**SS.7.C.1.1:** *Recognize how Enlightenment ideas including Montesquieu’s view of separation of powers and John Locke’s theories related to natural law and how Locke’s social contract influenced the Founding Fathers.*

***SS.7.C.1.1 Benchmark Clarification 1****:* Students will identify and describe the Enlightenment ideas of separation of powers, natural law, and social contract.

In the 1700’s a movement developed in Europe called the **Enlightenment**. The main idea of the Enlightenment was the importance of learning and reasoning. Enlightenment thinkers believed education would solve society’s problems. These thinkers focused on the relationship between government and the people being governed. Their ideas included **separation of powers**, **natural law,** and the **social** **contract**.

Separation of powers means that power in government is divided into three branches. Each branch has its own unique responsibilities. This was a new idea in Europe because most governments had one person with all the power, like a king or queen. The idea of **checks** **and balances** allows each branch to limit the powers of the other branches.

Natural law is the Enlightenment idea that all human beings are born with and entitled to certain rights such as life and freedom. Natural law is universal, which means that these rights are guaranteed to everyone simply because they are born. Locke and Montesquieu believed that government laws and actions must respect **natural rights** and reflect natural law.

Finally, Locke and Montesquieu believed in the idea of a social contract. A social contract is created when an organized society agrees on the relationship between the government and the people, and on the rights and duties or the people and on the limits and responsibilities of the government.

***SS.7.C.1.1 Benchmark Clarification 2****:* Students will examine how Enlightenment ideas influenced the Founders’ beliefs about individual liberties and government.

The United States grew into 13 colonies from English settlements in North America. The King of England and Parliament (England’s legislature) governed the colonies. Many American colonists grew angry that the King refused to listen to their concerns. They were also angry that the Parliament did not include the colonists in decisions about the colonies. The colonists believed that the King and Parliament violated their **individual liberties**. This means that the colonists’ ability to live as free and independent people was not being protected.

Some colonists decided to speak out about wanting to separate from the English government. They wanted to create their own government. Representatives from each of the 13 colonies met and wrote a document listing their reasons for separation.

These representatives are now known as the Founding Fathers, or Founders. Many of the Founders’ views on the purpose of government included **Enlightenment** ideas such as **separation of powers**, **natural law,** and the **social contract**.

***SS.7.C.1.1 Benchmark Clarification 3****:* Students will evaluate the influence of Montesquieu’s and Locke’s ideas on the Founding Fathers.

The **Founding Fathers** read the ideas of **Enlightenment** thinkers. They read John Locke’s work about **natural law** and the **social contract**, and Baron de Montesquieu’s work about **separation of powers**.

Locke believed that the purpose of government is to protect **individual liberties** and the **natural rights** of life, liberty and property. The Founding Fathers included these ideas when they wrote the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence stated that the colonists wanted to be a free country, independent from England.

Montesquieu saw the dangers of a government ruled by one person with all the power. Montesquieu wrote that power in government should be divided into legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Each branch would have its own roles and responsibilities. This concept is called separation of powers.

James Madison and the other Founders used the ideas of natural law, social contract, and separation of powers to create the system of government in the U.S. Constitution. The Constitution continues to be the framework for the United States government today.

**Vocabulary:** *define each word/phrase in your own words – complete sentences*

**Checks & Balances: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Enlightenment: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Natural law: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Natural right: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Separation of powers: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Social contract: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Quiz:** *For each question, circle the best answer.*

**Low Complexity Question**

The image below concerns government.



Source: U.S. House of Representatives

Which Enlightenment idea is represented by the image?

Hint: The image is a visual representation of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.

The correct answer option should explain which Enlightenment idea is shown by the image of the three branches of government.

1. Separation of powers
2. Checks & balances
3. Social contract
4. Natural law

**Moderate Complexity Question**

The statements below are from the 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights.

Which statement reflects the Enlightenment ideas of government as expressed by Montesquieu?

Hint: The statements are from the 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights. This document is not required reading so it may include unfamiliar information.

The correct answer will reflect Enlightenment thinker Montesquieu’s influence on the writing of this document.

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4

**High Complexity Question**

How are the Enlightenment ideas that influenced the Founding Fathers reflected in modern institutions?

1. Colonies have been re-established to preserve popular sovereignty.
2. Oligarchies have increased to safeguard natural rights.
3. The United Nations promotes universal human rights.
4. The European Union encourages economic stability.

Hint: Apply Enlightenment ideas of the Founding Fathers to modern institutions.

The correct response will reflect how the Enlightenment ideas that influenced the Founding Fathers are found in present times.