Absolutism

-As European nations acquired empires and wealth from the Americas, their treasuries greatly increased and they built powerful armies. The leaders of these countries ensured loyalty to the crown (monarchy) and achieved absolute rule over their governments and people by divine right.

Parliament triumphs over absolutism in England

-Queen Elizabeth I dies without a direct heir to the throne. The throne passed to her direct relatives the Stuarts, the ruling family of Scotland

-The Stuarts were not popular with the people and had problems dealing with Parliament, resulting in a “century of revolution” against parliament

-King James I lectures Parliament about divine right, “don’t question power”

-James I dissolves parliament and begins taxing on his own; Parliament fiercely resists his claims for absolute power

-James I rejects English Protestants called Puritans attempts to purify the Church of England from Catholic practices

-Charles I inherits throne after father (James I) dies

-like father, acts as an absolute monarch

-ignored Petition of Right (can’t raise taxes w/out approval of Parliament or imprison anyone without just cause) he earlier signed and further angered the Puritans even more

-Asks Parliament for funds to suppress a Scottish rebellion, however, Parliament launches it’s own rebellion which led to the battlefield

The English Civil War (1642-1649)

Cavaliers- supporters of Charles I; odds on favorites (nobles well trained in dueling and warfare)

Roundheads- opposed Charles I (country gentry, manufacturers, Puritans)

-Oliver Cromwell was the Roundhead’s leader

-Roundheads win and King Charles I put on trial and found guilty; head was severed with an ax

-first time a King had been killed by his own people

-Result was no ruler in England could claim absolute power

-England becomes a republic, known as the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell

Civil War also changes England socially

* fined on Sunday for cursing, in a tavern, dancing, etc.
* all theatres were closed
* banned music in churches
* education was given to boys and girls

-Puritans lose their grip of England after the death of Cromwell

-Parliament invites Charles II to return and the monarchy is restored with the Stuarts

-he reopened theatres and taverns and restored the official church of England

-James II inherits throne after Charles II death and tries to restore Catholicism

-Parliament is outraged and this begins the Glorious Revolution

Glorious Revolution

-Parliament invites James’s Protestant sister and husband William III to become rulers

-before crowned they had to accept a new series of acts called the English Bill of Rights

-ensured superiority of Parliament over the monarch

-Parliament handles tax issues

-no Catholics could be monarch

-traditional rights reinstated (trial by jury)

-affirmed habeas corpus

-this made England a limited monarchy (monarch’s power limited by Parliament)

-Glorious Revolution was the beginning of constitutional monarchy but not quite democracy