

Exercise walk-through

The Enlightenment ■ 4.3

eXercise

You must be able to

- state the central claims about reason, authority and rights
- explain the **social contract** 社会契约 argument
- describe the role of the **public sphere** 公共领域
- state the limits Enlightenment thinkers themselves accepted

Method — Central claims

That reason applied to human affairs can improve them; that inherited authority must justify itself; and that individuals possess rights not granted by rulers.

Method — Social contract

Legitimate government rests on the consent of the governed rather than on divine appointment. The argument supplies a **criterion** by which any existing government can be judged and found wanting.

Method — Public sphere

Salons, coffee houses, periodicals and academies created a space where argument circulated outside church and court, and where standing depended on what was said rather than on birth.

Method — Stated limits

Many thinkers restricted the political rights they argued for to propertied men, and several argued explicitly against extending them to women. Recording this is part of describing the movement accurately.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State two central Enlightenment claims.

Solution 2.1

Method: Central claims

Worked steps

any two of: reason applied to human affairs can improve them; inherited authority must justify itself; individuals possess rights not granted by rulers **B2**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Explain what the social contract supplies to a critic of government.

Solution 2.2

Method: Social contract

Worked steps

a criterion — consent — by which any existing government can be judged **B1** and found wanting **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

A salon hosts an argument between a noble and a writer of no rank.

- (a) State what this illustrates.
- (b) State one limit of the public sphere.

Solution 2.3

Method: Public sphere

Worked steps

- (a) that standing in the public sphere depended on argument rather than birth **B1**.
- (b) participation was largely confined to the educated and propertied **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

The social contract grounds legitimate government in

- A** divine appointment
- B** the consent of the governed
- C** inherited title
- D** military force

Solution 3.1

Method: Social contract

- A divine appointment
- B the consent of the governed
- C inherited title
- D military force



Worked steps

B. consent replaces divine appointment.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Recording the limits Enlightenment thinkers accepted is

- A** unnecessary
- B** part of describing the movement accurately
- C** a modern imposition
- D** irrelevant to the exam

Solution 3.2

Method: Stated limits

- A unnecessary
- B part of describing the movement accurately 
- C a modern imposition
- D irrelevant to the exam

Worked steps

- B. accuracy requires the limits as well as the claims.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A thinker argues for natural rights and against political rights for women.

- (a) State what this shows about the movement.
- (b) Explain how a good answer handles it.

Solution 3.3

Method: Stated limits

Worked steps

(a) that its universal language coexisted with stated exclusions **B1**. (b) state both the claim and the limit **B1**, since reporting either alone misdescribes the movement **B1**.