
AS HISTORY

Russia in the Age of Absolutism and Enlightenment, 1682–1725

Paper 1E

Specimen 2014

Morning

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-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 **1E**.
- Answer **two** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **either** 02 **or** 03.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- 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:
 - 50 minutes on Section A
 - 40 minutes on Section B.
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Section AAnswer Question 01.

Extract A

In 1722 Peter implemented his passionate belief in meritocracy in the famous Table of Ranks of the Russian Empire. This created three parallel ladders of official ranks in the three branches of state service. Everyone was to begin at the bottom rung, and promotion was to depend not on birth or social status, but strictly on merit and length of service. Thereafter, at least in theory, nobility was of no importance in Russia, and honours and office were open to everyone. Despite subsequent alterations and the inevitable corrosion by special favours and promotions won by bribes, it remained the basis of class structure in the Russian Empire.

Adapted from Robert K Massie, *Peter the Great*, 1997

Extract B

There are many misconceptions about the Table of Ranks, this most important and enduring of Peter's reforms. The most widespread is that it demonstrated a firm commitment to 'meritocracy' to the detriment of birth, or, even more radically, raised commoners at the expense of nobles. The insistence on qualifications runs through Peter's policies but the prime beneficiary of the Table of Ranks was to be the State. There was no place here for modern concepts such as equality of opportunity or help for the disadvantaged. The table was intended to encourage the nobility to perform more efficiently.

Adapted from Lindsey Hughes, *Peter the Great*, 2004

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With reference to these extracts and your understanding of the historical context, which of these two extracts provides the more convincing interpretation of the effectiveness of the Table of Ranks?

[25 marks]

Section B

Answer **either** Question 02 **or** Question 03.

EITHER

0 2

‘Peter’s success in foreign policy was due to the Russian navy.’

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

OR

0 3

‘Peter the Great’s domestic reforms were determined by what he saw on the Great Embassy.’

Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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