5. The Enlightenment

Europe at the time of the Enlightenment and on the eve of the French Revolution
Unit 5.1 - The Origins of the Enlightenment

1. **How did the Age of Enlightenment come about?**
   The 17th century was the Age of Science because some of the most important scientific discoveries were done in this century. The 18th century was the Age of the Enlightenment or the Age of Reason. Men believed that they could solve all problems with the use of scientific experiments and logical reasoning. They believed that they were living in an age of optimism and unending progress.

2. **Circles of Enlightenment**
   The Enlightenment started in France but it then became an international movement. By 1750 Paris became the centre for philosophers, writers and artists from all over Europe. Great Britain also played a leading part in the movement. In England, the government was shared between the King and Parliament. This system of government was called constitutional monarchy and it was admired by many Frenchmen because at that time France had an absolute monarchy (all power was in the King’s hands).

   In the 18th century the educated middle class, nobles and artisans became more interested in reading. This development helped to spread the ideas of the Enlightenment. Rich families had their own private library in their homes. Books, pamphlets, magazines and newspapers were published and sold freely in Britain, France, Holland and Germany. In cities such as Paris, London and Berlin, the educated classes met in cafés and talked about philosophy, politics and discoveries in science and technology. In countries where a strict censorship was enforced (as in Austria, Spain, and Russia) books and newspapers were secretly smuggled in the country from abroad.

3. **Why did the Age of Enlightenment end?**
   But not everyone in the 18th century accepted the ideas of the Enlightenment. The ideas of the Enlightenment were mostly confined to the small number of the educated classes. These ideas had little appeal for the ordinary people. These people wanted a religion of the heart not a religion of reason. The philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) struck a decisive blow against the Enlightenment when he published the book Critique of Pure Reason (1781). Kant argued that science and reason do not provide man with all solutions to their problems. Kant’s ideas were to bring about a new age of reasoning, known as the Romantic Movement (or Romanticism).

   In the end, the 18th century (thought to be the Age of Reason) ended with riots, revolutions, massacres, executions and wars caused by the French Revolution of 1789. Sadly, much of the slaughter and conquest that accompanied the Revolution was done in the name of the principles of the Enlightenment.

4. **What were the long-term effects of the Enlightenment?**
   Today’s Western World owes much to the Age of the Enlightenment, namely:
   - greater tolerance between people
   - a decline in superstition among the people
   - more respect for human rights by governments
   - freedom of thought and expression
   - widespread interest for learning among the people
   - more genuine efforts to have good governments
Unit 5.1 - Origins of the Enlightenment

1. The Enlightenment originated in ______________ in the ____________st century. (2)
2. The Enlightenment was also called ___________________________________________ (1)
3. What type of people can be seen in source A? ____________________________________ (1)
4. What is their social status? ____________________________________________________ (1)
5. Where do you think such meetings took place? ____________________________________ (1)
6. What did they usually do during such meetings? ____________________________________ (1)
7. Why there are no women in the picture? ____________________________________________ (2)
8. What may have been the motive for the artist to paint such a picture? ____________________________________________ (2)
9. Look at source B. Why are the peasants attacking the balloon? ________________________________ (1)
10. What was the contribution of Diderot to the spreading of Enlightenment ideas? ____________________________________________ (1)
11. What stand did the Catholic Church take about the Enlightenment? Why did it do so? ____________________________________________ (2)
12. Name the philosopher and the movement that challenged the ideas of the Enlightenment?
   (a) philosopher: ___________________ (b) Movement: ___________________ (1)
13. (a) Which event in European history made many people abandon the ideas of the Enlightenment bring in after 1789?
   ____________________________________________ (1)
   (b) Give a reason why many people changed their mind about the Enlightenment.
   ____________________________________________ (1)
   ____________________________________________ (2)
   ____________________________________________ (2)

(Total marks = 20)
1. **John Locke** (English) - *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) arguing that men are created with equal rights to life, liberty and property. One of man’s rights is to revolt against a bad or unjust government.

2. **Voltaire** (1694-1778) (French) - His writings filled 70 volumes of plays, novels, histories, poems, pamphlets and letters. He attacked the Catholic Church for having left the people ignorant. He criticized the French monarchy for its bad government. But Voltaire was against government by the people. He admired enlightened despotism like Frederick the Great of Prussia and Joseph II of Austria. Once he wrote, “No government can be in any manner effective unless it possesses absolute power.”

3. **Charles, Baron de Montesquieu** (1689-1755) (French) – *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748). He was against both absolute monarchy and enlightened despotism. He admired the English constitutional monarchy. His greatest work was He divided governments into republics, monarchies and despotisms. His ideas influenced the Constitution of the United States in 1789.

4. **Denis Diderot** (1713-84) (French) – Editor of the first published encyclopedia (1751-72) – 28 volumes contained the ideas of the Enlightenment. The Encyclopédie was a great success: 4,300 people subscribed to its first edition. The Catholic Church condemned it the as the ‘gospel of Satan’.

5. **Adam Smith** (1723-1790) (Scottish) – His book *The Wealth of Nations* (1767) He is the founder of economics as a human science. He analyzed the division of labour, money, prices, wages and the means of production. His ideas gave rise to the political and economy theories of liberalism and capitalism.

6. **Jean-Jacques Rousseau** (1712-1788) (Swiss) - *The Social Contract* (1762). He believed that man in the state of nature (without civilization) is good and harmless. It is society that corrupts him with greed and ambition over other men. The right for private property was the cause for all ills. The best form of government had to be based on the ‘general will’ or ‘the will of the majority’. This is how modern democracies work today where free elections take place. *The Social Contract* influenced the republican radical leaders of the French Revolution. Robespierre used it as the model for his Republic of Virtue (1793-94).
1. What did Locke say about the government of a country? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (2)

2. What did Voltaire say about the Catholic Church? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

3. Why did Montesquieu prefer the English political system? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (2)

4. Adam Smith is held to be the first modern economist. State why? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (2)

5. (a) What did Rousseau say about the state of man in nature? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

(b) What did he say about the state of man in society? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

6. Who wrote the following famous books on political theory? 

(a) *Two treatises of Government:* 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

(b) *The Spirit of the Laws:* 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

(c) *The Wealth of Nations:* 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

(d) The Social Contract: 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

(e) Anti-clerical satirical play: 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

7. Match Column A with Column B.: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A Enlightened philosopher</th>
<th>Column B Main political theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Locke</td>
<td>Anti-clericalism - the movement against the influence of the Catholic Church in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Voltaire</td>
<td>Liberalism – the right for everyone to be free and treated equally in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Montesquieu</td>
<td>Democracy – when the government is chosen by the people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Rousseau</td>
<td>Capitalism – the right for everyone to work for profit and wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e Adam Smith</td>
<td>Separation of Powers between Parliament, the Government and the Law Courts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Name the philosopher that had the greater influence on the course of the French Revolution? 

_________________________________________________________________________ (1)

(Total marks = 20)
1. What is the meaning and origin of ‘enlightened despotism’ and ‘enlightened despots’?

*Enlightened despotism* is a term given to kings, queens and emperors having absolute powers but who put into practice the political ideas of the philosophers of the Enlightenment. They hoped to win the loyalty of their subjects by *reform from above*. In this way they hoped to stop the people from trying to bring to change society by *revolution from below*. By reforming the ills of society they could: (a) have a more efficient government, (b) bring greater prosperity to their country and (c) have a stronger army. To meet these objectives enlightened despots needed a team of well-trained and loyal (obedient) *minister* and *civil servants*.

2. Who were the most famous enlightened despots

The greatest *enlightened despots* sat on the thrones of *Prussia*, *Austria*, and *Russia*. There were a number of *petty* (lesser) *despots* who ruled over *Spain* (Charles III, 1759-88), *Portugal* (Joseph I, 1750-77), *Sweden* (Gustavus III, 1771-92) and *Denmark* (Christian VII, 1766-1808). Most enlightened despots followed the same patterns of reform: they improved agriculture, reduced the hardships of the peasants, reformed the courts, codified the laws, abolished torture, granted religious toleration, opened hospitals and schools, encouraged scientific and technical research. In Catholic states like Austria, Spain and Portugal, they reduced the influence of the Catholic Church and expelled the Jesuit Order because of its control over education, especially the universities.

3. How did enlightened despotism end?

Enlightened despots had to meet a common danger. While they were trying to bring about *reforms*, the *nobility* of Europe, and of France in particular, began to demand more *privileges* from the monarchy. The reforms of the enlightened despots worked against their vested interests (e.g. they refused to pay taxes like the rest of the common people). The nobility as a class became more determined to oppose these reforms. This was what happened in France a few years before the outbreak of Revolution in 1789. Most of the work of the enlightened despots were stopped because of the confusion brought about in Europe by that Revolution.
## Unit 5.4 - The Great Enlightened Despots

| **1. Frederick II ‘the Great’**  
| **King of Prussia, (1740-1786)**  
| Frederick II of Hohenzollern ruled Prussia as an absolute king. He held that all persons, including himself were servants of the state. The king was simply ‘the first servant’ and his duty was to promote the welfare of his people. Fredrick’s reform made Prussia the most efficient and powerful state in Europe. Prussia fought and won the Seven Years’ War (1757-63) alone against Austria, Russia and France. He reduced censorship of the press and gave religious toleration to religious minorities. But he still excluded Jews from the civil service and imposed a special tax on them. |

| **2. Maria Theresa**  
| **Empress of Austria (1740-1780)**  
| Maria Theresa of Habsburg was not a great leader herself. But she employed ministers who were able to put her policies in practice. She set up a Council of State to examine the laws and make reforms, reformed the criminal code, strengthened the army, improved the conditions of the peasants, set up primary schools and reformed the University of Vienna. Maria Theresa was a devout Catholic and thus left the Catholic Church to enjoy a position of great influence in the country. |

| **3. Joseph II of Habsburg**  
| **Holy Roman Emperor (1780-1790)**  
| Joseph II was elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1765. In 1780 he succeeded his mother Maria Theresa as ruler of Austria. He set up a secret police to inspect the work of the civil service, abolished the death penalty in many offenses and gave Protestants, Orthodox, Catholics and Jews equal status before the law. He took over hundreds of monasteries from the Catholic Church which he turned into state schools or hospitals. Bishops were made to swear an oath of loyalty to the state. Joseph relaxed the press censorship and encouraged the publication of books about the Enlightenment. But the nobility refused to accept most of his reforms. The peasants revolted when promises of reform were not carried out. Most of his reforms were stopped after his death. Joseph had tried to go too fast and too far. Frederick II of Prussia said of him: ‘he always took the second step before he took the first.’ |

| **4. Catherine II the Great**  
| **Czarina (Empress) of Russia (1762-1796)**  
| Under her rule, the Russian Empire won new lands from the Ottoman Empire and from Poland. Catherine II was a friend and sponsor of Voltaire and Diderot. She applied some of the ideas of the Enlightenment to reform the government. She set up state primary schools and of a medical college. But instead of abolishing serfdom, she expanded it further to new conquered lands and gave nobles more powers over their peasants. But when the French Revolution broke out in 1789, Catherine became afraid to make more liberal reforms. Although Catherine was held to be at times cruel and ruthless, she helped to make Russia a modern European state. |
Unit 5.3 and 5.4 - Enlightened Despotism

1. Explain the term ‘enlightened despotism’.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
(2)

2. What type of people were enlightened despots? Underline two from the following:
   (popes, presidents, kings, prime minister, emperors, mayors, lawyers)
   (2)

3. Fill in the following table as shown in the examples given. (10 x 1 = 10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of enlightened despot</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Dates when ruled</th>
<th>One enlightened achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frederick II</td>
<td>1740-1786</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Austrian Lands</td>
<td>1740-1780</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1780-1790</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Russian Empire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Identify two not so good measures taken by one or more of the above enlightened despots.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
(2)

5. Name two other petty despots and the country over which they ruled.
   (a) ____________________________________________________________
   (b) ____________________________________________________________
(2)

5. Why did the nobility came out against the changes of the enlightened despots?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
(2)

(Total marks = 20)
Unit 5.5 - The Enlightenment

Read carefully the following essay titles and answer any ONE in about 200 to 300 words. Essays carry 20 marks each.

PAPER 2A
On the Enlightenment and enlightened despotism
1. (a) What do you understand by ‘the Age of Reason’? (6)
(b) What contribution to the development of new ideas was made before 1763 by French philosophers? (SEC 1996) (14)

2. How far can Frederick II of Prussia and Catherine the Great of Russia be described as enlightened monarchs? Discuss with reference to their ideas and policies.

3. Who were the enlightened philosophers and what impact did they have on the French Revolution of 1789? (SEC 2011)

PAPER 2B
On the Enlightenment and enlightened despotism
1. (a) What do you understand by ‘Enlightened Despotism’? (8)
(b) Who were the main enlightened despots of Europe in the 18th century? (6)
(c) What did any one of these enlightened despots achieve? (SEC 1995) (6)

2. (a) What was the Enlightenment? (2)
(b) Name two philosophers that profess enlightenment ideas. (2)
(c) Outline the teaching of one of these philosophers. (6)
(d) Frederick II of Prussia is described as an enlightened despot. Explain why. (10) (SEC 2010)

3. (a) What was the Enlightenment? (4)
(b) Name one philosopher and discuss his significance. (4)
(c) Name one enlightened despot and discuss his/her policies. (4)
(c) What effect did the Enlightenment have on the French Revolution? (4)
(d) Explain was slavery was. (4) (SEC 2011)

4. (a) What was the Enlightenment? (4)
(b) What caused this movement? (4)
(c) Name two philosophers of the Enlightenment and two enlightened despots. (4)
(d) Choose any one of these philosophers and explain his ideas. (4)
(e) What were the main results of this movement? (4) (Annual Paper 2009)