### A. Clarifying
As you read about the absolute monarchs that ruled in Central Europe, fill out the chart by writing notes in the appropriate spaces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Thirty Years’ War</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Note two causes of the war.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Note four consequences of the war and the Peace of Westphalia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Note two differences between the economies of western and central Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Note two reasons why central European empires were weak.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prussia and Austria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Note three steps the Hapsburgs took to become more powerful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Note three steps the Hohenzollerns took to build up their state.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Synthesizing
On the back of this paper, write a brief assessment of Maria Theresa and Frederick the Great as rulers.

Absolute Monarchs in Europe 3
A period of political transition in central and eastern Europe followed the end of the Thirty Years' War, in 1648. The declining powers of Poland, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire faced not only a deterioration of their influence, but outright extinction from Europe. Prussia, the Russian Empire, and the Austrian Empire emerged as powerful forces on the European continent.

The three declining powers shared many characteristics. In all of them, central power became weak. They lacked efficient systems of government and administration. In addition, the people in these empires were difficult to govern because they consisted of many nationalities and spoke a variety of languages. Finally, none of the empires formed their people into a strong organization. As a result, the Polish Republic ceased to exist in 1795, while the Holy Roman Empire disappeared in 1806.

However, the Ottoman Empire, though crumbling and weak, managed to maintain itself until 1922.

The 17th century saw the emergence of a new kind of national state. These new states were built on a strong monarch, a standing army, and a professional civil service and administration. These new powers sought to fill the “political vacuum” created in central Europe by the declining empires. Leaderless populations could easily be shifted inside the political boundaries by the monarchs of newer national states. As a result, these new powers led by the Hohenzollerns of Prussia, the Romanovs of Russia, and the Hapsburgs of Austria formed or expanded their states in the void created by the “soft” rule of these aging empires.

These three new empires, in turn, would influence the course of European history for the next 200 years.
Interpreting Text and Visuals

1. What new power swallows the Kingdom of Hungary? ________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

2. What empires are shown on both maps? Which increase? Which decrease? ____________
   ___________________________________________________________________

3. By 1795, the lands of Poland were divided up by what other empires? ________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

4. Examine again the location of the Ottoman Empire. Why do you think it was able to last the 
   longest out of the three aging powers? ______________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

   ___________________________________________________________________

6. What problems caused the decline of Poland, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire? 
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

7. Describe the characteristics that enabled Russia, Austria, and Prussia to rise to power. _____
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
**HISTORYMAKERS** Maria Theresa  
*Dutiful Defender of Austria*

"... She could fight like a tiger and was at war for a large part of her reign; but she never fought [to gain land but] always ... to preserve her inheritance. ... She was not a zealously reforming queen. Her reforms were radical and far-reaching, but she reformed, as she fought, because she saw what had to be done. ..."—Historian Edward Crankshaw on Maria Theresa

The 18th century was a time in which kings wrote the history of Europe. However, Maria Theresa of Austria emerged as a strong and powerful queen. She bravely defended Austria during a Prussian invasion and launched a series of domestic improvements that helped her people.

With no male heir, King Charles VI of Austria feared that other powers in Europe would try to seize his kingdom after his death. As a result, he convinced these European monarchs to accept Maria Theresa, his eldest daughter, as the next ruler of Austria. In 1740, Charles died, and the 23-year-old queen inherited a troubled country. Her people were uneasy. They thought that her husband would rule the nation, and they did not trust him. In addition, poor weather had produced bad harvests, and there was widespread hunger.

Maria Theresa learned about these worries by sending one of her ladies-in-waiting in disguise into Vienna to hear what her subjects were saying. For example, the people resented the fact that wild animals roamed the forests owned by the monarchy, eating food that they could eat. She won their approval by ordering the animals killed.

Just months after Maria Theresa became queen, Frederick II of Prussia moved his army into Silesia, Austria’s richest region. Later in life, she wrote that she faced this situation "... without money, without credit, without an army, without experience and knowledge, even without counsel." Her father’s old advisers gave her simple advice: give up Silesia.

The young queen proved to be made of sterner stuff. In June 1741, Maria Theresa moved her army into Silesia, Austria’s richest region. Later in life, she wrote that she faced this situation "... without money, without credit, without an army, without experience and knowledge, even without counsel." Her father’s old advisers gave her simple advice: give up Silesia.

The queen also made the army larger and better trained. In addition, she issued an order to set up a public school system in Austrian lands. Finally, she brought people to settle rural areas where no one lived, which resulted in increased farmland.

Maria Theresa made these changes to strengthen her position, but they also benefited her people. Crankshaw summarizes her rule: “She had held her society together, encouraged its individual talents, and left it better than it was before.”

**Questions**

1. **Determining Main Ideas** What would you say was the main idea of this biography?
2. **Making Inferences** How would you describe Maria Theresa’s character?
3. **Drawing Conclusions** Would you say that Maria Theresa was a good queen? Explain.
**Determining Main Ideas** Complete the chart below by answering the questions about each topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question 1</th>
<th>Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thirty Years’ War</td>
<td>1. When did the war start?</td>
<td>2. What two religions were involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hapsburg triumphs</td>
<td>3. Who led the Hapsburg armies in putting down the Czech uprising?</td>
<td>4. How were Hapsburg soldiers paid?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hapsburg defeats</td>
<td>5. Who drove the Hapsburg armies out of Germany?</td>
<td>6. Why did Cardinal Richelieu send French troops to join the German protesters?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Theresa</td>
<td>7. What was Maria Theresa’s affect on the nobility?</td>
<td>8. Which family did she belong to? Which country did she rule?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick the Great</td>
<td>9. Which country did he rule?</td>
<td>10. How did Frederick II feel a ruler should treat his people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Years’ War</td>
<td>11. How did France get involved in this war?</td>
<td>12. Who was the real victor of the war?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>