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# SPAIN: 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES







What is the Spanish Golden Age?

## LET'S BEGIN

- 1 What event marked the beginning of the 15th century in Spain?
  - 2 What changes occurred at the beginning of the Modern Age once the Catholic Monarchs ruled Spain as one territory?
  - 3 In pairs, look at the large painting. Do you know who the artist is? Do you recognise this painting? What artistic style do you think it is?
  - 4 What does the smaller photo show? Do you recognise this building? Do you know where it is? What artistic style do you think it is?
  - 5 Can you name any artists from 18th-century Spain?
- What do you know? Let's find out!



### Useful language



I think this is a painting by ...

The scene shows ...

In the foreground, I can see ...

In the background, I can see ...

## Reflect

- 1  How many centuries did the Modern Age span?
- 2  Name three things that happened in the 15th century and three things that happened in the 16th century.
- 3 Which dynasty ruled in Spain at the end of the 16th century?
- 4 Think about the hierarchy you learnt about in Unit 1. Then read the text and answer the questions below in your notebook.


Social structure was hierarchical and very unequal in the Middle Ages, and the population was mostly rural. Social classes were based on status and wealth, and it was very difficult to move up from one class to another.

Society was divided into the privileged classes and the unprivileged classes. Living conditions were very difficult for the unprivileged classes. City streets were usually dirty because there were no sewage systems, and rural peasants lived in small, cramped accommodation. Wealthier people lived in more comfortable conditions.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a Which class did most of society belong to in the Middle Ages? | c What was the social structure based on? |
| b What were the living conditions like in those times?          | d What were the streets like?             |

- 5 In your notebook, answer the following questions:

- a How many levels did the hierarchy pyramid have?
- b Which groups made up the 'privileged' classes and 'unprivileged' classes?
- c Think of one profession for each group.
- d Which groups do you think lived in the countryside?
- e What made living conditions difficult for some groups?

- 6  In the last unit you learnt that Felipe II became king of Spain and reigned until almost the end of the 16th century:

- a What do you think happened next? Research the Habsburg family tree online.
- b How did Felipe II pay for the expensive wars that were fought under his reign?
- c Do research online to find out how this affected Spain in the 17th century.



Peasants worked in the fields.





## Early modern lives

### Think first

You are going to research daily life in early modern Europe. In your notebook, match the people in the box with the social classes.



### People

banker • bishop • blacksmith • doctor • duchess  
king • merchant • monk • duke • nun  
peasant • queen • emperor • shoemaker

### Social classes

monarchs • nobles • clergy  
middle class • lower class

**Materials:** computer, internet access, pen, notebook.

### Step by step

- 1 As a group, choose four types of early modern people, either from the *Think first* activity or your own ideas. Choose two from the privileged classes and two from the unprivileged classes. Each member of your group will research one person.
- 2 Search online for information about the daily life of the person you have been assigned.
  - a Where did they usually live?
  - b How much did they have to work?
  - c How much money did they have?
  - d What and how often did they eat?
- 3 Write down the information in your notebook. Include other interesting details that you find and keep a record of the websites that you use.
- 4 Share your information with your group. Who found the most facts about the person they studied? Who discovered the most interesting fact?
- 5 Present your work to the class. You can do this as a play or as a digital presentation.



### Reflect

How different were the lives of the privileged and unprivileged classes? Who do you think had the most comfortable / uncomfortable life? Why?

Evaluate your cooperative learning.



# 17th-century Spain

Who was the first king of the Habsburg dynasty?  
Which territories did he rule?

## The start of a decline

Frequent wars in the 16th century and the cost of maintaining a large empire had consequences for 17th-century Spain. It suffered a period of economic crisis with financial and political troubles.

### Economic crisis

**Wars** were very expensive. During the 17th century, Spain was involved in frequent territorial and religious wars. One example is the Thirty Years' War, which was fought against many different European powers (1618–48). By the end of the 17th century, Spain was weakened and had lost some of its European territories, such as Portugal.

**Pirates**, often supported by France or England, frequently attacked Spanish ships that were on their way back to Spain from the Americas and carrying large amounts of gold and silver.

The **monarchy** also spent lots of its wealth on its armies and the administrative officials that looked after the Spanish Empire.



The famous pirates Francis Drake and Jean Fleury

### Social problems

**Population:** In general, the population of Spain decreased during the 17th century. Many people died as a result of war.

**Living conditions worsened** as **famine** was caused by poor harvests and plagues. Many people **emigrated** to the Americas looking for a better quality of life.

However, while this was a general tendency, the *Morisco* population actually increased in Spain during this time. Some *Moriscos* were very successful and had jobs such as merchants and shopkeepers. They were expelled from Spain because of their increasing power in society. This meant many of them were separated from their families.



The expulsion of the *Moriscos*

### Political structure

Three Habsburg kings ruled in Spain in the 17th century: Felipe III, Felipe IV and Carlos II. These monarchs had ministers, called *validos*, to represent them and run the government's administration. These ministers became very powerful.



Duke of Lerma, *valido* to Felipe III

## The Habsburg dynasty



During the reign of **Felipe III** from 1598 to 1621, Spain started to lose power and influence in Europe. The monarch began the tradition of giving royal power to noblemen, called *validos*, who became the real rulers of the country. The Duke of Lerma had a lot of power during Felipe III's reign.

Economic problems also increased during his reign. Less gold and silver was arriving from the Americas, so formerly wealthy cities, such as Segovia, Toledo and Sevilla started to experience slow economic declines.



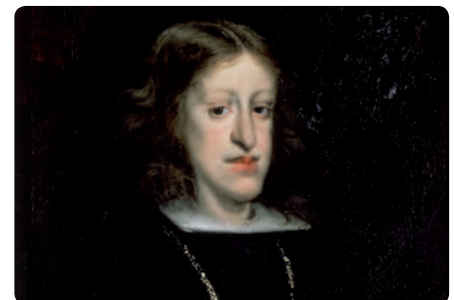
Felipe III



Felipe IV

**Felipe IV** officially ruled Spain between 1621 and 1665. However, the *valido* tradition was now well-established.

Portugal revolted in 1640, which led to its independence from the Spanish Empire. This was officially recognised by Spain in 1668.



Carlos II

**Carlos II** ruled from 1665 to 1700. He was very young when he inherited the throne, so his mother ruled on his behalf for the first ten years of his reign. His *valido* was the Duke of Medinaceli. Carlos II did not produce an heir, so the Spanish Habsburg dynasty ended with his death in 1700.

- 1 What were the main causes of the economic crisis in 17th-century Spain?
- 2 Why did less wealth arrive from the Americas? How did this affect the economy?
- 3 In pairs, name the main reasons for the decrease of the Spanish population in the 17th century.
- 4 Who were the *Moriscos*? Write a few sentences in your notebook.



# The Golden Age

Can you name the main characteristics of the Renaissance style?

The Golden Age was a period when many great works of art, literature and architecture were created. It spanned the 16th and 17th centuries and coincided with the voyages of Columbus, the unification of Spain and the reign of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty.

The main style used in the 17th-century Golden Age was the **Baroque** style. The invention of the printing press in 1450 helped distribute literature to the masses and popularise it.

## Baroque literature

During the Golden Age, some of Spain's most famous literature was written. Baroque literature was characterised by the use of satire, realism and religious themes. Prose and poetry were popular genres.

- **Novelists:** Miguel de Cervantes, María de Zayas y Sotomayor, Baltasar Gracián.
- **Playwrights:** Félix Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, Pedro Calderón de la Barca.
- **Poets:** Francisco de Quevedo, Luis de Góngora, Santa Teresa de Jesús.



Don Quijote by Cervantes



Las comedias by Tirso de Molina



Obras festivas by Quevedo

## Baroque architecture

During the Golden Age, many beautiful churches and squares were built. Common characteristics in architecture included oval shapes, elaborate structures and lots of ornamental features.



Museum of History of Madrid



University of Valencia



Santiago de Compostela Cathedral

## Project tips

Velázquez was a realist painter, which means he only painted what he could see.

## Baroque painting

Some famous Baroque painters from the Golden Age were Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez, José de Ribera, Francisco de Zurbarán and Bartolomé Estaban Murillo. The main features of their style were realism and the way in which they painted emotion.

### Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez

Velázquez painted royal portraits such as of Felipe IV, as well as historical scenes.



*The Fable of Arachne (1655)*

### José de Ribera

Ribera used a style called **tenebrism**, which featured a strong contrast between light and dark.



*Venus and Adonis (1637)*

### Francisco de Zurbarán

Zurbarán specialised in religious paintings of monks, nuns and saints as well as still lifes.



*Breakfast with chocolate (1640)*

### Bartolomé Esteban Murillo

Murillo is known for his religious scenes and portraits of women and children.



*Rebecca and Eliezer (1660)*

**1** What invention in 1450 popularised Baroque literature? Search online for the German goldsmith most associated with the invention. What was his name?

**2** What were the main characteristics of Baroque architecture?

**3** Which of the artists on this page do you prefer? Describe their style in your notebook.



# 18th-century Spain

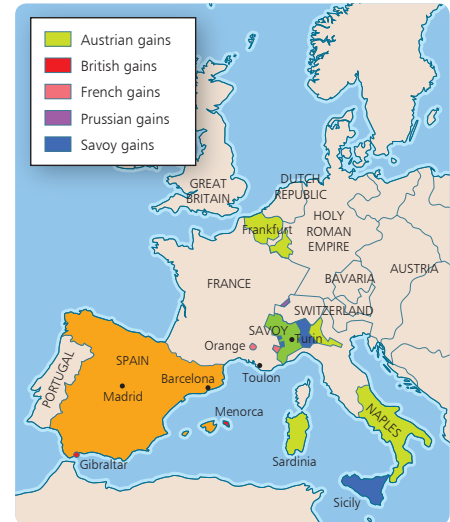
There were great political and social changes in 18th-century Spain. There was a change in dynasty and absolute monarchism appeared. The Spanish economy began to improve and the population increased, with many people moving to towns and cities.

## The War of Succession (1701–1714)

Carlos II left no heir to the throne when he died in 1700. As a result, two royal families claimed the Spanish throne: the **French Bourbons** and the **Austrian Habsburgs**. This war started as a civil war, and then developed into a European war.

The war ended with the signing of the **Treaty of Utrecht** in 1713–14. The Bourbon dynasty replaced the Habsburgs and **Felipe V** was officially recognised as the king of Spain.

However, in exchange, Spain lost some of its European territories. The Spanish territories in the Netherlands and Italy were given to Austria, and Gibraltar and Menorca were given to the British. This was because other European countries were afraid Spain would be too powerful in Europe with so many territories.



Europe after the treaty of Utrecht

## The Bourbon dynasty

### Felipe V (1700–1746)

Felipe V established a new form of government called **absolute monarchism**. This meant that the monarch had unlimited power in government. He also created laws for the whole Empire from Spain and centralised the government.

**Jorge Juan** was a Spanish mathematician and scientist who worked during the reign of Felipe V. In 1734, Felipe V sent him on an expedition to assess how round the Earth was. He discovered that it was not a perfect sphere, but actually flattened at the poles.



Felipe V



Jorge Juan

## The Enlightenment

The Enlightenment period meant significant cultural changes for some 18th-century European countries. The Enlightenment was the belief in human reasoning over religion or authority. People started to believe that they could improve their lives through education and politics. In Spain, the Enlightenment coincided with the reign of Felipe V, Fernando VI, Carlos III and Carlos IV.

### Fernando VI (1746–1759)

Fernando VI supported the Arts. He founded botanical gardens and an observatory, and supported technical and agricultural advances. He died without an heir, so his brother Carlos III ruled after him.



Fernando VI



Carlos III

### Carlos III (1759–1788)





Carlos III made cities safer and more hygienic thanks to new sewage systems, water systems, street lighting and pavements. Streets became wider, and monuments such as the *Puerta de Alcalá*, the Royal Palace and various fountains were built. He also created hospitals, museums and botanical gardens. He supported the development of industry, agriculture and trade.

### Carlos IV (1788–1808)

In the 18th century, **Francisco de Goya** was a royal court painter and recorded the events of the end of the 18th century in Spain. He started to paint for Carlos III and the royal family in 1785 and continued painting the royals during Carlos IV's reign. Goya's portraits show the splendour and wealth of the royal family with lots of light and colour.



Francisco de Goya, *Charles IV of Spain and His Family* (1800)

-  In pairs, discuss the War of Succession. How long did it last? Who were the original participants? What compromise did the victor have to make?
-  Name three advances from the 18th century. Who supported these advances?
-  In your notebook, write about the improvements the Spanish population experienced during the 18th century.
-  Who are the Bourbons' descendants today?

### Useful language


The three main advances were ...

They were supported by ...  
(*Fernando VI*) supported ...



## The Arts

Many of the 18th-century Bourbon monarchs devoted time and money to the Arts in Spain. This included painting, architecture, theatre and literature. The Arts can be a useful historical source as they are a window into the culture of a particular moment in history.

- 1  Get into pairs. Person A reads text A below. Person B reads text B on page 108. Together, decide if the sentences below refer to text A, B or both.

### Unit 3, text A



Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599–1660) was a very famous painter from the Golden Age. He was born in Sevilla and was very passionate about art. He told his parents that he wanted to be a painter when he was 11 and moved to Madrid aged 23 to become a portrait artist at the court of King Felipe IV. Being painted by artists was important to the monarchs as it was a way for them to be recorded in history.

Velázquez became famous for his delicate painting style and the light and dark colours he used. He influenced many artists of the following centuries. One of his most famous paintings, *Las Meninas*, cleverly shows himself painting a court scene. It shows us what court life was like in that time. Velázquez was a royal painter until he died in 1660.



Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (1656)

- a His life as a soldier inspired his stories.
- b He was passionate about his art from childhood.
- c He was a portrait artist.
- d He influenced many people for generations to come.
- e He wrote one of the most important novels in the history of literature.

- 2   Which type of art do you prefer? Choose one and explain your answer.

- painting
- literature
- theatre
- architecture

Make notes in your notebook about this type of art. Then research one of the artists from page 46 or 47. Tell the class. Think about the following:

- What was their most famous work?
- Where can we see it?
- What does it tell us about life in that period of time?
- Does it tell us what life was like for everyone?

### Useful language

I chose this type of art because (*I like going to the theatre*).

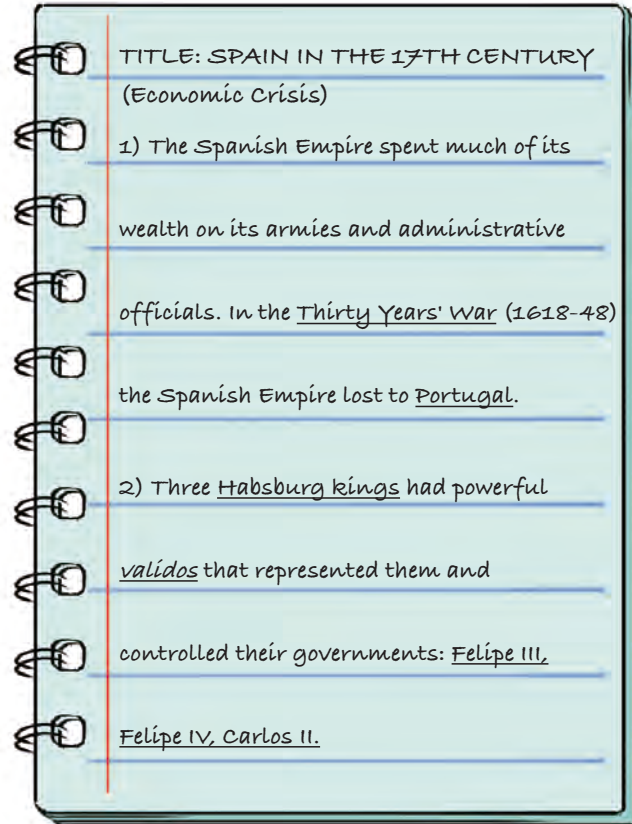
I am passionate about (*literature*) because ...



## Writing a summary

A good way to remember what you have read is to write a short summary about it. Summaries are short explanations of a text that include everything a person needs to understand it.

- 1) In your notebook, write one or two short sentences for each paragraph in the text. Your sentences should include important words and information. Look at the example below. Compare the words on the notepad to the ones in the summary:



- 2) If another person reads your summary, they need to be able to answer these questions:

- What important events happened?
- When did they happen and where?
- How did the situation start or end?
- Which people are important to remember, and why?

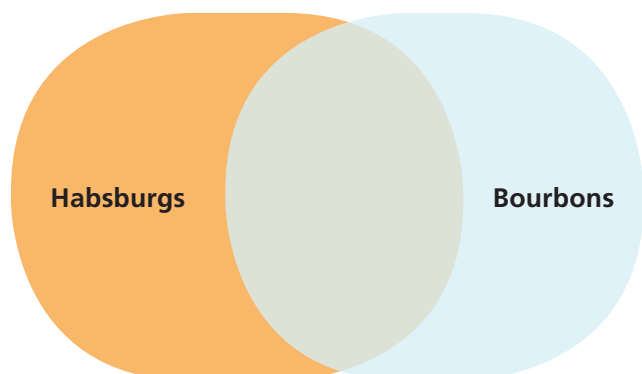
- 1 Use the information on pages 44–45 of your Pupil's Book.
- 2 Work in pairs. Person A writes four sentences about Felipe III and Felipe IV. Person B writes four sentences about Carlos II and Spain's social problems in the 17th century.
- 3 Share your summary with your partner. Can they understand all the details without reading the original text? If not, work together to change or add details to make your summary clearer.





# REVIEW

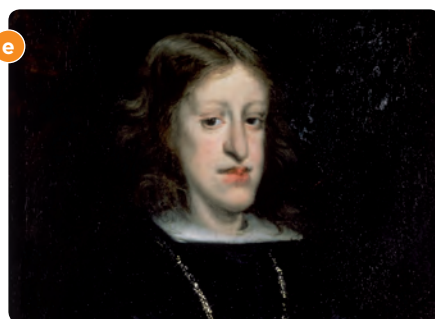
- 1 In your notebook, complete the diagram using the words from the box.



- Felipe V
- cultural advances
- Golden Age
- Thirty Years' War
- *validos*
- modernisation of Spain
- Carlos II
- 16th and 17th centuries
- Carlos III
- population increase
- population decrease
- expulsion of the *Moriscos*
- Enlightenment
- 18th century

What event marked the change of the two dynasties?

- 2 Put the portraits of kings in the order of the periods in which they reigned.



- 3 Put these cultural movements in order and associate each one with three words that define that movement. It can be a characteristic or an artist.

- Enlightenment
- Baroque
- Renaissance

- 4 Imagine you lived in 17th or 18th-century Spain. What social class do you belong to? What is your profession? What is your life like? Write a short paragraph in your notebook.

**5** Read the sentences. In your notebook, write the names of the monarchs they refer to. Which dynasty did each monarch belong to?

- a Goya painted a portrait of this king's family.
- b He died without an heir.
- c He introduced absolute monarchy.
- d He introduced various improvements to Spanish cities.

**6** Decide if the following events occurred in the 17th or 18th century. In your notebook, complete the table.

- a The War of Succession took place.
- b Ministers called *validos* ruled the country.
- c The Treaty of Utrecht was signed.
- d Many Spaniards emigrated to the Americas.
- e Spain lost Gibraltar.

17th century	18th century
.....	.....

**7** In your notebook, order the events from the earliest to the most recent. Write the dates.

- a The Spanish War of Succession began.
- b Felipe V became the first Bourbon king of Spain.
- c The Thirty Years' War began.
- d Carlos II died.
- e Portugal became independent.

**8** How do you think these events contributed to the economic and political crisis in Spain?

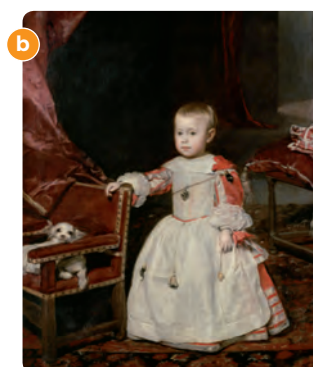
- a Pirates attacked Spanish ships.
- b Spain was involved in many wars.
- c The country was ruled by *validos*.
- d The Spanish population decreased.

**9** Read the sentences. Who do they refer to?

- a His style of painting was called tenebrism.
- b He painted the family of Felipe IV.
- c He painted the family of Carlos IV.
- d He wrote *Don Quijote de la Mancha*.

**10** Look at these paintings of children. Can you identify which belongs to Murillo and which one to Velázquez? Then compare and contrast them. Think about the following:

- differences in daily life
- clothes
- colours used and why



**11** Talk about the Golden Age in Spanish art. What events marked this period? Who were the most famous painters? What were some of the greatest literary works? Use the word cloud below to help you.



What do you know now?  
Check your progress!