



A-level HISTORY

Component 2F The Sun King: Louis XIV, France and Europe, 1643–1715

Friday 6 June 2025 Afternoon Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is 7042/2F.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 1 hour on Question 01 from **Section A**
 - 45 minutes on each of the **two** questions answered from **Section B**.

Section AAnswer Question 01.

Source A

From a letter to a trusted friend from Archbishop Fénelon, 1708. Fénelon was a former tutor of the Dauphin. He had been exiled by Louis XIV since the 1690s.

The former finance minister, Monsieur Chamillart, told me that the country is experiencing desperate times. The continuation of the war has led to famine and increased taxes across the provinces. Monsieur Chamillart said that to sue for peace was impossible as the peace terms would further ruin France. I was tempted to say: "either make war more successfully or don't make it at all!" In my opinion the peace terms will be only more shameful in a year and the country will have starved by then. The army is currently in trouble because of a lack of money and no sense of direction. There is no single person in control of affairs, nor anyone who dares take on anything upon themselves. Gone are the days of Louvois, and I fear we will see unrest among the soldiers if things do not improve. There is already a risk of rebellion in the provinces due to lack of food. We are ruining and risking France to retain control of Spain.

5

10

Source B

From a speech by Louis XIV, June 1709. This speech was addressed to Louis' subjects. All parish priests in France had to read the speech to their parishioners.

After many years of war and continued sacrifice by the people of France, I owe it to my subjects to inform them of the reasons why we are still at war. I share in all the evils which this war is inflicting on my faithful subjects. Though I have demonstrated to the whole of Europe that I want peace, I am certain that to agree peace now would only be a disaster for France. If it was up to me alone, the people of France would now be enjoying peace. Our enemies continue to plot against us and restrict our trade, and it is to our enemies that our combined anger should be directed. For peace to be agreed I would have had to accept conditions that were highly dangerous for the safety of my frontier provinces. I would have had to force my grandson, the King of Spain, to quit his throne. My enemies offer such peace knowing that it would be impossible for me to accept.

5

10

Source C

From the diary of a bourgeois resident of Caen, 1709. Caen is in the northwest of France.

Since the month of January, wheat has been very expensive. This has led to much famine, particularly for the poor. This has given rise to a royal declaration which has commanded every person in each parish to donate a sum of money in proportion to his wealth. This was not enough to stop some riots by artisans who lacked bread, because there were job cuts in all the trades. In Rouen, a crowd of nearly four thousand poor people formed, and went to the home of the Intendant to demand bread. As the Intendant was in Paris, they sacked and looted his house. They then went to the home of the Commissioner of Police and did the same to his house. This disorder would have gone on had the business owners not decided to put a stop to it. In order to do this they closed the town gates and shops for two days. Whilst things seem quieter now we are all doubtful that this tranquillity will last.

5

10

0	1
---	---

With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying discontent in France towards the end of Louis XIV's reign.

[30 marks]**Turn over for Section B**

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0	2
---	---

'In the years 1643 to 1648, the Regency government in France was weakened most by its financial policies.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0	3
---	---

'France was strengthened by the Dutch War.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0	4
---	---

To what extent were the actions of Louis XIV, from 1685, responsible for the outbreak of the Nine Years War?

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

Copyright information

For confidentiality purposes, all acknowledgements of third-party copyright material are published in a separate booklet. This booklet is published after each live examination series and is available for free download from www.aqa.org.uk

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders may have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements. If you have any queries please contact the Copyright Team.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.



2 5 6 A 7 0 4 2 / 2 F