promotion of social equality**
- 5. How did Enlightenment thinkers view governmental power?**
 - A. They believed it should be absolute and unchecked**
 - B. They thought it should be hereditary and unchangeable**
 - C. They believed it should be limited and accountable to the people**
 - D. They supported the idea of divine right of kings**

- 6. Which of the following is a significant outcome of the Enlightenment?**
- A. Increased power for the Church**
 - B. Promotion of scientific reasoning and inquiry**
 - C. Rejection of all forms of government**
 - D. Emphasis on tradition over progress**
- 7. What is the main idea of John Locke's political philosophy?**
- A. Government should be based on divine right**
 - B. People form government to protect their rights**
 - C. Humans need strict control to prevent chaos**
 - D. Peace is achieved through absolute rule**
- 8. Which event marked the successful overthrow of slavery in Haiti?**
- A. The French Revolution**
 - B. The American Revolution**
 - C. The Haitian Revolution**
 - D. The Industrial Revolution**
- 9. Who drafted the Declaration of Independence during the Enlightenment?**
- A. George Washington**
 - B. Benjamin Franklin**
 - C. Thomas Jefferson**
 - D. John Adams**
- 10. Which of the following best describes the Enlightenment era?**
- A. A period characterized by ignorance and blind faith**
 - B. A time when traditional authority was questioned and reason was valued**
 - C. An era of strict adherence to monarchy**
 - D. A phase of artistic decline and superstition**

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. B
7. B
8. C
9. C
10. B

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Explanations

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1. How did Enlightenment thinkers influence political thought?

- A. By supporting the idea of absolute monarchy
- B. By promoting the questioning of traditional authority**
- C. By advocating for feudal systems
- D. By emphasizing divine right

Enlightenment thinkers profoundly influenced political thought by promoting the questioning of traditional authority. This movement encouraged individuals to critically examine systems of governance, societal norms, and religious beliefs that had previously gone unchallenged. Notable figures such as John Locke, Voltaire, and Rousseau argued for principles like individual rights, liberty, and democracy, moving away from the unquestioned acceptance of monarchies and established institutions. This push for critical inquiry and skepticism marked a significant departure from earlier political philosophies that had upheld absolute authority and divine right as legitimate grounds for rule. By advocating for reason, empirical evidence, and the idea that government should be based on the consent of the governed, Enlightenment thinkers laid the groundwork for modern democratic theories and practices. Their ideas paved the way for revolutions and reforms that emphasized personal freedoms and the pursuit of social justice.

2. How is empiricism defined?

- A. A belief that knowledge is derived solely from reason
- B. A philosophy stating that knowledge comes from experience**
- C. A doctrine emphasizing intuition and gut feeling
- D. A study of moral principles and ethics

Empiricism is defined as a philosophy stating that knowledge comes from experience. This principle emphasizes the role of sensory experience in the formation of ideas, as opposed to the reliance on innate ideas or pure reason. Empiricists argue that all knowledge is ultimately grounded in what we can observe or experience directly through our senses, such as sight, touch, taste, hearing, and smell. This perspective was crucial during the Enlightenment, as it laid the groundwork for the scientific method and encouraged a systematic approach to understanding the world through observation, experimentation, and evidence. Thinkers like John Locke and David Hume were pivotal figures in advancing the concept of empiricism, arguing against rationalist doctrines that asserted knowledge could be acquired solely through reason without empirical evidence. In contrast, other options describe different philosophical stances. For example, the idea that knowledge is derived solely from reason aligns more with rationalism, while the emphasis on intuition relates to a more subjective or psychological approach to knowledge acquisition. The study of moral principles and ethics pertains to a different area of philosophy entirely and does not address the foundational basis of knowledge as empiricism does.

3. What was the significance of the palace of Versailles?

- A. It was a military fortress
- B. It served as a center for trade
- C. It symbolized royal extravagance**
- D. It functioned as a school for nobles

The palace of Versailles embodies royal extravagance and serves as a prominent symbol of absolute monarchy in France, particularly during the reign of Louis XIV. Constructed in the 17th century, Versailles was designed to reflect the power and glory of the king and to serve as a showcase of his wealth and authority. The opulent architecture, extensive gardens, and lavish interior decor were all intended to impress both the French nobility and foreign dignitaries, reinforcing the idea of the king's divine right to rule. Moreover, Versailles played a strategic role in Louis XIV's efforts to control the nobility. By inviting nobles to live at the palace, he could monitor their activities and reduce their power outside of court, effectively centralizing authority. The grandeur of the palace and the elaborate ceremonies held there were practical tools in showcasing the monarchy's wealth and power, further embedding the idea of the king as a near-divine figure in the eyes of his subjects. Thus, the significance of the palace of Versailles lies not only in its physical beauty but also in its role as a representation of monarchical power and the philosophy of absolutism.

4. What was a key outcome of the reforms made by JB Colbert?

- A. Increased public trust in the monarchy
- B. Greater national debt due to extravagant spending**
- C. Enhanced agricultural production
- D. Promotion of social equality

The key outcome of the reforms made by Jean-Baptiste Colbert, who served as the finance minister under King Louis XIV of France, was the enhancement of agricultural production. Colbert implemented a variety of economic policies aimed at improving the French economy, including promoting mercantilism, boosting agriculture, and encouraging industry. By providing a framework that supported agricultural practices and investing in infrastructure, he significantly increased the production of crops, which helped strengthen France's economy and self-sufficiency. Colbert's focus on agriculture was part of a broader effort to reduce dependency on imports and improve the country's exports, thereby enhancing national wealth. His agricultural policies laid the groundwork for sustainable economic growth, ensuring that France could feed itself and increase its wealth through effective management of its natural resources. Other options are not solutions to the economic challenges of the time, such as public trust, which can be quite complex and not solely dependent on economic reforms, or the idea of social equality, which Colbert's reforms did not specifically address as they primarily focused on economic productivity and state revenues. The promotion of social equality was not a focus of Colbert's policies, as his reforms were designed to bolster the state rather than redistribute wealth or improve the social hierarchy.

5. How did Enlightenment thinkers view governmental power?

- A. They believed it should be absolute and unchecked**
- B. They thought it should be hereditary and unchangeable**
- C. They believed it should be limited and accountable to the people**
- D. They supported the idea of divine right of kings**

Enlightenment thinkers advocated for the idea that governmental power should be limited and accountable to the people. This perspective emerged as a reaction against absolute monarchies and the idea that rulers had an inherent right to govern without any constraints. Prominent Enlightenment philosophers such as John Locke, Montesquieu, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasized the importance of individual rights, the social contract, and the separation of powers within government. They argued that governments exist to serve the populace and that their authority should be derived from the consent of the governed. This emphasis on accountability led to concepts such as checks and balances, where different branches of government would have distinct powers and could oversee one another, preventing any single entity from gaining too much control. In doing so, these thinkers laid the groundwork for modern democratic principles, advocating the idea that legitimate political authority must be based on the will of the people, thus ensuring that power is used responsibly and justly. This foundational belief is pivotal in understanding the shift from absolutism to more democratic forms of governance during and after the Enlightenment.

6. Which of the following is a significant outcome of the Enlightenment?

- A. Increased power for the Church**
- B. Promotion of scientific reasoning and inquiry**
- C. Rejection of all forms of government**
- D. Emphasis on tradition over progress**

The Enlightenment, which emerged in the late 17th and 18th centuries, was characterized by a shift towards reason, science, and rational thought. A significant outcome of this intellectual movement was the promotion of scientific reasoning and inquiry. Thinkers of the Enlightenment, such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Newton, emphasized the importance of observation, experimentation, and critical thinking, which laid the groundwork for modern scientific methods. This focus on empirical evidence and logic challenged established norms and traditions, leading to advancements in various fields including natural sciences, philosophy, and social theory. In contrast, the other options do not align with the central tenets of the Enlightenment. The idea of increased power for the Church contradicts the movement's challenges to religious authority and dogma. The rejection of all forms of government does not reflect the Enlightenment's engagement with ideas about governance, as many Enlightenment thinkers advocated for the establishment of rational and representative forms of government. Lastly, the emphasis on tradition over progress is contrary to the Enlightenment's core message, which celebrated progress through reason and knowledge rather than adherence to historical practices without question. Thus, the promotion of scientific reasoning and inquiry represents a fundamental outcome of the Enlightenment, shaping the course of Western

7. What is the main idea of John Locke's political philosophy?

- A. Government should be based on divine right**
- B. People form government to protect their rights**
- C. Humans need strict control to prevent chaos**
- D. Peace is achieved through absolute rule**

The main idea of John Locke's political philosophy centers on the concept that people form governments primarily to protect their natural rights, such as life, liberty, and property. Locke argued that in a state of nature, individuals had these rights, but the lack of a formal governing authority could lead to conflicts and violations. Therefore, by entering into social contracts and establishing governments, individuals could ensure the protection of their rights and maintain order. This notion laid the foundation for modern democracy and influenced later political thought significantly, emphasizing the role of government as a protector of individual freedoms rather than a ruler imposed by divine right or force. The other choices do not align with Locke's views. The idea of government based on divine right contrasts with Locke's belief in consent and the social contract. The concept that humans need strict control to prevent chaos reflects a more authoritarian view, failing to incorporate Locke's emphasis on individual rights and freedoms. Lastly, linking peace with absolute rule connects to forms of governance that Locke critiqued, as he promoted limited government and the idea that rulers should be held accountable to the governed.

8. Which event marked the successful overthrow of slavery in Haiti?

- A. The French Revolution**
- B. The American Revolution**
- C. The Haitian Revolution**
- D. The Industrial Revolution**

The successful overthrow of slavery in Haiti is best represented by the Haitian Revolution. This revolution, which occurred from 1791 to 1804, was led by enslaved Africans in the French colony of Saint-Domingue who rose up against their colonial masters. It was a unique and powerful example of enslaved people fighting for their freedom and establishing an independent nation. The revolution not only resulted in the abolition of slavery in Haiti but also led to the establishment of Haiti as the first independent Black republic in the world in 1804, making it a significant milestone in the history of civil rights and anti-colonial movements. While the French Revolution played an indirect role by stirring ideas of liberty and equality in the colonies, it was the specific actions and struggles of the enslaved people during the Haitian Revolution that directly resulted in the overthrow of slavery. The American Revolution, though it had its own implications and ideologies around freedom, did not directly influence the situation in Haiti in the same way. The Industrial Revolution was primarily focused on economic and industrial changes and had little to do with the specific context of slavery in Haiti.

9. Who drafted the Declaration of Independence during the Enlightenment?

- A. George Washington**
- B. Benjamin Franklin**
- C. Thomas Jefferson**
- D. John Adams**

The Declaration of Independence was drafted by Thomas Jefferson, who was deeply influenced by Enlightenment ideals. During this period, thinkers emphasized reason, individual rights, and the concept of government as a social contract. Jefferson's writing reflects these principles, advocating for the inherent rights of individuals and the notion that governments are established to protect those rights. His use of language in the Declaration, especially the famous assertion that "all men are created equal," exemplifies the Enlightenment's focus on equality and liberty. While other notable figures such as George Washington and John Adams played crucial roles in the American Revolution, and Benjamin Franklin was involved in diplomatic efforts, it was Jefferson's articulation of the colonies' desire for independence that captured the Enlightenment's spirit and aims, ensuring that the Declaration became a foundational document for the United States.

10. Which of the following best describes the Enlightenment era?

- A. A period characterized by ignorance and blind faith**
- B. A time when traditional authority was questioned and reason was valued**
- C. An era of strict adherence to monarchy**
- D. A phase of artistic decline and superstition**

The Enlightenment era is best characterized as a time when traditional authority was questioned and reason was valued. This period, spanning roughly from the late 17th century to the 18th century, centered around the idea that human beings could use reason and rational thought to challenge established norms, beliefs, and power structures. Thinkers such as Voltaire, John Locke, and Immanuel Kant emphasized the importance of individual rights, scientific inquiry, and critical thinking, leading to advancements in various fields such as philosophy, science, and political theory. This approach significantly contrasted with the surrounding periods of ignorance or blind faith, which often relied on superstition and unquestioned adherence to established doctrine. Those characteristics are poorly associated with the Enlightenment, as the era explicitly aimed to promote knowledge, education, and the scientific method while advocating for social reforms and questioning absolute monarchies. The focus was on elevating rational thought over dogma, leading to significant societal changes and laying the groundwork for modern democratic systems.