AP EUROPEAN HISTORY • EXERCISE SHEET

5.3 Britain's Ascendency

Name: ______________ Class: __________ Date: ____________ **Total: 12 marks**

KEY WORDS britain's ascendancy 英国的崛起 • fiscal crisis 财政危机

Objective

Build the skills to explain **Britain's ascendancy 英国的崛起**.

You must be able to:

- name the sources of British advantage
- explain the fiscal advantage of parliamentary consent
- describe the role of naval power
- state the consequence for France

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Sources of advantage

A fiscal system able to borrow cheaply, a navy able to protect trade and deny it to rivals, a commercial and colonial network, and political stability after the constitutional settlement.

■ Fiscal advantage

Because taxation required parliamentary consent, lenders believed the debt would be honoured; the state therefore borrowed at lower rates and could sustain longer wars than rivals with larger populations.

■ Naval power

A navy protects one's own trade and denies the enemy's, which turns a war into an economic contest that the stronger trading power wins over time.

■ Consequence for France

The same wars left France with debt and without the fiscal machinery to service it, which is the direct link between 5.3 and 5.4's revolution.

2 Practice

2.1 Name three sources of British advantage. [3]

2.2 Explain why parliamentary consent lowered borrowing costs. [2]

2.3 Two states fight the same wars; one emerges dominant and the other in fiscal crisis.

(a) State the mechanism. [1]

(b) State the link to the next subtopic. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A navy turns a war into [1]

- **A** a purely land contest
- **B** an economic contest the stronger trading power wins over time
- **C** a religious dispute
- **D** a stalemate always

3.2 Lenders charged Britain less because they believed [1]

- **A** the crown could repudiate freely
- **B** a body representing them would honour the debt
- **C** the navy would seize their money
- **D** interest was illegal

3.3 A state borrows at a lower rate than its rival for thirty years.

(a) State the cumulative effect. [1]

(b) Explain how it converts into military advantage. [2]

Solutions

2.1 any three of: cheap borrowing; naval power; a commercial and colonial network; political stability after the settlement.

2.2 taxation required the consent of a body representing the lenders, so the debt was believed secure and the rate fell.

2.3 (a) the difference in fiscal systems and borrowing costs. (b) French debt without the machinery to service it produces the crisis of 5.4.

3.1 B. protecting one's own trade and denying the enemy's is decisive over time.

3.2 B. representation made the promise credible.

3.3 (a) a very large difference in the total cost of the same borrowing. (b) the saving funds ships, troops and subsidies to allies, so the cheaper borrower fields more force for the same real cost.