

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE History

Candidate Exemplar Work (June 2009):

- HIS1E: Absolutist States: The Reign of Louis XIV, 1661–1715



The following responses are not 'model' answers, nor are they indicative of specific overall grades, but are intended to illustrate the application of the mark scheme for this unit. These responses should be read in conjunction with the HIS1E Question Paper, Sources Booklet and Mark Scheme.

Copies of the paper and are available from e-AQA or the AQA History Department.

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AQA GCE History Teacher Resource Bank Commentaries on June 2009 AS answers

General Introduction by the Chief Examiner

The first June examination series for the new AS specification saw some excellent examples of well prepared candidates who were able to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding by addressing the questions set directly and efficiently. Sadly, it also suggested that, whilst some candidates knew the material quite well, they struggled to apply it successfully to the questions asked. At the lowest end, there were, of course, some candidates whose knowledge let them down, but even these might have been able to achieve more highly had they thought more carefully about each question's demands.

The importance of timing for both Units needs to be stressed. In Unit 1 candidates should allow themselves approximately 12 minutes for the first part question and 25 minutes for the second. In Unit 2, they could spend 15 minutes on the first part question and 30 minutes on the second, but they are likely to need slightly longer for the source question. Good time keeping is essential in any examination. No matter how successful the answer to the first part question, an incomplete second part question will always mean a loss of marks (notes receive limited credit).

These commentaries are intended to help teachers and candidates to understand the demands of each question type and consequently to encourage students to perform at the highest level of which they are capable. Please note that errors relating to Quality of Written Communication (of spelling, syntax, etc.) have been reproduced without correction. Please note that the AQA convention for question numbering will be changing as from the June 2010 examination papers. Examples of the new format for question papers can be found elsewhere in the Teacher Resource Bank.

Unit 1

The first part of each question in Unit 1 (those questions labelled 01, 03 and 05 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks candidates to 'explain why' an event, issue or development came about. The best candidates answered this question, not only with a selection of reasons (and a minimum of three well-explained reasons was expected for Level 3/4), but also by showing how those reasons linked together. This is essential to meet Level 4 criteria and can be achieved by prioritising, differentiating between the long and short-term factors, or showing how different categories of reasons, such as political, social and religious inter-link. It is not, however, enough to simply assert that the links exist – they also needed explaining.

Candidates who only performed at Level 2 often wrote too descriptively, whilst many achieved a good Level 3 by offering a range of relevant and clearly explained reasons but failing to make any links between them. As the exemplars demonstrate, answers did not need to be long but they had to be effectively focused and directed to achieve good marks.

The second part of each question (those questions labelled 02, 04 and 06 in the new numbering style) asked for a response to a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful'. Each question stem invited candidates to offer a balanced response and this was the key to an award at high Level 3, 4 or 5. Most answers which achieved only a Level 2 or a low/mid-Level 3 mark contained too much description, were excessively one-sided or lacked depth and precision in their use of examples. Some candidates also failed to address the full question set, often

by ignoring starting or finishing dates. To achieve the higher levels, candidates needed to balance one side against another. For example, a question asking how far 'X' contributed to 'Y' demanded a consideration of the importance of other factors which also contributed to 'Y'. Sometimes questions, particularly 'how important' questions (e.g. how important was 'X' in bringing about 'Y?'), could be balanced by considering the ways in which 'X' was important as opposed to the ways in which it was not, rather than introducing 'other factors'; either approach was equally legitimate. The crucial test of an answer was, therefore, the degree to which the candidate was able to argue the issue and how well that argument was supported by accurate and precise evidence. The best answers at Level 5 managed to sustain a focus and convey convincing individual judgement.

Unit 2

The first part of question 1 (labelled 01 in the new numbering style from June 2010) asks students how far the views in two given sources (A and B) differ, in relation to a given topic. Perhaps the most common error was to waste time writing a paragraph or more about the source content before addressing differences. Levels were awarded according to how well candidates identified and explained differences of **view**. This was not simply an exercise in source comprehension, so such answers received an award of only Level 1/2. Contrasting 'views' required students to go beyond the mere words of the sources or their omissions, and to assess 'how far' the sources differed required some awareness of the degree of **similarity** they contained. To meet the full demands of the question and obtain an award at high level 3/4, candidates also needed to introduce some contextual own knowledge to explain the differences and similarities identified – possibly (but not necessarily) referring to provenance when it helped the explanation, and, more often, explaining references in the sources and drawing on their contextual knowledge to account for differing views.

In the second part of question 1 (labelled 02 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to answer a question beginning 'how far, how important or how successful' with reference to the sources as well as their own knowledge. The best answers to these questions maintained a balanced argument (as explained for Unit 1 above) and the information given in the sources was used in support of that argument. Poorer answers tried to address the sources separately – at the beginning or end of the answer, or sometimes as an asterisked afterthought. Those who omitted them altogether could not obtain more than top Level 2. Whilst the main criteria for the higher levels was the degree of argument, the precision of the evidence and the judgement conveyed, in addition to these, good source use could ensure that students were placed higher in a level than those who used the sources in a perfunctory way. Source use needed to be explicit, and the best candidates appreciated that Source C was provided to give further ideas and/or information that was of direct relevance to this question.

In questions 2 and 3 (03/04 and 05/06 in the new numbering) candidates were asked to respond to an 'explain why' question – on which comments will be found under the Unit 1 commentary above – and a short, provocative quotation about which they were invited to explain why they agreed or disagreed. The demands here were similar to those for the second part of Unit 1 (b) questions. In adopting a view about the quotation, candidates were expected to examine the opposing arguments in order to reach a balanced judgement on the extent of their agreement/disagreement.

Sally Waller Chief Examiner December 2009

GCE History HIS1E: Absolutist States: The Reign of Louis XIV, 1661–1715

Responses to June 2009 Questions

Candidate 1

- 1 (a) Explain why Louis XIV carried out the policy of *Reunions* in the years 1679 to 1684. (12 marks)

Louis XIV carried out his policy during the Reunions war because he had the opportunity to achieve all of his aims.

During the war of the Re-union, the emperor was tied down fighting the Turks. This meant Louis's main threat could not stop him as he was too busy. This allowed Louis to attack places like Strasbourg and take them. Taking a huge town like Strasbourg was great for Louis as it achieved his aim of strengthening his North East border. As a vital Rhine crossing was now taken, meaning countries from the north would find it much harder to attack him, so Louis carved out the Re-union policy as he could address an aim of strengthening his North east border. Again Louis carried out the policy of the Reunion as he thought he could get himself a great image and a lot of glory. After taking town after town in the war of the Re-unions, Louis was being seen as really powerful inside of France, which gave him a great image inside of France. Although he got a damaged image due to the fact people were calling him the 'most Christian Turk' as he weren't defending the Christian faith when being under attack from the Turks.

So, overall Louis carved out his policy of the Reunion as he had the opportunity to achieve some of his foreign policy aims while his main enemy the emperor was tied down. So this allowed him to strengthen his North East border by taking Strasbourg and get an improved image inside of France because he was being seen as so powerful.

Principal Examiner's Comments

Script A begins well by establishing an argument in the opening sentence. This argument is maintained in some other areas of the response. Hence there is already indication that the candidate will advance beyond the purely narrative that might be seen at Level Two.

The next paragraph provides some supporting knowledge developing the idea of Louis XIV's opportunism. The use of phrases such as 'the emperor', 'the Turks', 'Strasbourg', indicates that the candidate has an understanding of the topic. Hence the explanations are being backed by appropriately selected information as expected at Level Three.

The candidate goes on to offer both the security of France's North-East border, and also Louis XIV's personal glory as additional factors that might explain motivation for the Reunions. Hence the candidate offers the range that is expected at Level Three supported by specific knowledge.

These three factors are also tentatively linked together in an argument that suggests that this war against the Turks provided an opportunity for Louis XIV to fulfil these other long standing aims. This is especially evident in the candidate's conclusion. Therefore the candidate has advanced into Level Four. However, there is some irrelevancy in the response – especially the mention of the consequences

of the Reunions for Louis XIV's image. In addition, the links between factors are not maintained throughout the response and are only really seen in the conclusion. Therefore an award of Level Four, 10 marks.

Candidate 2

- 1 (a) Explain why Louis XIV carried out the policy of *Reunions* in the years 1679 to 1684. (12 marks)

The policy of reunions in the years 1679–1684 were carried out for numerous reasons.

After the Dutch War (1672–1679), Louis had made progress in strengthening his *pré carré* (his north east border). In the Treaty of Nymagen, he gained various towns in the Flanders region and kept the French-Comte on his eastern border. The policy of reunions, reinforced with the help of Colbert de Croissy, set up 'Chambres des Reunions' in various towns; these were once dependent upon France for various reasons. Louis set up these courts in German provinces and to the North East (eg. Metz). Although these policies angered his allies, Louis' primary objective was to create a stronger defence system that could not rely on natural barriers – like that on his Southern and Western borders.

Furthermore, Louis had also extended his right of regal at this time; to create more money from empty bishoprics. With an extended France, he could claim more money which added to his depleting finances.

Another reunion is, as J.Lynn says "his later wars were more dynastic", he wanted to create a strong future for France. After his two earlier wars, that Lynn says were all about, "la gloire" it could be said Louis' attentions were solely on creating a large and powerful France.

Principal Examiner's Comments

Script B begins with a one sentence introduction that doesn't really convey anything worthy of credit – if the candidate had listed the 'numerous reasons' and stated what the most important one was then the response would have been much more powerful as it would have established an argument from the outset.

*The next paragraph relies heavily on description which covers the Dutch War, the Chambres de Reunion and eventually moves on to consider one motive – the creation of a 'stronger defence system'. There is worthy subject knowledge here but it is not linked well to the demands of the question in considering **why** the policy of Reunions was carried out.*

The notion of finance being a motive for Reunions is given some credit by the examiner as an alternative explanation. The conclusion lists some further factors although these are really quite general comments that might apply to any aspect of foreign policy and are certainly not specific to the Reunions.

Overall, this response is heavily narrative, lacking a consistent focus but with some attempt to link knowledge to the Reunions specifically. There is some understanding of the demands of the question and some sound support. A good Level Two response that deserves 6 marks.

Candidate 3

- 1 (b) How successful was Louis XIV in achieving the aims of his foreign policy in the years 1661 to 1685? (24 marks)

When Louis ascended the throne in 1661 he wished to extend the French empire and sought to achieve supremacy over Europe. However achieving this was dependent on securing his borders; weakening the power of the Habsburgs and extending his borders into foreign territories. By 1685 Louis had involved himself in three wars and for the most part achieved these aims, however this may have been at the cost of the French people and the economy.

In 1666 Louis aggravated the beginning of the war of devolution in which he believed land of Philip the IV of Spain should have been devolved land to the children of his first wife and therefore his wife Maria Theresa. His main aims of this war was to achieve control over the Spanish Netherlands which had proved vulnerable in the past and to dominate Europe. During the war Louis quickly overran the Spanish Netherlands gaining key fortresses such as Lille and Franch-Comte and clearly dominated the war in the process. However, by the end of the war the Triple Alliance had formed against him and Louis was forced to sign the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. This treaty meant Louis had to return areas he had gained such as Franch-Comte but he was able to retain the key fortresses and quickly fortified these towns. Therefore Louis was partially successful in this war as he did gain territorial advancements and was able to dominate the war. However, he failed to gain control over his most coveted Spanish Netherlands and in addition had destroyed relations with foreign powers and having to agree to a treaty did not demonstrate the supremacy Louis wished; though he did benefit most from the treaty.

In 1672 Louis entered a war against the Dutch, with clear aims of what he wished to achieve. Firstly he wanted to gain revenge over the Dutch for what he considered treachery, when in the War of Devolution, when they had joined the Triple Alliance against him; since France had helped them in the past. In addition, he wished to destroy them with their Calvinist ideas disputing his Catholic monarchy and authority, as well as being a successful republic which undermined his authority further. Finally Louis also believed this was a way to finally achieve control over the Spanish Netherlands. During the war, Louis managed to make significant advancements and by 1679 when he sign the peace treaty in Nijmegen, he retained control over areas such as Franch-Comte and thus further extended his empire; as well as achieving more towns on the North East Frontier. However, Louis once again failed to prevent an alliance forming against him, and so further destroyed foreign relations. What's more he still hadn't resumed control over the Spanish Netherlands or managed to destroy the Dutch. Therefore the Dutch war was only partially successful as he did make significant territorial advancements, however these were not the aims he had pursued at the beginning of the war.

In 1683 the War of the Reunions commenced. During this war Louis set out once again achieve control over the Spanish Netherlands and supremacy over Europe; especially as the Emperor was located elsewhere he believed he would finally be able to achieve these aims. In addition to this, this obviously meant further securing his borders and gaining more territory where possible. In 1684 Louis signed the Treaty of Ratisbon, which enabled him to retain the key cities of Luxemborg and Strasborg and this further increased his territories. However, once again Louis failed to achieve the Spanish Netherlands. Though he had dominated to war and managed to destruct the 140,000 army who fought against him in the

Alliance; so arguably Louis had finally achieved supremacy over Europe as he was even able to beat them collectively. However, the further destruction of relations with Europe does have to be considered. Therefore, the War of Reunions was arguably the most successful was he'd fought as supremacy as well as key territories were finally achieved.

In conclusion, therefore by the end of his reign Louis had achieved most of his key aims set out in 1661 with regard to his foreign policy; supremacy of Europe, secured borders and extend his territory. However, this has to only be considered to an extent, as by 1685 he still had not regained full control over the Spanish Netherlands which he most coveted and the destruction and aggression of Louis had destroyed relations with foreign powers; which undoubtedly came back to bite him in his later years.

Principal Examiner's Comments

Script C begins well with an introduction that defines Louis XIV's aims, whilst also establishing an argument that is maintained throughout the response.

The structure of the essay is good with each foreign policy event given a separate paragraph. Whilst there is a strongly chronological approach, this does not necessarily indicate reliance on narrative. Certainly the temptation for a candidate to simply describe is much stronger when events are considered in date order rather than in order of significance, but in this example there is close argument throughout. Given the time constraints placed on candidates one would not expect an exhaustive answer but rather one in which the key elements of a good essay are displayed. This script shows very good subject knowledge and the ability to utilise specific examples in support of an over arching argument. This depth of knowledge indicates that the script is at least Level Two. The analysis in the script is strong with very few sections of simple narrative that fails to advance the candidates argument – this, in conjunction with the evidence of knowledge, therefore warrants a good Level Three at least. This argument is also balanced with each event considered both in terms of successes and failures – this is clearly very important in a 'How Successful' type question and indicates that the script should be awarded at least a Level Four. The evidence is precisely selected and has a depth that is very impressive – this candidate has a good understanding both of the demands of the question and also of the period. Most importantly, the evidence and argument offered throughout the script leads towards a reasoned and relevant conclusion. This conclusion is not simply tagged on to the end; it is powerful and is the culmination of a sustained argument. Whilst the comparison between events is weaker than the standard shown by the candidate in other aspects of this response, and the event by event approach not entirely convincing- this script deserves a good mid range Level 5 mark of 23.

Candidate 4

- 1 (b) How successful was Louis XIV in achieving the aims of his foreign policy in the years 1661 to 1685? (24 marks)

Louis was very successful in achieving his aims between 1661–1685. As France gained quite a lot and yet lost barely anything, Louis had a few foreign policy aims between 166–1685, the main ones being improve the north east frontier, improve the image and end Spanish encirclement. A big success for Louis was *Gloire*, this is where he wanted to achieve success without damaging France. He did this well in his early years, fighting a few wars and never losing. The main 3 wars were war of devolution, Dutch war, and Reunions war, and the War of the Spanish Succession. In all his 3 wars, France dominated a lot and gained towns which could help him protect the north east, which was key for Louis. Towns like Lille, Bordeaux and *** which improved the north east frontier.

This made Louis's image look good as he was winning all these wars and France at this time was the strongest country in Europe. People all around the world were talking about him or his palace Versailles. The Russians even tried to copy it.

However, image was also a bad point for Louis as he was doing **** so good people started to make alliances against him like Luxembourg, England and the Dutch. Also he was seen as an aggressor and was fighting wars for fun because the Dutch war Colbert told him not to but he still did.

Louis didn't really end Spanish ***** either, although he improved his north east frontier and tries to prevent the Spanish from attacking from the north. France and Spain still had a big *****. Also, Louis didn't really achieve *dynasty* you could say. He put France so in a strong position if he was to die then and someone from his family took over they would be in a strong position.

Overall, Louis did achieve his foreign policy aims between 1661 to 1685. Although he only achieved improve the north east frontier, *Gloire* and some image, these were Louis's main aims, and France were unbeaten and one of the strongest countries in Europe.

Principal Examiner's Comments

This begins quite well by attempting to define the aims of Louis XIV's foreign policy. Effectively this becomes a list of terms with little evidence that the candidate has the knowledge to develop these in depth.

*Reference to *la Gloire* as an aim is sound, but is supported by generic and quite superficial detail, e.g. 'in all three wars France dominated a lot'. The need to support the north eastern frontier is then mentioned but the names of towns captured and the relevant wars are either incorrect or vaguely asserted. However, there is an attempt to link the acquisition of good frontiers with the pursuit of glory. Mention of Louis XIV's entrance into Strasbourg would have provided good evidence in support of this candidate's assertion - without this sort of detail the script is stuck in Level Two.*

Areas in which Louis XIV failed to succeed are attempted, but this is in list form and is again excessively general. 'People started making alliances against him' is accurate but not in the depth that is expected of a response placed in the higher levels. The fact that Louis did not end Spanish encirclement is mentioned but

again not developed, whilst the section on dynastic concerns is entirely assertive and it is not made clear by the candidate how this links to foreign policy 1661-1685. This paragraph is focused on the question and does have some limited support – this lifts it out of Level One – but it lacks the development required at Level Three or above.

There is some understanding of the period and of the demands of the question, but the support is limited. Whilst there is some evidence of assessment relevant to the period, this is quite fleeting and is not securely supported. Therefore this script is awarded a high Level 2, 10 marks.

Candidate 5

- 2 (a) Explain why there was a need to reform the trade and industry of France in 1661. (12 marks)

In 1661, when Louis came to the throne, the country had been ravaged by civil war and was bankrupt. In addition there was little food in reserve, little food being grown, a corrupt tax system and very limited trade.

Agriculture in France was where the most french people worked. However their methods were very traditional and did not provide a high enough yield for all the people. Historians are convinced conditions were awful on the land and for this reason many peasants moved to the cities. This led to many vagrants and unemployed people in the cities and did nothing to help the already too small supply of food being grown.

Secondly, the tax system was extremely corrupt. The peasants were charged sometimes up to 50% of their income in taxes whilst the nobility paid nothing. Many peasants could not afford this and so lost their property or were imprisoned. In addition, the collecting methods were not very efficient and in some provinces, their local government even decided how much their people would pay.

Trade was another aspect which was suffering badly before 1661. The nobility saw trade as "beneath" them and so refused to take part in any trade whatsoever as they would lose their noble title. Whilst in France trade was not well thought of, in Holland trade was thriving, resulting in the Dutch dominating European trade. On top of this, many goods used by the French people were foreign so were expensive to ship in.

In conclusion, the French economy was deeply suffering and desperately needed to be reformed if France wanted any chance of successfully competing with other countries in trade and industry.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The script begins with quite a general introduction into which the motives for reform must largely be inferred.

The paragraph on agriculture is sound and offers some good reasons why there was a need to reform. Unfortunately no links between factors are established and neither is there any attempt to prioritise, however this is factually sound above Level One.

The section on taxation could be tentatively linked to the need to reform trade and industry, but this candidate does not make these links. Therefore this section is not credited by the examiner.

The idea of nobility that considered trade 'beneath them' is good, although might have been developed further. Likewise the idea of competition with the Dutch and the expense of foreign goods ensure that another two reasons are at least identified.

This script lacks a cohesive thread and is essentially a list of points with some development. Because these points are not linked and there is no attempt to explain how one might impact on the other, or no attempt to explain what might be the most significant factor, this script cannot go beyond Level Three. There is clearly evidence of appropriately selected information and also a range of factors, but this is not detailed. Therefore the script receives a mid Level Three, 8 marks.

Candidate 6

- 2 (b) How successful were Colbert's reforms in strengthening the French economy in the years 1661 to 1683? (24 marks)

There were many ups and downs to Colbert's financial reforms and with many of his successes there were pitfalls. Colbert's economic policy can be broken into three categories, industry, communication and agriculture. Colbert's overall outcome was a success as although the French people did badly, economy made a step in the right direction.

Industry was a success because Colbert and the crown poured a lot of money into it to insight a change. Colbert set up many textiles works including the Gobelins Tapestry Works which thrived and offered patronage, so many useful foreign workers came to France. This is a success because whereas before there was no money in industry, these successful ventures accompanied with more overall money worked as a catalyst.

However there were also failures in industry as even with Colbert's millions the majority of people did not get involved with industry. Nobles saw the industry as beneath them and common people saw good use in only more basic and essential goods, not things like fur trade. This therefore had backdraws because many people wernt interested in reviving industry.

Another success for Colbert was communication, economy did badly because moving to one side of France was difficult, Colbert spent 600,000 livres on roads, built 800 post offices and spent 7.5 million on the canal des deux mers this helped tradesmen get around France and increased trade massively as an outcome. Although Colbert failed to rationalise weights across France, this does not compare to his flourish in uniting France and helping trade through easy access around the country.

However one flaw to Colbert's economic policy was his plan on agriculture, Colbert didn't see agriculture as an important benefactor to economy so made little effort to resolve it.

The Governor of Dauphine even wrote to Colbert saying a bad harvest and the Dutch war meant that huge numbers of townspeople were surviving by eating

acorns. This shows that townspeople of France were doing badly. However as agriculture was ignored rather than reformed it was left in its original condition rather than worse off due to reform.

Overall Colbert's reforms were a success as France began with 451 million livres of debt and this policy was a success as it was a step in the right direction. Communication did very well and this in hand boosted trade. With more communication came more opportunities for trade and with more money in industry available and successful businesses, money and economy were more obtainable. Although Colbert was unsuccessful in setting industry fully alight, some progress was made, and even though peasants didn't live in the best situations. This was the situation before reform therefore no reform to agriculture cannot technically hold Colbert to blame. Leading to an overall improvement, from little industry and trade to something more.

Principal Examiner's Comments

The introduction is excessively wordy and thereby loses its power. However, there is some argument established.

The section on industry is well supported with specific evidence, for example the name of the Gobelins Tapestry Works, although there is some lack of depth when arguing how successful these industrial ventures might have been. There is balance, as expected at Level Four and this is probably better linked to the notion of success.

The Paragraph on communication is good, although again the focus on degree of success can waver as there seems to be an assumption that money spent by Colbert on a project necessarily meant it succeeded. However, the failure of agricultural development is handled well and both sections are supported by relevant subject knowledge. The conclusion is sound as there are explicit links between factors – quite a high order skill, although again they lack development and contain some assertion.

This script shows good understanding of the demands of the question as there are no sections that are irrelevant either according to period or topic. Often, in questions focused on Colbert, candidates write at length on financial issues when asked about economic and vice versa. There is also a sound range of factors mentioned: state industry, influx of foreign skills, nobility, communications, and agriculture. In addition, successes and failures are mentioned in a consistently analytical approach. These are all components expected of a Level Four response. This script lacks some development – there is evidence towards the end that the candidate has run out of argument and knowledge. However, the range of topics mentioned in the time given is good and there is a good understanding of different historical interpretations. A good Level Four response, 20 marks.