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ABSTRACT

This lesson plan begins with an overview of the age of enlightenment and those ideas that influenced the founders of the United States. The lesson plan provides information sheets about five enlightenment thinkers: John Locke (1632-1704), Mary Wolstonecraft (1759-1898), Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755), Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788), and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). The teacher notes section offers tips on how to present the material to students, lists 10 activities for students to complete, includes a focused vocabulary, and Web links. The lesson plan discusses the unit and lists six activities: (1) "Overview"; (2) "Venn Diagram"; (3) "T-Chart"; (4) "Matching"; (5) "Time Line"; and (6) "Documents of Democracy Chart." Contains a vocabulary page. (BT)

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History Social Science



Schools of California
Online Resources for
Education (SCORE):
Connecting California's
Classrooms to the
World

The Growth of Democratic Tradition: The Age of Enlightenment

SO 034 244

Tenth Grade Lesson by Marie A. Rosa

SCORE

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The Growth of Democratic Tradition:



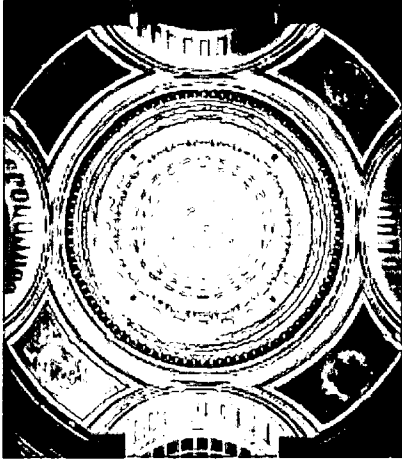
The Age of Enlightenment



During the Enlightenment, or Age of Reason, intellectuals began to examine the standards by which rulers governed. The principles of this time held that everything, including the government, was worth examination and scrutiny. These principles spread to our early political scientists.

These new liberal ideas stated that individuals had natural rights and that government was an agreement or contract between the people and their ruler. In this governmental contract both the ruler and the citizen had rights and responsibilities.





Power needed to be separated and balanced so that individuals or groups did not become corrupt through those powers. The people wanted a change from absolutism and the divine right of kings to constitutionalism.

Constitutionalism was the belief that the government contract should be written down, making clear what powers were given to whom.

The philosophers believed that the government "contract" and its supporting laws needed to reflect the "general will" of the people. Laws should be agreed upon by both the ruler and those governed. Assemblies of citizens should be formed with real power to influence the government and judge whether rulers acted properly.



Rulers and governments which abused their power and did not protect the rights of the citizens were corrupt and the people had a right to rebel and replace the

ruler. The ruler also had the right to expect that the citizens would respect the government and laws which were just.

After the American Revolution and the French Revolution, more and more countries began to write constitutions which reflected these liberal ideas. Political theorists or thinkers further examined how to determine if the laws or rules of government really reflected the "individual rights" of the citizens and the "general will" of the people.



It became accepted that legislation and justice ought to reflect what was the best for the most people, or the greatest good for the greatest number. Discussion and debate on exactly who was a citizen and had the right to take part in the new governments continued to grow. Discussions on slavery, women's rights, and discrimination continue today.

After reading the overview, visit the following political thinkers. Read through their ideas. Decide who would have agreed with the theories presented in the Growth of Democratic Traditions overview.



John Locke



Mary Wolstonecraft



Montesquieu



Jean Jacques Rousseau



John Stuart Mill

John Locke

1632-1704



John Locke is considered one of the most important fathers of our democratic tradition. He wrote *Two Treatises of Government*. Locke's ideas were widely read in both England and America. Thomas Jefferson used Locke's principles in the Declaration of Independence when he said men are "endowed with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Locke believed that a Social Contract exists between the government and the people. He states that governments are formed with the consent of citizens. Locke believed that powers in the government should be limited and the powers between parts of the government should be balanced. These checks and balances (later reflected in the U.S. Constitution) and true representation in the legislature would maintain limited government and individual liberties.

Locke said that the state exists to preserve the natural rights of its citizens. Therefore, he said that if a government fails in that task, citizens had the right to rebel against it. In some cases, it was the citizens duty to rebel. He did not agree with Thomas Hobbes that the individual person surrendered his natural rights to the government in return for protection. John Locke also believed that no one should dictate another person's religion.

Important Facts

- ideas used by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence
- believed all individuals had natural rights which include "life, liberty, and property"
- state should protect individual rights
- citizens should rebel against unjust governments
- wrote *Two Treatises of Government*
- believed in religious freedom
- supported women's rights

Locke was also a proponent of equal rights for women. He believed that the idea that man was superior to women was an idea that men had made, and could therefore be reversed.

Mary Wolstonecraft

1759-1898



Mary Wolstonecraft was born in 1759. She grew up in London in a large family. She watched her father bully his wife and family and protected her sister from an abusive husband. After a few years as a teacher, she decided to follow a literary career.

Mary became disturbed by the unfair treatment of women. She read books by the Enlightenment thinkers like John Locke and Edmund Burke. She was very moved by the French Revolution and their fight for rights. In 1790 she produced her Vindication of the Rights of Man as a response to Edmund Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France. In 1792, she published her Vindication of the Rights of Women. This important work advocated equality of the sexes and ideas which were the main doctrines of the later women movement. She did not believe that women were helpless creatures who were fit to be simple decorations inside a man's house. Society had created women who were "gentle domestic brutes." Mary believed women were too often nauseatingly sentimental and foolish. She encouraged women to become educated, to gain self-respect, and put their abilities to good use in society.

Although Mary viewed marriage as a form of tyranny over her sex, she eventually married William Godwin. Mary Wolstonecraft died the year her child was born in 1897. Her daughter, Mary, eventually married Mr. Shelley and wrote the famous novel Frankenstein.

Important Facts

- Born 1759 in London
- Became a teacher and a writer
- disagreed with societies treatment of women
- believed marriage was particularly unfair to women
- advocated equal education for women and men
- wrote ***Vindication of the Rights of Women***
- believed that both sexes could contribute equally to society

Mary Wolstonecraft was truly an Enlightened thinker and a child of the French Revolution. She saw a new age of reason and benevolence close at hand. Mary undertook the task of helping women to achieve a better life, not only for themselves and for their children, but also for their husbands. She is one of the pioneers of the Women's Rights Movement.

Baron de Montesquieu

1689-1755



Montesquieu's full title was Baron de la Brede et de Montesquieu. He became the first great French man associated with the Enlightenment. He became famous in 1721 with his *Persian Letters*, which criticized the lifestyle and liberties of the wealthy French as well as the church. However, Montesquieu's book *On the Spirit of Laws*, published in 1748, was his most famous work. It explained his ideas on how government would best work.

Montesquieu argued that the best government is one in which power was balanced among three groups of officials. He thought England - which divided power between the king (who enforced laws), Parliament (which made laws), and the judges of the English courts (who interpreted laws) - was a good model of this. Montesquieu called the idea of dividing government power into three branches the "separation of powers." He thought it most important to create separate branches of government with equal but different powers. That way, the government would make sure that too much power was not held by one individual or group of individuals. He wrote, "When the [law making] and [law enforcement] powers are united in the same person... there can be no liberty."

Important Facts

- three-part government -- legislative, executive, and judicial
- separation of governmental powers
- U.S. government based on his suggested structure
- wrote *On the Spirit of Laws*
- Believed in the rights of the individual
- influence the writing of constitutions of many countries including the United States

According to Montesquieu, each branch of government could limit the power of the other two branches. There would be a system of 'checks and balances' between the groups. Therefore, no branch of the government could threaten the freedom of the people. His ideas about separation of powers became the basis for the United States Constitution.

Despite Montesquieu's belief in the principles of a democracy, he did not feel that all people were equal. Montesquieu approved of slavery. He also thought that women were weaker than men and that they had to obey the commands of their husband. Although some women might have the ability to govern, it was against their basic nature.

Jean Jacques Rousseau

1712-1788



Jean Jacques Rousseau was born in 1712. He had an unusual childhood with no formal education. From these very simple beginnings he became one of the most influential thinkers of the Enlightenment.

His classic book on political theory was called *The Social Contract* (published in 1762). The beginning, 'Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains' is very famous. This work looks at how man should behave with society. "The Social Contract" is what Rousseau calls the agreement among men and government that explains what responsibilities are required in the partnership. The social contract he explores in the book involves people recognizing a collective 'general will'. This general will is supposed to represent the common good or public interest. One of the primary principles of Rousseau's political philosophy is that politics and morality should not be separated. When a state stops acting in a moral fashion, it no longer has the right to control, make decisions, and exert authority over the individual. The second important principle is freedom, which the state is created to preserve.

Rousseau believed that all citizens should participate in government or the contract - and should be committed to the general good - even if it means acting against their private or personal interests.

Important Facts

- believed politics and morality are not separate
- he is considered an opponent of the Enlightenment's emphasis on reason
- believed people should rely more on instinct and emotion
- state is created to preserve freedom
- government is a contract between the ruler and citizens
- wrote *The Social Contract*

John Stuart Mill

1806-1873



John Stuart Mill was born in 1806, well after the Enlightenment and after the American Declaration of Independence, but his interpretation of the basic ideas of liberty, individual rights, women's rights, and other issues contribute to the continuing development of democratic ideas.

Mill was a philosopher, economist, and (like his friend Jeremy Bentham) was a proponent of Utilitarianism. Utilitarians believed that an action is right if it tends to promote happiness and wrong if it tends to produce the reverse of happiness -- not just the happiness of the person involved in the action but also the happiness of everyone affected by it. In other words, things that produce the greatest happiness for the most people are good. He particularly approves of common sense morality. They are things people do without systematic thought.

This focus on the greatest good for the greatest number, is against John Locke's idea of individual rights. Mill believed that ethically, a person needs to be concerned for how the individual action affects society. Rights are ultimately founded on utility. In *On Liberty* Mill made the statement that self-protection alone could excuse or justify either the states tampering with the liberty of the individual or any personal interference with someone else's freedom.

John Stuart Mill expressed believed that there is an

Important Facts

- known for his thoughts on how people and the government should behave toward each other
- **greatest good for the greatest number** should be the aim of the lawmakers
- self-protection can be a defense for interfering with someone else's personal freedoms
- advocated freedom of opinion without censorship
- approves of common sense morality
- worked for

intellectual elite. Without men of genius, society would become a "stagnant pool." He recognized that a person and society has to be trained properly to make use of the liberty he advocated. He was in total opposition to any government ensorship. Without complete liberty of opinion, he insisted, civilizations would not develop. A society has to be free and open without suppressive government or private organizations.

Mill was also a believer in rights for women. He and his wife, Harriet, worked for women's suffrage in England. As a member of Parliament, Mill presented a petition for women to receive the ability to vote.

women's rights

Teacher's Notes

It is expected that students first read through the overview page. After that, students should navigate through the five political thinkers in order to discover their theories and apply them to the development of democratic traditions as presented in the overview. A suggested unit plan with activities can be found on the unit plan page.

These pages are intended to enrich those parts of the curriculum which deal with the Enlightenment, Age of Revolutions, Constitutionalism, and the Rise of Democratic Traditions. The site consists of an overview page which discusses the changes from Absolutism to Constitutionalism. The majority of the pages are concerned with five philosophies or early political scientists. Four of the five political theorists are from the age known as the Enlightenment. Their ideas had a direct impact on the revolutionaries who wrote the documents of freedom and liberal constitutions in the 18th and 19th centuries in the United States, Europe, and Latin America. John Stuart Mill's ideas about censorship and public good have helped the courts refine its interpretation of the constitution. The importance of Mary Wolstonecraft's writings has been particularly influential in the women's movement during the twentieth century. It is necessary to give students a background on Absolutism before beginning the unit. Please consult the unit plan notes.

7.11 Students analyze political and economic change in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (the Age of Exploration, the Enlightenment, and the Age of Reason).

7.11.5. Describe how democratic thought and institutions were influenced by Enlightenment thinkers (e.g., John Lock, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, American founders).

- 8.1 Students understand the major events preceding the founding of the nation and relate their significance to the development of American constitutional democracy.

8.12. Analyze the philosophy of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights").

- 10.2 Students compare and contrast the Glorious Revolution of England, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution and their enduring effects worldwide on the political expectations for self-government and individual liberty.

10.21. Compare the major ideas of philosophers and their effects on the democratic revolutions in England, the United States, France, and Latin America (e.g., John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Simon Bolivar, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison).

- 11.1 Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.

11.1.1 Describe the Enlightenment and the rise of democratic ideas as the context in which the nation was founded.

12.1 Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.

12.1.1 Analyze the influence of ancient Greek, Roman, English, and leading European political thinkers such as John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Niccolo Machiavelli, and William Blackstone on the development of American government.

Rise of Democratic Ideas Vocabulary

abusive	Enlightenment	preserve
advocated	ethically	principle
assemblies	formal	produce
affect	focus	promote
authority	inalienable	proponent
balance	influential	pursuit
basic	intellectual	rebel
basis	interference	reflect
benevolence	interpret	representation
bully	issue	responsibilities
ensorship	justice	rights
consent	justify	separate
contract	liberty	standard
corrupt	literary	suffrage
criticize	maintain	suppressive
democratic	morality	system
doctrines	nauseatingly	theory
economist	opposition	tyranny
elite	particularly	utility
endowed	petition	will
enforce	philosophy	

Links

www.lucidcafe.com

www.lucidcafe.com/library/96jun/rousseau.html

www.geocities.com/Athens/4753/locken.html

www.geocities.com/Athens/4753/frames.html

<http://www.knuten.liu.se/~bjoch509/philosophers/philosophers.html>

www.chateauversailles.fr

www.utm.edu/research/iep/

www.wsu.edu/~dee/ENLIGHT/ENLIGHT.HTM

Selected Biographies
Archive

Rousseau

Locke

Locke, Rousseau, Mill

virtual tour

Modern Encyclopedia
of Philosophy

Rousseau,
Enlightenment

Unit Plan

Getting "Into" the Unit:

Discuss the Age of Absolutism as personified in Louis XIV. Explain how many monarchs believed they ruled by divine right. (This form of government placed absolute, or unlimited, power in the monarch and his or her advisors.) The nickname of Louis XIV, "the Sun King," promoted the image of the king as the center of the universe of each nation. His famous quote "I am the state" further exemplifies his far reaching power. Louis governed by decree and, although he felt a certain paternalism towards his subjects, was not responsible to the wishes of any specific subject. Those favors bestowed and powers delegated to someone else were given at his whim. Use images of the palace at Versailles to illustrate the pomp and majesty attached to Louis and his court. The palace at Versailles has a wonderful web tour. Explain that the English, Russian, Austrian and some German Monarchs also believed in "the divine right of kings."

Possible Activities:

- As an introduction to government, have the students in groups of four create a list of the top ten laws they feel are most important in any given society. Tell them they have been shipwrecked on an island or are colonizing a new planet or some other framework to begin their new civilization. After students have created their list, debrief as a class with a large piece of chart paper having each group contribute to the top laws of society. Then discuss how news laws will be arrived at in the future, how existing laws will be amended, how the laws will be enforced, what rights should be protected, and who will decide the fairness of the laws or the enforcement. After this activity introduce Louis XIV and continue with the lesson.
- Review the feudal pyramid. Discuss the duties of the king to the people and vassals to the king.

Getting "Through" the Unit:

<u>Activity #1: Overview</u>	text on the development of democratic traditions
<u>Activity #2: Venn Diagram</u>	comparing and contrasting three philosophies
<u>Activity #3: T-Chart</u>	comparing and contrasting two philosophies
<u>Activity #4: Matching</u>	connecting ideas to the five thinkers
<u>Activity #5: Time Line</u>	places the philosophies and the documents of democracy on a time line
<u>Activity #6: Documents of Democracy Chart</u>	research activity connecting documents, ideas, and philosophers

The following text appears with illustrations on the "Overview" page. The text intentionally does not include references to the philosophies although it contains many of their ideas. After reading through the overview, copy Activity #1 page. Activity #1 expects that the students will match the thinkers to the ideas they would support.

Activity #1: Overview

List the names of the thinkers that would support the ideas in italics contained in each paragraph.

During the Enlightenment, or Age of Reason, intellectuals began to examine the standards by which rulers governed. The principles of the Scientific Revolution, which held that everything including the government was worth examination and scrutiny, spread to these philosophies; our early political scientists.

These new liberal ideas were that individuals had natural rights and that *government was an agreement or contract* between the people and their ruler. In this governmental contract both the ruler and the citizen had rights and responsibilities. *Power needed to be separated and balanced* so that individuals or groups did not become corrupt through those powers. Liberal ideas mean ideas that want a change from the way things are usually done. These ideas were considered liberal because they wanted change from absolutism and the divine right of kings.

The philosophers or philosophies as they were called, believed that government "contract" and its supporting laws needed to reflect the "*general will*" of the people. *Laws should be agreed upon* by both the ruler and those governed. Assemblies of citizens with real power to influence the government and judge the effectiveness of the constitutions should be formed.

Rulers and governments which abused their power and did not protect the rights of the citizens were corrupt and the people had a *right to rebel* and replace the ruler. The ruler also had the right to expect that the citizens respect the government and laws which were just. Citizens should expect that their right to *freedom of speech without censorship* was protected as well as many other natural rights. Citizens also wanted the right to choose their own *religion*. Some political thinkers believed everyone had a right to *universal suffrage*. Suffrage means the right to vote. Some thinkers fought for *women's rights*.

After the American Revolution and the French Revolution, more and more countries began to draw up or write constitutions which reflected these liberal ideas. Political theorists further examined how to determine if the laws or rules of government really reflected the "*individual rights*" of the citizens and the "general will" of the people. It became accepted that legislation and justice ought to reflect what was the best for the most people, or *the greatest good for the greatest number*. Discussion and debate on exactly who was a citizen and had the right to take part in the new governments continued to grow. Discussions on *women's rights and discrimination* continue today.

Activity #2: Venn Diagram

Have students choose three of the political philosophers to compare to each other using three circles in an overlapping Venn diagram.

Activity #3: T-Chart

Choose any two political philosophers and have the students compare and contrast them to each other.

	Similarities	Differences
Philosopher #1		
Philosopher #2		

Activity #4: Matching

Match the Political Thinker with the Ideas they believed. There may be more than one answer for each idea.



John Locke



Mary Wolstonecraft



Montesquieu



Jean Jacques
Rousseau



John Stuart Mill

Idea	Thinker
1. Natural rights	
2. Women's rights	
3. Self-protection can be a defense for interfering with an others personal freedoms	
4. Considered an opponent of the Enlightenment's emphasis on reason	
5. Citizens should rebel against unjust governments	
6. Advocated freedom of opinion without censorship	
7. Government is a contract between the ruler and citizens	
8. Marriage was particularly unfair to women	
9. Three part government -- Legislative, executive, and judicial	
10. Advocated equal education for women and men	
11. Religious freedom	
12. Politics and morality are not separate	
13. Greatest good for the greatest number should be the aim of the lawmakers	
14. Separation of governmental powers	
15. State is created to preserve freedom	
16. Influence the writing of constitutions of many countries including the United States	

"Beyond" the Unit:

Activity #5: Time Line

Have students create a time line covering the years 1600-1900. Include the life span of each of the five political thinkers. Also include the following events and documents: Declaration of Independence, Declaration of the Rights of Man, Constitution; American Revolution, French Revolution, Mexican War of Independence, American Civil War.

More Advanced: Have students draw conclusions about the ideas of the philosophers and the ideals of the revolutions. Which documents or revolutions have direct relationship to the ideas of the five political thinkers.

Activity #6: Documents of Democracy Chart

Have students research the following documents: Declaration of Independence, Declaration of the Rights of Man, Declaration of the Rights of Women, Constitution, Bill of Rights, etc. Work in groups and use the structure of this site to establish a relationship between the Documents of Democracy and the liberal ideas which they include. For Example:

<p style="text-align: center;">IN CONGRESS. July 4, 1776.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,</p> <p><i>(The main body of the document contains the text of the Declaration of Independence, including the famous phrase "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...")</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"> <i>(Signatures of the delegates, including John Hancock, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson)</i> </p>	<p>KEY IDEAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural rights -- • John Locke, • Mary Wolstonecraft • Right to Rebel -- • John Locke • General Will -- • Jean Jacques Rousseau
<p>Date Written:</p> <p>Country:</p>	<p>Authors):</p>

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Vocabulary Page

abusive	hurt or injure by treating in a bad or cruel way
advocated	to speak in favor of; recommend; urge.
affect	to have an influence on
assemblies	groups of people that gather to discuss issues
authority	the power and right to decide on and to enforce laws or rules
balance	a steady or stable position
basic	forming the main part of something; absolutely necessary
basis	the part on which other parts rest or depend; foundation
benevolence	feelings of goodness and kindness
bully	a person who uses strength to get what they want
censorship	when freedom of speech is controlled by someone in power
consent	to give permission; agree
contract	an agreement between two or more persons or groups
corrupt	dishonest; wicked
criticize	to judge whether something is good or bad; evaluation
democratic	based on the idea of equal rights for all
doctrines	a belief or set of beliefs held by a group of people

economist	someone who studies how money, goods, and services work
elite	a powerful minority; a socially superior group
endowed	to be given
enforce	to make sure rules or laws are followed
Enlightenment	period of history when scientific thinking was thought to be powerful
ethically	following accepted morals and standards of society
formal	correct and official
focus	to center attention on; the primary part
inalienable	unable to be denied or taken away
influence	able to make change occur; very important
intellectual	somebody with high mental ability and training
interference	to try to stop something from happening
interpret	to explain the meaning or importance
issue	a subject being discussed or argued about
justice	right; appropriate; fair
justify	to explain away and make actions reasonable
liberty	freedom
literary	relating to literature and writing
maintain	keep and protect
morality	following accepted beliefs of society and culture
nauseatingly	making you sick
opposition	someone or something against

particularly	especially; most importantly
petition	a formal request
philosophy	study of the truth about life and nature
preserve	to keep and protect
principle	belief that is held to be true or right
produce	to create or make
promote	to help develop or grow
proponent	someone who helps spread and idea
pursuit	to chase after and try to claim
rebel	to fight against those in power
reflect	be true to what was intended
representation	people who are elected to stand for your point of view
responsibilities	an obligation or duty; something which must be cared for
rights	guarantees of personal freedom
separate	divided apart
standard	rules which are used to show correct actions
suffrage	the right to vote
suppressive	to stop the development of; put down using force
system	a set of rules and beliefs
theory	an idea of why things happen
tyranny	when power is abusive and used to hurt people
utility	something that is able to be used
will	the power of the mind to make decisions



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