

NAME:

DATE:

CLASS:

DBQ FOCUS: Charlemagne's Frankish Empire



Document-Based Question Format

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying Documents (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.)

This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write a response that:

- Has a relevant **thesis** and **supports that thesis with evidence** from the documents.
- Cites evidence from included source perspectives.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the author's points of view.

Historical Context: Charlemagne [i.e. Charles the Great] is the most discussed political leader of the 8th and 9th centuries. Charlemagne used the great wealth and strong military organization that he had inherited from his father and brother to build his empire. In 772 he opened an offensive against the Saxons, and for more than 30 years he pursued a ruthless policy that was aimed at subjugating the Saxons and converting them to Christianity. Almost every year, Charlemagne attacked one or another of the several regions of Saxon territory. He also was responsible for mass executions. The Saxons proved to be a far more difficult enemy than any of the other nations conquered by Charlemagne. By contrast, the Lombards had been conquered in a single campaign in 773-74. On Christmas Day in 800, Charlemagne accepted the title of emperor and was crowned by Pope Leo III, and ruled until his death in 814. He became ruler of a vast empire in Western Europe, and from 800 on held the title of Roman Emperor. During his reign, it looked as if a new Roman Empire might emerge in Europe; however this did not happen. His empire was divided into three areas and led to the gradual emergence of regional monarchies.

Question

How was Charlemagne able to successfully unite the various Germanic tribes as part of the growing Carolingian Empire?

Document 1

Source: from Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, S. E. Turner, trans. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880), pp. 56-62, 51-54, 64-66.

[Charles' Appearance.] Charles was large and strong, and of lofty stature, though not disproportionately tall (his height is well known to have been seven times the length of his foot); the upper part of his head was round, his eyes very large and animated, nose a little long, hair fair, and face laughing and merry. Thus his appearance was always stately and dignified, whether he was standing or sitting; although his neck was thick and somewhat short, and his belly rather prominent; but the symmetry of the rest of his body concealed these defects. His gait was firm, his whole carriage manly, and his voice clear, but not so strong as his size led one to expect.

His health was excellent, except during the four years preceding his death, when he was subject to frequent fevers; at the last he even limped a little with one foot. Even in those years he consulted rather his own inclinations than the advice of physicians, who were almost hateful to him, because they wanted him to give up roasts, to which he was accustomed, and to eat boiled meat instead. In accordance with the national custom, he took frequent exercise on horseback and in the chase, accomplishments in which scarcely any people in the world can equal the Franks. He enjoyed the exhalations from natural warm springs, and often practised swimming, in which he was such an adept that none could surpass him; and hence it was that he built his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and lived there constantly during his latter years until his death. He used not only to invite his sons to his bath, but his nobles and friends, and now and then a troop of his retinue or body guard, so that a hundred or more persons sometimes bathed with him.

Student Analysis

How did Charlemagne command respect through his non-verbal presence?

How did Charlemagne's personal life reflect the strength of his ruling style?

Document 2

Source: from Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, S. E. Turner, trans. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880), pp. 56-62, 51-54, 64-66.

[Charles's Manner] Charles was temperate in eating, and particularly so in drinking, for he abominated drunkenness in anybody, much more in himself and those of his household; but he could not easily abstain from food, and often complained that fasts injured his health. He very rarely gave entertainments, only on great feast-days, and then to large numbers of people. His meals ordinarily consisted of four courses, not counting the roast, which his huntsmen used to bring in on the spit; he was more fond of this than of any other dish. While at table, he listened to reading or music. The subjects of the readings were the stories and deeds of olden time: he was fond, too, of St. Augustine's books, and especially of the one entitled "The City of God."

Student Analysis

How did Charlemagne view moderation an individual's will power? In your opinion how did this influence his ruling style?

Document 3

Source: Sullivan, Richard E., *Carolingian Missionary Theories*. The Catholic Historical Review. Catholic University of America Press. Vol. 42, No. 3 (Oct., 1956), pp. 273-295

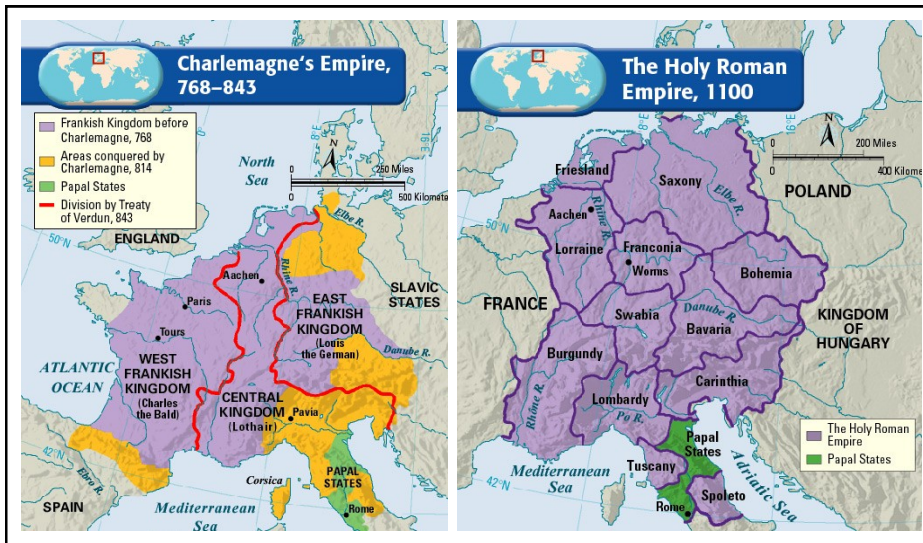
When Alcuin addressed his letters to Charlemagne's court in 796 to plead for a sensible missionary policy in connection with the Avars, he made no protest against the fact that Charlemagne's armies would force the Avars to accept baptism. ... Several Carolingian writers made it perfectly clear that they felt the most efficient way to bring pagans to the point where they would listen to Christian teaching was the use of political force, arguing openly that it was justifiable and praiseworthy to initiate the conversion process by the use of the sword... (277)

Student Analysis

How did Charlemagne spread Christianity throughout Europe?

Document 4

Source: Map compiled by various sources



Student Analysis

How do both maps of the Holy Roman Empire compare at different points in history? How do they differ?

Document 5

Source: from Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, S. E. Turner, trans. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880), pp. 56-62, 51-54, 64-66.

[Charles' Education] Charles had the gift of ready and fluent speech, and could express whatever he had to say with the utmost clearness. He was not satisfied with command of his native language merely, but gave attention to the study of foreign ones, and in particular was such a master of Latin that he could speak it as well as his native tongue; but he could understand Greek better than he could speak it. He was so eloquent, indeed, that he might have passed for a teacher of eloquence. He most zealously cultivated the liberal arts, held those who taught them in great esteem, and conferred great honours upon them. The King spent much time and labour with him studying rhetoric, dialectics, and especially astronomy; he learned to reckon, and used to investigate the motions of the heavenly bodies most curiously, with an intelligent scrutiny.

Student Analysis

Describe Charlemagne's philosophy on the value of education?

Document 6

Source: from Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, S. E. Turner, trans. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880), pp. 56-62, 51-54, 64-66.

In order to cement the bonds of society and to increase the feeling of association beyond the cold bonds which resulted from the community of interests of the upper classes, Charlemagne tried to promote a certain amount of basic education. He had a love of wisdom and learning for their own sake. There was much more than mere flattery in the verses which hailed Charlemagne not only as a zealous warrior but also as an indefatigable worker for the improvement of learning. His intentions, however, were always practical. He realized that the administrative system might be improved if a few people could be made to learn to read and write.

Student Analysis

Why was education important for the general welfare of the public?

Document 7

Source: Munz, Peter. *Life in the Age of Charlemagne*. B.T. Batsford, Ltd., London, 1969.

The most tangible expression of this conception of his power is his legislative enterprise. The mere volume of his legislation is unique in medieval history. The large number of his written laws and instructions which have come down to us comprise no less than 1,075 separate pieces of 'legislation'. They were collected and issued in bundles known as 'capitularies'. ... They touched on private matters, on economics and trade, on religion and justice and warfare. ... Nothing was too big or too small to escape the King's attention, and these capitularies, if nothing else, bear witness to his constant vigilance. They were not formally enacted by a legislative body. They were issued on the King's authority as an expression of his concern and responsibility for the welfare of the people entrusted to him by God. Charlemagne was unique among medieval rulers in his scrupulous concern for the welfare of his subjects. (56-57)

Student Analysis

Describe Charlemagne's legislative influence in regulating law and order in the Holy Roman Empire.

Document 8

Source: *Einhard: The Life of Charlemagne*, translated by Samuel Epes Turner, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1880).

[Foreign Relations] He added to the glory of his reign by gaining the good will of several kings and nations; so close, indeed, was the alliance that he contracted with Alfonso [II 791-842] King of Galicia and Asturias, that the latter, when sending letters or ambassadors to Charles, invariably styled himself his man. His munificence won the kings of the Scots also to pay such deference to his wishes that they never gave him any other title than lord or themselves than subjects and slaves: there are letters from them extant in which these feelings in his regard are expressed. ... he dispatched his ambassadors with them, and sent magnificent gifts, besides stuffs, perfumes, and other rich products ... In fact, the power of the Franks was always viewed by the Greeks and Romans with a jealous eye, whence the Greek proverb "Have the Frank for your friend, but not for your neighbor."

Student Analysis

What was Charlemagne's relationship with foreign dignitaries?

Document 9

Source: *Einhard: The Life of Charlemagne*, translated by Samuel Epes Turner, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1880).

Toward the close of his life, when he was broken by ill-health and old age, he summoned Louis, King of Aquitania, his only surviving son by Hildegard, and gathered together all the chief men of the whole kingdom of the Franks in a solemn assembly. He appointed Louis, with their unanimous consent, to rule with himself over the whole kingdom, and constituted him heir to the imperial name; then, placing the diadem [crown] upon his son's head, he bade him be proclaimed Emperor and Augustus. This step was hailed by all present with great favor, for it really seemed as if God had prompted him to it for the kingdom's good; it increased the king's dignity, and struck no little terror into foreign nations. After sending his son back to Aquitania, although weak from age he set out to hunt, as usual, near his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle. ... While wintering there, he was seized, in the month of January, with a high fever, and took to his bed. ... He died January 27, the seventh day from the time that he took to his bed, at nine o'clock in the morning, after partaking of the holy communion, in the seventy-second year of his age and the forty-seventh of his reign. His body was washed and cared for in the usual manner, and was then carried to the church, and interred amid the greatest lamentations of all the people.

Student Analysis

Describe the magnitude of respect that Charlemagne demanded and/or was awarded by his subjects.

**Generic Core-Scoring Guide for AP World History
Document-Based Question**

Basic Core: Competence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
1. Has acceptable thesis.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
2. Addresses all of the documents and demonstrates understanding of all or all but one.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all or all but one document. [Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but two documents.]	2 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
4. Analyzes point of view in at least two documents.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways, depending on the question.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence ➤ Depending on the topic of the question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Causation • Comparison • Patterns of Continuity and Change Over Time
6. Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Argumentation ➤ Use of Historical Evidence
Subtotal	7	Essay as a whole: Synthesis
Expanded Core: Excellence	Points	Historical Thinking Skills Assessed
Expands beyond basic core of 1–7 points. A student must earn 7 points in the basic core area before earning points in the expanded core area. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis. ➤ Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents. ➤ Uses documents persuasively as evidence. ➤ Analyzes point of view in most or all documents. ➤ Analyzes the documents in additional ways — groupings, comparisons, syntheses. ➤ Brings in relevant “outside” historical content. ➤ Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed. 	0–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Same skills as noted in basic core ➤ Other historical thinking skills may be demonstrated depending on the question and the documents
Subtotal	2	
TOTAL	9	

TOTAL POINTS BASIC CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EXPANDED CORE	
TOTAL POINTS EARNED	
FINAL GRADE	

RUBRIC	PERCENT	POINTS
9	100	50
8	95	48
7	90	45
6	85	43
5	80	40
4	75	38
3	70	35
2	65	33
1	60	30
0	0	0

Comments: