

AP World History
Enlightened Despotism
1750-1900

Objective: Students will work with historical documents to develop an understanding and interpretation of the significance of centralized monarchs in the age of Enlightenment thought.

Project Overview: Through an examination of primary documents and secondary historical interpretations, students will research, *select* and organize historical evidence in support of a single historical interpretation that they believe best captures the role and importance of European enlightened despots in World History.

Historiography: “Few historical concepts have had their obituaries written more frequently than enlightened absolutism, yet so obstinately refused to die” - H. M. Scott

Task: In small groups, students will

1. Exploratory Phase:

- a. Examine primary documents and conduct general research to gain an understanding of the major opinions and policies of the Enlightened Despots.
- b. Survey the various secondary interpretations of the age and its rulers and consider the ways in which your understanding and research information coincides with the various conclusions proposed by historians
- c. *Access suggested resources below*

2. Creating a Historical Argument:

- a. The group may either articulate a specific argument proposed by a historian from their research, or create their own interpretation.
- b. Students will present their evidence from the exploratory phase (step a) via a google presentation, Prezi, or PowerPoint that illustrates the ideas contained in your selected interpretation.

3. Assessment

- a. Submit your group’s completed work/presentation of ideas to your teacher
- b. Class Discussion

Resources:

[PRIMARY SOURCES DOCUMENT LINK](#)

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATIONS (*EXCERPTS FROM SELECTED WORKS*)

The Interpretation of History (pp.194-195)

By L. Cecil Jan

http://books.google.com/books?id=gOnic_27CpQC&pg=PA194&lpg=PA194&dq=enlightened+despot+AND+historical+interpretation&source=bl&ots=f2ewJp-dW7&sig=5zll_wjTqZ7xT9x0ppC3VSShRt8&hl=en&sa=X&ei=0WmjUuzaMZLlsAS5soDACA&ved=0CEAQ6AEwBg

Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 7, Enlightenment, Reawakening and ... (p.52)

edited by Stewart J. Brown, Timothy Tackett

http://books.google.com/books?id=VLG0mqIZ55IC&pg=PA52&dq=enlightenment+despots&hl=en&sa=X&ei=AHykUuX8K_OmsQTo8oDYDw&ved=0CDwQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=enlightenment%20despots&f=false

Syllabus of a Course of Twelve Lectures on the Enlightened Despotism of the (Lec. 1 pp.3-5)

By Henry Morse Stephens

<http://books.google.com/books?id=sgpFAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=enlightened+despots&hl=en&sa=X&ei=J32kUovTM7HhsATPvYBA&ved=0CDwQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=enlightened%20despots&f=false>

The age of the enlightened despot, 1660-1789 (pp.256-259)

By Arthur Henry Johnson

<http://books.google.com/books?id=g998AAAAMAAJ&pg=PA256&dq=enlightened+despots&hl=en&sa=X&ei=J32kUovTM7HhsATPvYBA&ved=0CEsQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=enlightened%20despots&f=false>