The Florida Joint Center for Citizenship
A Partnership for Florida's Civic Health

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

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

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Lesson Summary

Essential Question
How did the ideas of Montesquieu and Locke influence the Founding Fathers?

NGSSS Benchmark
SS.7.C.1.1 Recognize how Enlightenment ideas including Montesquieu's view of separation of powers and John Locke's theories of natural law and how Locke's social contract influenced the Founding Fathers.

Common Core Benchmarks

LACC.68.RH.1.1	LACC.68.RH.1.2	LACC.68.RH.2.4	LACC.68.WHST.1.2
LACC.68.WHST.4.10	LACC.7.SL.1.1	MACC.K12.MP.1.1	MACC.K12.MP.5.1

Overview
In this lesson, students will recognize how two Enlightenment thinkers influenced the Founding Fathers.

Learning Goals/Benchmark Clarifications
- Students will identify and describe the Enlightenment ideas of separation of powers, natural law, and social contract.
- Students will examine how Enlightenment ideas influenced the Founders' beliefs about individual liberties and government.
- Students will evaluate the influence of Montesquieu's and Locke's ideas on the Founding Fathers.

Benchmark Content Limit
- Items will not require students to match a particular Enlightenment philosopher with a corresponding theory.

Civics EOC Reporting Category
Reporting Category 1 – Origins and Purposes of Law and Government

Suggested Time Frame
- Three 45-50 minute class periods

Civics Content Vocabulary
-
- checks and balances, consent of the governed, Enlightenment, individual liberty, influence, natural law, natural rights, separation of powers, social contract

Instructional Strategies
- Close reading of complex text
- Defining terms in context
- Guided discussion

Materials
Computer with internet access to project lesson activity sheets
Highlighters for all students
Student activity sheets:
- Influence from the Enlightenment: John Locke

- Why Government activity sheets from iCivics: http://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/why-government
- John Locke and the Declaration of Independence
- Influence from the Enlightenment: Baron de Montesquieu

Student reading materials:

- John Locke from iCivics http://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/john-locke-mini-lesson
- Baron de Montesquieu from iCivics: http://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/montesquieu-mini-lesson

Lesson Activities and Daily Schedule

Please use the chart below to track activity completion.

Day	Task #	Steps in Lesson	Description	Completed? Yes/No
Day One	Task 1	1-4	Hook Activity	
	Task 2	5-14	John Locke Reading	
	Task 3	15-24	Why Government Activities	
Day Two	Task 3	15-24	Why Government Activities (continued)	
	Task 4	25-28	Social Contract Class Discussion	
	Task 5	29-34	John Locke and Declaration of Independence Activity	
Day Three	Task 6	35-41	Baron de Montesquieu Reading	
	Task 7	42	Checking for Understanding	

Essential Content Background

This section addresses the following issues:

1. What are Enlightenment ideas?
2. John Locke and Natural Rights theory
3. Montesquieu's ideas on creating a "just government"

1. What are Enlightenment ideas?

"Enlightenment" is the term used to describe a Western philosophy that emphasizes reason as its primary basis. Enlightenment emerged from Europe in the 18th century, and represents a departure from the legitimacy of government that comes from a religious authority such as a theocracy or the divine right of kings. Core enlightenment values include an emphasis on liberty, individual rights and reason. Governments that reflect these values grant more freedom for the common people based on self-governance, natural rights, and natural law. Historians of America's founding argue that Enlightenment philosophy was read by those who signed key governing documents in the United States including the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Key Enlightenment philosophers whose writings impacted the founding documents of the United States include Baron de Montesquieu and John Locke. Montesquieu is best known for advocating separation of powers and checks and balances for an effective government (reflected in the U.S. Constitution) while John Locke's views are best reflected in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, particularly regarding those components focusing on the law of nature and social compact.

2. John Locke and Natural Rights theory

The founding fathers were deeply concerned about government abusing its power. It was reasoned that when a government abused its power, it deprived the citizens of their liberty. As liberty was a fundamental God given right, assurances had to be put in place to protect the people from government abusing its power.

The founding fathers consulted the works of many political philosophers when they developed government structures that protected the people from government abusing its powers. One of the most influential works was John Locke's Second Treatise of Civil Government (1690).

John Locke (1632-1704) was a British political philosopher who wrote extensively on the relationship between government and the society. It was Locke's view that there was a social contract between the government and society in a civil (citizen based) government. This civil government was based on natural law, which is fundamentally tied to natural rights.

According to Locke, men lived in a "state of nature" which meant that one is allowed to conduct one's life as one best sees fit, free from the interference of others. There is no government in a state of nature, and people are assumed to be equally responsible for protecting each others' "life, health, liberty and possessions". The laws by which people lived were derived from God, and these laws included the notion that people were forbidden from harming one another. Thus, the state of nature is a state of liberty where persons are free to pursue their own interests provided that in doing so they do not harm one another.

Still, it is not uncommon for property disputes to arise. Under the state of nature there is no government to appeal one's grievances against a person who stole property or liberty (i.e. making a person a slave). Under the law of nature, men are allowed to defend their lives and their property, which includes the right to kill others who threaten their property or liberty. This meant that there was no civil authority to settle disputes, and put the community at risk for an outbreak of war due to the lack of a civil government.

According to Locke, civil governments were established for the sake of protecting property. Because of the state of nature and law of nature from which civil governments were derived, a contract between the government and the governed had to be in place in order for that government to be legitimate. Property is the basis for Locke's argument for both a social contract and civil government because it is the protection of that property (property protection extends to a person so that one has dominion over their own bodies) that compels men to choose a civil government and abandon the notion of living in a state of nature. The social contract is a voluntary agreement between the people and the government.

These ideas show that people are born with God given (natural) rights that are protected by civil governments. Governments are created to protect that which belongs to the people. However, governments are limited in their regulation of human behavior to the extent to which the people themselves believe does not infringe on their God given freedoms. The people enter into a social contract voluntarily provided that the government is formed in a way that respects natural rights and is derived from the consent of the governed.

3. Montesquieu's ideas on creating a "just government"

The U.S. Constitution is organized around a separation of powers system that utilizes checks and balances. The power to legislate, enforce and adjudicate are separated into three different branches of government. These branches may not function with complete independence. The founding fathers feared that branches functioning independently might still abuse their power. Thus, while there are separate branches of government, each vested with specific powers, this does not mean that each branch operates without some level of oversight from one or both other branches.

Charles de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755) was a French political philosopher whose written works on the theory of separation of powers and checks and balances had a strong influence on the founding fathers. His 1748 work, The Spirit of the Laws (French: "L'Esprit des Lois") was originally published anonymously and received high praise outside France, especially in Britain. Montesquieu argued that "government should be set up so that no man need be afraid of another", which was well received by the founding fathers, particularly James Madison, who believed that a clearly defined and balanced separation of powers system that utilized checks and balances would provide a stable foundation for the new government.

Montesquieu argued that government should be created to accommodate separate branches of government with equal but different powers. This way, power would not be concentrated with one individual or group of individuals. Liberty was threatened if power became concentrated in one place; thus, no branch of government could threaten the freedom of the people.

Civics Content Vocabulary

Word/Term	Part of Speech	Definition
checks and balances	phrase	a principle of the federal government, according to the U.S. Constitution, that allows each branch of government to limit the power of the other branches
consent of the governed	noun	an agreement made by the people to establish a government and abide by its laws
Enlightenment	proper noun	a period in European history when many educated people stressed the importance of learning and reasoning; education was considered the key to understanding and solving society's problems
individual liberty	noun	a person's ability to be free and independent
influence	verb	having an effect or impact on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of another or others
natural law	noun	laws passed by government to protect natural rights
natural rights	noun	the belief that individuals are born with basic rights that cannot be taken away by governments; life, liberty, and property
separation of powers	noun	the structure of the federal government, according to the U.S. Constitution, that sets up three branches with their own distinct powers and responsibilities
social contract	noun	an implied agreement among the people of an organized society that defines the rights, duties, and limitations of the governed and the government

Suggested Student Activity Sequence

1. To begin this lesson, project the definition of influence on the board:
   Influence - having an effect or impact on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of another or others.
2. Pose the following questions for discussion: "How can you explain this term in your own words? Are there people in your life that influence your appearance, actions or words? Have you seen celebrities or friends wear or do something that you appreciate, so you do or wear the same thing or something similar? Have you heard something your parents or friends have said that you repeat or it has influenced what you have said?"
3. Provide time for students to brainstorm independently and then share out.
4. Explain to students that the concept of influence had a significant impact on how the U.S. government was formed. The Founding Fathers were influenced by other writers and philosophers while they wrote the documents that guide our government today.
5. Pass out the "Influence from the Enlightenment: John Locke" student activity sheet.
6. Provide students with the following key points about the Enlightenment and instruct students to take notes on their activity sheet.
   - The age of the Enlightenment occurred during the 18th century in Europe.
   - The Enlightenment focused on the ideas of reason, liberty, and individual rights.
   - Ideas from the Enlightenment impacted the ideas included in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.
7. Pass out the "John Locke" reading from the John Locke mini-lesson from iCivics: http://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/john-locke-mini-lesson.
8. Read aloud the first paragraph as a whole class.
9. Pose the following question for discussion: "According to the text, whom did John Locke influence?" (Thomas Jefferson) Instruct students to write the answer on their activity sheet.
10. Place students into pairs and review the vocabulary graphic organizer on the activity sheet.
11. Instruct students to read the remaining paragraphs and to complete the vocabulary graphic organizer on their activity sheet so that they define the concepts of "natural rights" and "social contract" by identifying evidence from the text, writing the definition in their own words and creating a visual representation (picture or symbol) of the concept.
12. Provide time for students to read and complete the graphic organizer.
13. Review the concept of natural rights with the students and explain that Locke believed that these rights should be protected by society and government through the idea of natural law. Instruct students to add the concept of natural law to their activity sheet.
14. Pose the following questions for discussion: "Why do you think liberty is a natural right? What does it mean as an individual to have liberty?" Lead students to the understanding that individual liberty is a natural right because it is natural for people to be free from government abuse of power.
15. Pass out the "Why Government" activity sheets from iCivics: http://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/why-government. Teacher note: The "Why Government" activity sheets include the Activity Prep, Activity pg. 1, Activity pg. 2 and Worksheet pg. 1. Photocopy Activity pgs. 1 and 2 as a two-sided handout.

16. Explain to students that they are going to complete the "Why Government" activity sheets to add to their understanding of John Locke's views on natural rights, social contract and government.
17. Direct student attention to the "Why Government Activity Prep" activity sheet and the "Why Government Activity pgs. 1 and 2" and review the directions as a whole class.
18. Explain to students that they will draw a picture for each statement in Step One on the "Why Government Activity Prep" activity sheet and draw the picture on the corresponding "Why Government Activity pgs. 1 and 2."
19. Provide time for students to draw their pictures for Step One.
20. Return student attention to the "Why Government Activity Prep" activity sheet and read aloud the directions for Step Two.
21. Provide time for students to cut out and match each statement to one of the pictures.
22. Have students share out.
23. Instruct students to use their completed "Why Government Activity pgs. 1 and 2" activity sheets to complete the "Why Government Worksheet pg. 1" activity sheet.
24. Monitor student work while they complete the activity sheet.
25. Return student attention to the "Influence from the Enlightenment: John Locke" activity sheet from earlier in the lesson and review the remaining questions on the activity sheet as a whole class: "According to the reading, how are the concepts of social contract and the purpose of government related? What evidence in the text led you to your answer?"
26. Provide time for the students to return to their reading and answer the questions.
27. Have students share out.
28. Remind students that in a social contract, citizens give up some of their freedoms in exchange for the government to protect their natural rights of life, liberty, and property. In return, the government has a responsibility to hold up their end of the social contract. If government does not hold up their end of the contract, citizens would no longer agree to be governed and they would have the right to revolt. This is known as "consent of the governed." Instruct students to add consent of the governed to their activity sheet.
29. Project an image of the Declaration of Independence from OurDocuments.gov: http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=2# and explain the following key points about the Declaration of Independence and Thomas Jefferson:
    - Remind students that, according to the reading, Thomas Jefferson was inspired by John Locke.
    - Thomas Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, the document that formally stated the colonies' desire to be independent from England.
    - The Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War are what led to the colonies becoming the United States.

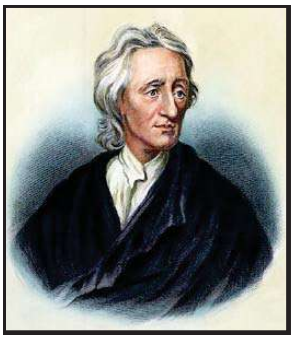
    Teacher Note: As an extension suggestion, have students watch the 14 minute "Declaration of Independence" video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYyttEu_NLU.
30. Pass out the "John Locke and the Declaration of Independence" student activity sheet and project the following excerpts from the Declaration of Independence:
    - *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

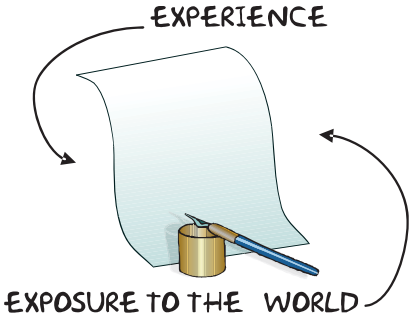
- *Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed*
- *…whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it…*
- *A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.*

31. Work as a whole class to identify how John Locke influenced these ideas. Read the excerpt aloud to the class and instruct the students to summarize the excerpt in their own words. Then, determine how John Locke influenced the excerpt. Instruct students to take notes on their activity sheet.
32. Pose the following questions for discussion: "Based on these excerpts, what connection can you make between the ideas in the Declaration of Independence and John Locke's ideas? How did John Locke influence Thomas Jefferson's (and the other writers of the Declaration of Independence) ideas about natural rights and government?"
33. Direct student attention to the question on the bottom of the activity sheet. Read the quote from President John Quincy Adams aloud and instruct students to answer the question.
34. Have students share out.
35. Explain to students that they are going to learn about another Enlightenment thinker that influenced the Founding Fathers.
36. Pass out the "Baron de Montesquieu" reading from iCivics: http://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/montesquieu-mini-lesson and the "Baron de Montesquieu" activity sheet.
37. Read aloud the first paragraph as a whole class.
38. Pose the following question for discussion: "According to the text, what document did Montesquieu influence?" Have students write their answer on the activity sheet.
39. Have students return to their partner and complete the rest of the reading and activity sheet.
40. Provide time for students to read and complete the activity sheet.
41. Review the final question on the activity sheet as a whole class and pose the following question for discussion: "Based on what we have learned from the reading, Montesquieu influenced the structure of our government. How would you evaluate his influence on the on the Founding Fathers?" Instruct students write a summary statement on their activity sheet.
42. Checking for Understanding (Formative Assessment):
    Instruct students to write a well-crafted informative response using the following prompt:
    Prompt
    Using what you have learned from your readings, explain how John Locke and Baron de Montesquieu influenced the Founding Fathers. Provide a specific example for Locke and Montesquieu.

John Locke

A Man with Many Hats





The Blank Slate

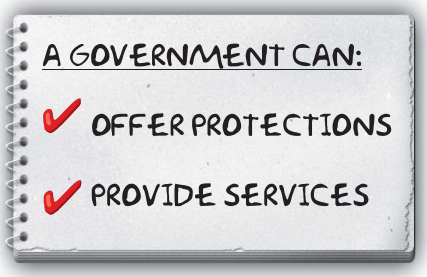
tabula rasa

Natural Rights

natural rights

Life
Liberty

Property

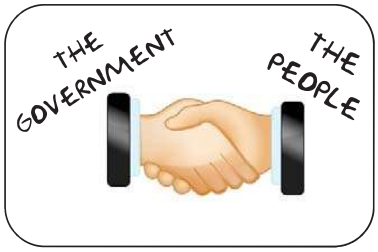


Why do we need a government?

state of nature

Social Contract

social contract



Name: _____ Date: _____

INFLUENCES FROM THE ENLIGHTENMENT | JOHN LOCKE

According to the text, whom did John Locke influence? _____

Vocabulary Graphic Organizer **Directions,** while you read identify and write down the evidence from the text that defines the term. Define the term in your own words and create a picture, symbol or visual representation of the term.			
Concept	**Evidence from Text**	**Definition in your own words**	**Visual Representation**
natural rights			
social contract			

According to John Locke, how are the concept of social contract and the purpose of government related? What evidence in the text led you to your answer?	
Evidence from Text	**Answer**

Additional Vocabulary Terms from Class Discussion	
natural law	
consent of the governed	

Name; _____ Date: _____

JOHN LOCKE AND THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Directions: As a whole class, review each excerpt from the Declaration of Independence. Summarize the excerpt in your own words and then determine how John Locke influenced the excerpt from the Declaration of Independence.

Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence	**Summary of excerpt in your own words**	**Connection to the ideas of John Locke**
We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.		
Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed		
…whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it…		
A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.		

The Impact of John Locke on the Founding Fathers
President John Quincy Adams once stated that: "The Declaration of Independence was founded upon one and the same theory of government: the writings of Locke." Based on this statement, how would you summarize the impact of John Locke on the Founding Fathers.

Adapted from: John Locke: A Philosophical Founder of America: http://www.wallbuilders.com/libissuesarticles.asp?id=99156