The Enlightenment

**Key Concept 5.3** — The 18th century marked the beginning of an intense period of revolution and rebellion against existing governments, leading to the establishment of new nation-states around the world.

1. The rise and diffusion of Enlightenment thought that questioned established traditions in all areas of life often preceded revolutions and rebellions against existing governments.
   ○ Enlightenment philosophies applied new ways of understanding and empiricist approaches to both the natural world and human relationships, encouraging observation and inference in all spheres of life; they also reexamined the role that religion played in public life, insisting on the importance of reason as opposed to revelation. Other Enlightenment philosophies developed new political ideas about the individual, natural rights, and the social contract.
   ○ The ideas of Enlightenment philosophers, as reflected in revolutionary documents—including the *American Declaration of Independence*, the *French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*, and Bolívar’s *Jamaica Letter*—influenced resistance to existing political authority, often in pursuit of independence and democratic ideals.
   ○ Enlightenment ideas influenced various reform movements that challenged existing notions of social relations, which contributed to the expansion of rights as seen in expanded suffrage, the abolition of slavery, and/or the end of serfdom.

**The Roots of the Enlightenment**

- The world Enlightenment refers to a change in ____________ among many educated Europeans that began during the 1600s.
- The new outlook put great trust in ____________ as the key to human progress.
- In the 1700s, this way of thinking became ____________ in Europe.
- Enlightenment thinkers felt that rational understanding would lead to great ____________ in government and society.
- In 1702, Bernard de Fontenelle wrote that the new century “will become more enlightened day by day, so that all previous centuries will be lost in ____________ by comparison.”
- In France, thinkers called ____________ championed these ideas. They often gathered in informal meetings called ____________ where they exchanged and debated ideas.
- Gatherings like these, some of which were organized by ____________, helped to shape and spread the ideas of the Enlightenment.

**Influence of the Scientific Revolution**

- Enlightenment thinkers were inspired by the example of scientists such as ____________ and ____________.
  - Scientists used ____________ and ____________ to understand the physical world. Their methods were rapidly overturning old beliefs.
  - Now thinkers wanted to take a similar approach to problems of ____________ life.
• Enlightenment thinkers asked questions like:
  – What ____________________________ governs the way people should live?
  – How well do our institutions agree with natural law?
  – Does natural law give all people certain ________________?
  – What is the best form of government?
• Philosophers didn’t always agree but they shared a trust in reason and observation as the best sources of ________________ and ________________.

**Influence of the Renaissance and Reformation**
• The ____________________________ of the Renaissance questioned accepted beliefs. They celebrated the dignity and worth of the ________________.
• During the Reformation, ________________ rebelled against the Catholic Church and put individual conscience ahead of the ________________ of the church.
• Enlightenment thinkers went even farther in ________________ authority and upholding the ________________ of individuals to think for themselves.

**Influence of Classical Cultures**
• Trust in reason goes all the way back to the ancient ________________ as does the idea that people should have a say in their government.
• Used the examples of ________________ in ancient Athens and the ________________ of ancient Rome.

**Influence of Christian Ideals**
• Enlightenment philosophers preferred ________________ understanding to faith based on the Bible. Yet most of them saw the laws of ________________ as the work of an intelligent Creator. They saw human progress as a sign of God’s _________________.
• Often their approach to ________________ problems reflected Christian values, such as respect for others and for a moral law.

**New Ideas of the Enlightenment**
• Believed that humans were perfectly able to discover ________________ for themselves rather than relying on the Bible as God’s word.
• Ideas about right and wrong should be based on ________________ insight, not the teachings of religious authorities.
• Questioned the ________________ of kings and stressed individual rights that governments must ________________.
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<tr>
<th>Enlightenment Thinkers</th>
<th>Use the set of short readings posted in Google Classroom to complete this activity.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thomas Hobbes: Absolute Rule by Kings</strong></td>
<td>In his book <em>Leviathan</em>, Hobbes described his beliefs about what humans beings are really like. What are some words he might use to describe what people are really like?</td>
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<td>According to Hobbes, why were governments created? What kind of government did his think was best, and why?</td>
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<td><strong>John Locke: Natural Rights</strong></td>
<td>According to Locke, what was the purpose of government? What rights did he think government should protect?</td>
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<td>In his book <em>Two Treatises of Government</em>, Locke argued that governments should only exist with the consent or approval of whom? What did he say should happen if the government does not do its job?</td>
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<td><strong>Baron de Montesquieu: Separation of Powers</strong></td>
<td>In his book <em>The Spirit of Laws</em>, Montesquieu described how he thought governments should be organized. What was the name of his idea, and how did it work?</td>
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According to Montesquieu, what might happen if governments do not use this idea?

Voltaire believed in a right so strongly that he said he would defend it to the death. What was that right?

Voltaire was well known for criticizing intolerance wherever he saw it. What happened to him because of his outspoken criticism of authorities?

What practices in the justice system upset Beccaria?

In Beccaria’s book *On Crimes and Punishment*, he shared his ideas on how criminals should be treated. What were some of Beccaria’s main ideas?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>The Impact of the Enlightenment</th>
<th>Who were some of Europe's &quot;enlightened monarchs&quot;? What were some of the reforms they introduced?</th>
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<td>Which Enlightenment thinkers and ideas are reflected in important U.S. documents like the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights?</td>
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<td>Women of the Enlightenment</td>
<td>What role did women like Madame Geoffrin play in supporting and promoting the ideas of the Enlightenment?</td>
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<td>What important rights did women like Abigail Adams, Olympe de Gouges, and Mary Wollstonecraft argue and fight for?</td>
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