



Name: _____ Date: _____

HOW DID ABSOLUTE MONARCHS JUSTIFY THEIR RULE?

Document #1

“Unlike my father, Louis XIII, I am not and will not be held accountable to the Third Estate (council of nobles) or to the people of France. I rule France because our Heavenly Father has chosen me, Louis XIV, to rule the French people. And I will not allow my power to be limited by the Constitution of France or any other stupid laws. After all, I am the State!!!!”

Louis XIV, King of France (1643-1715)

1. According to this document, how does Louis XIV justify his right to rule France?

2. Why do you think that Louis XIV was nicknamed “The Sun King?”

Document #2

“ Dear Jean,

Living under the rule of Louis XIV is really difficult. His ministers are harsh and brutal in collecting taxes from the common folk in France. He takes our taxes and uses them to build palaces and castles for himself. At one castle alone, he houses and feeds 1,000 dogs so that he may go hunting with his ministers. Meanwhile we die of hunger. Merchants can no longer sell goods, farmers no longer plow the fields, and most of our young men are off fighting in one of the King’s stupid wars. However, if this is God’s will, then we must all continue to obey.”

Love, Iva Hardlife, French peasant

1. According to this document, why would the subjects of “Divine Right” kings be reluctant to rebel against their rulers? _____

Document #3

Base your answers to the following questions on the picture on page 481 in your book. Louis XIV's palace at Versailles, France had over 10,000 rooms, which were often filled with French nobles and Catholic Church officials, all of whom were guests of Louis XIV.

1. Based on this document, what benefits would Louis XIV get from housing these French nobles and Church officials? _____

2. What risks was Louis XIV taking by housing these people at Versailles? _____
