

Documents of the United States of America

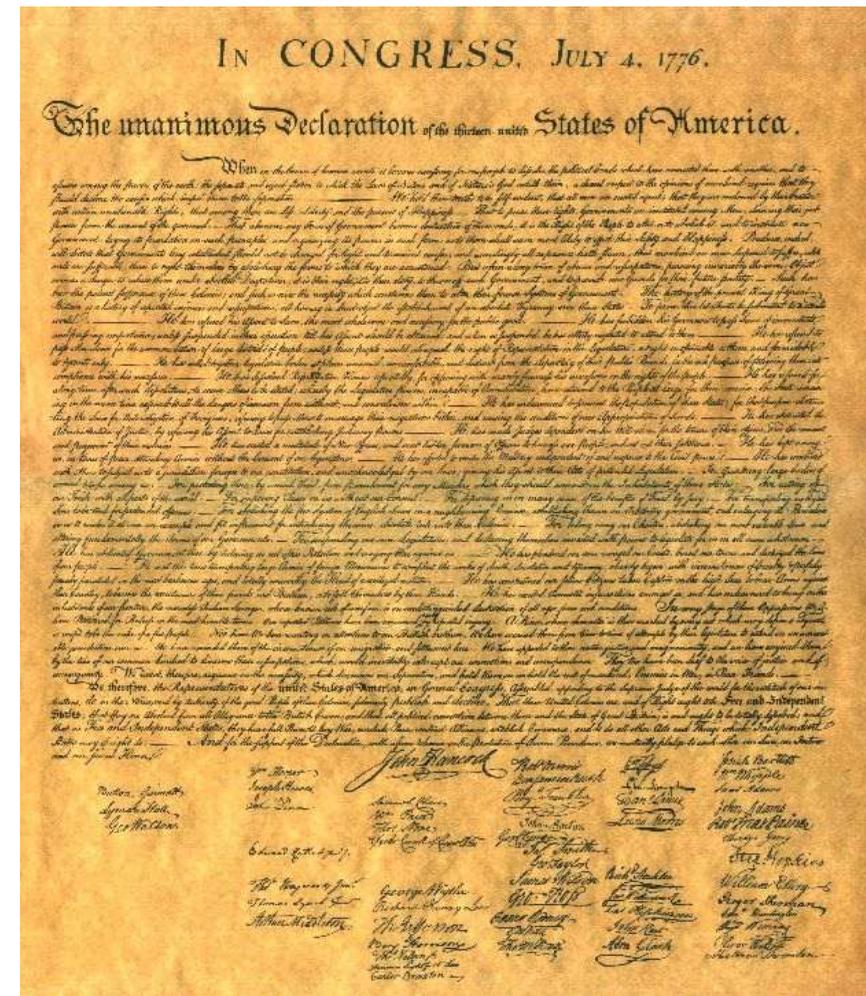


It was a hot day in Philadelphia. It was July 4, 1776. It was a meeting of the Second Continental Congress.

The people there are famous now—people like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson. But back then, they felt disrespected. They were about to change history.



They declared their independence from England and King George II. They did this in a document. The document is the Declaration of Independence. It is famous now, but back then it was just another paper filled with ideas from the Enlightenment.



Complete

1. The _____ met on July 4, 1776 in Philadelphia.
2. The men included _____, _____, and _____.
3. They created the document called _____.
4. This document separated America from _____.

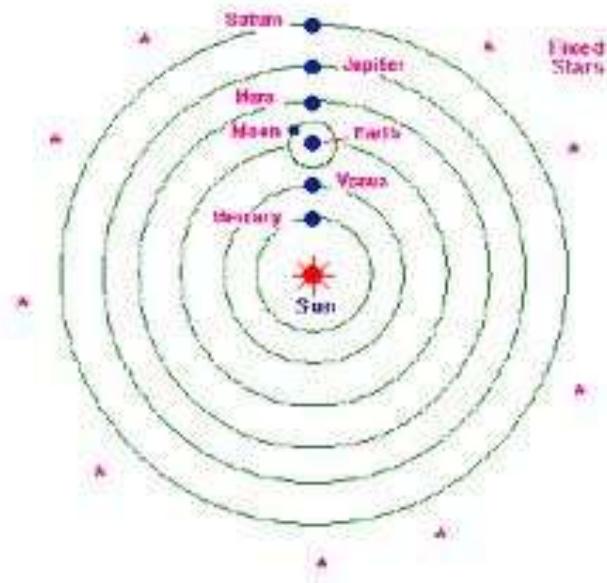
The ideas for the declaration came from the Enlightenment. It was an intellectual movement in Europe. Intellectual movements are a change in thinking. People during the Enlightenment changed the way they thought about government and people's "natural state."



Complete

1. The Enlightenment was an _____ movement.
2. Enlightenment philosophers changed the way people thought about _____ and power.

The Enlightenment came right after the Scientific Revolution. During the Scientific Revolution people used experiments and facts to prove ideas. They didn't just invent things or explain things with religion and superstition. During the Enlightenment, people tried to figure out what kind of government is “scientifically” the best for human beings.



The people who did this are called Enlightenment Philosophers. These philosophers talked a lot about the “natural state” of humans. Are people born good or evil? If people are born good, then why do they become evil? If people are evil, how can you force them to be good? The main question was—what is the best government for people to be the best that they can be?

Compete

1. The Enlightenment is connected to the _____ because both movements tried to prove ideas scientifically.
2. NATURAL STATE means _____.

Enlightenment thinkers looked at government as a contract. A contract is like a deal. So, they believed government was a contract between the people and the government.

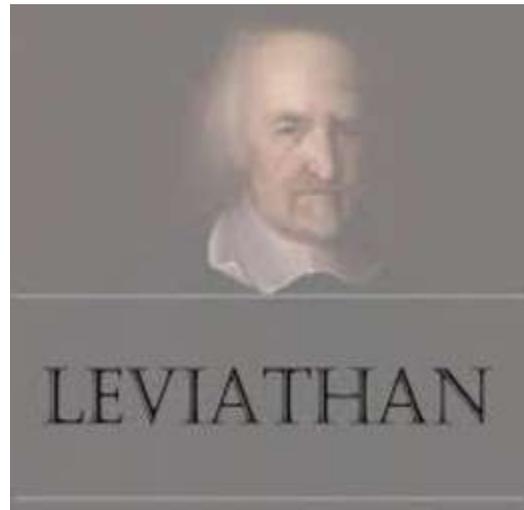
In a monarchy, the king has a contract with the people. If he is a good king, the people give up their freedom to be part of his country.

In a democracy, the people make a contract with each other to vote for laws that help everybody.

COMPLETE

1. Enlightenment thinkers looked at the relationship between government and the _____.
2. They believed in a contract, which is _____.

Thomas Hobbes was an Enlightenment Philosopher who was pessimistic about human nature. Hobbes did not trust people; their natural state is evil. He said humans “exist in a primitive state of nature.” Primitive is like a caveman or a wild animal. People make a contract with the government. The government needs to protect them from each other.



Thomas Hobbes wrote about “primitive,” evil humans in his book *Leviathan*. He said that you couldn’t trust people, so you needed an Absolute Monarch to command people. He supported kings like Louis XIV and Charles I. He recommended that people give up their rights and consent to be governed.

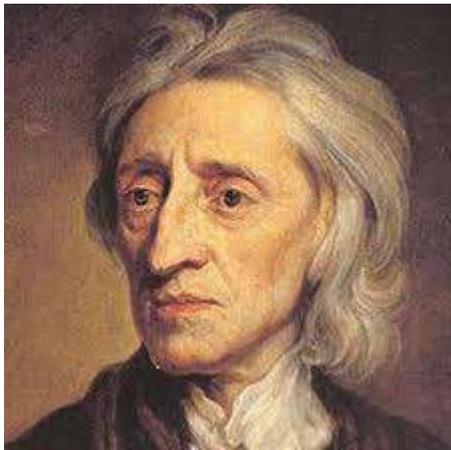
**"THE LIFE OF MAN,
SOLITARY, POOR,
NASTY, BRUTISH,
AND SHORT."
- THOMAS HOBBES**



Complete

1. Thomas Hobbes believed that people were naturally _____.
2. Thomas Hobbes believed that you couldn't _____ people.
3. Thomas Hobbes supported _____ as the best government.
4. Thomas Hobbes wrote _____.

John Locke disagreed with Hobbes. He believed that people were good in their natural state. He also believed that every single human being has natural rights. He didn't believe that kings have divine right. He believed that people have natural rights!



Every person has a right to **life**. You can't just murder people because you are the king or rich. You have a right to live your life as long as you don't infringe on other people's rights. Infringe means get in the way of... This is something a lot of people agreed with... maybe even Hobbes.

Hobbes

pessimistic view of
human nature
people are barbaric, selfish,
greedy, violent
people cannot rule themselves
Strong leader is needed
That leader (Leviathan)
has absolute power

govt is
necessary

No divine right

LOCKE

optimistic view of human
nature
people have potential
tabula rasa

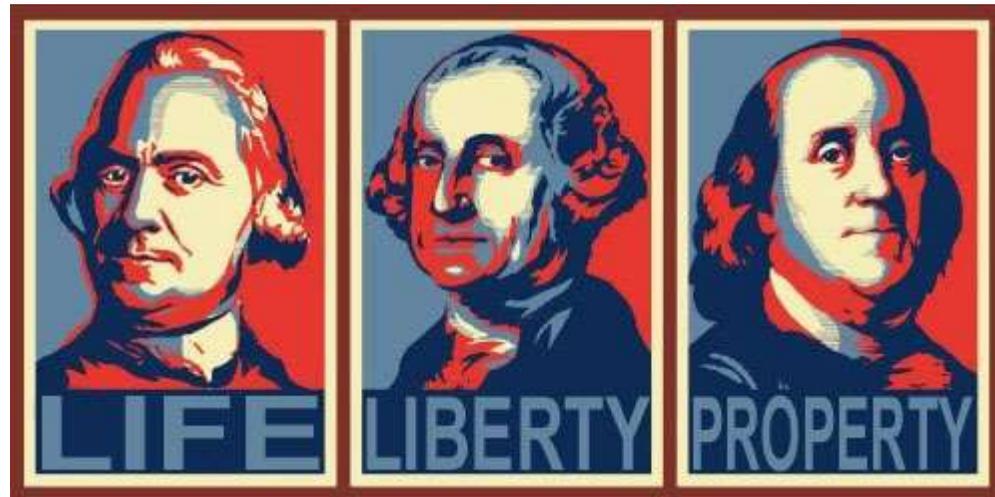
people have rights
(life, liberty, property)

self-governing

govt protects natural rights
(limited)

people should overthrow
a govt that does not protect
natural rights

Locke also believed every person has the right to **liberty** and **property**. This was more radical. Liberty is another word for freedom. Locke believed that if a king was not letting people have liberty, they could have a revolution. They could remove or even kill the king. The same could happen if the king took away their property.



John Locke's ideas were in *Two Treatises on Government*. People had a right to life, liberty, and property. People are sovereign. This word sovereign usually we use to describe a country, like, Canada is sovereign. It is not part of the USA. It has its own government.



Complete

1. John Locke believed that people were naturally _____.
2. John Locke's most radical idea was _____.
3. John Locke probably supported _____ as the best government.

Answer

4. How did John Locke disagree with Hobbes?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was another Enlightenment Philosopher. He expanded these ideas of John Locke. For Rousseau, people made a contract with the government. If they didn't get life, liberty, and property, they could end the contract. They could have a revolution and change the government. This is called the **social contract**. This idea has influenced every revolution. John Locke also used this idea.

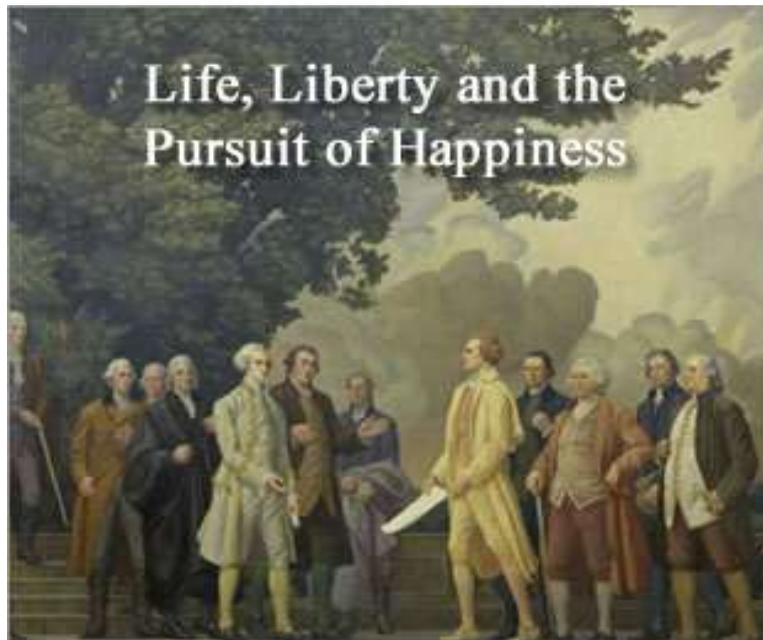


The social contract is
between people and
the government.

Complete

1. What is Jean-Jacques Rousseau famous idea?
2. What is the Social Contract in your own words?
3. If the king breaks the social contract, what can people do?

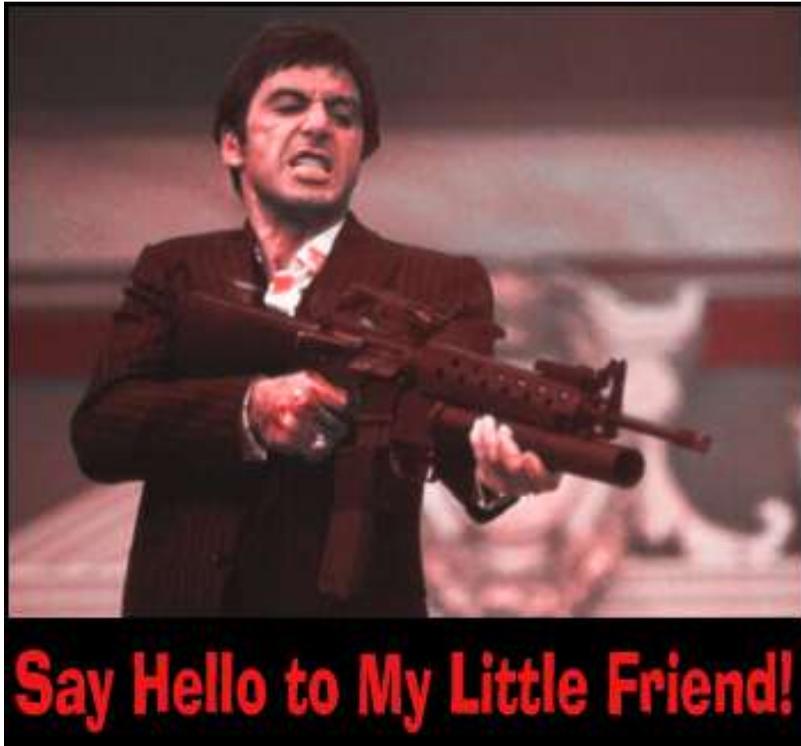
Let's look at the Declaration of Independence. If we go back to the United States in 1776, we can see how Locke and Rousseau's ideas work. The Americans are writing the Declaration of Independence. It is a letter to the King of England. Thomas Jefferson is writing it. He says we have "The Right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." (see how it changes from Locke.)



Complete

1. Thomas Jefferson writes the Declaration of _____.
2. He changes Life, Liberty, and Property to Life, Liberty, and _____.
3. What do you think the Pursuit of Happiness means? Is it similar to property?

Thomas Jefferson writes: “You are the King of England, our leader. But you are a bad leader. You are taking our property with taxes. You are getting in the way of our liberty with colonialism. You are infringing on our rights. We don’t want you anymore. The contract is broken. If you have any problems, you can say hello to my little friend.”



The King of England dismisses Thomas Jefferson and his Declaration of Independence. The American Revolution starts. It's a war between England and this new country, which will become the USA. It takes a long time, but the USA wins. England goes home. Now the Americans have to make a government. Americans have to make their own rules or Constitution. During the war, they use the Articles of Confederation. These are laws that strictly prohibited a centralized government. In other words, they keep the national government weak on purpose.

Rewrite

1. _____ wins the Revolutionary War.
2. During the war, Americans use the _____ as a legal framework.
3. The Articles keep the _____ government weak on purpose.

The Articles are weak on purpose because Americans don't want to kick out the British King but end up with an American one. They don't want any person or state dominating the US government. But it's too weak.

The weaknesses are:

- Weak national government
- No common currency or economic regulations
- Each state gets one vote regardless of size
- No executive or judicial branches

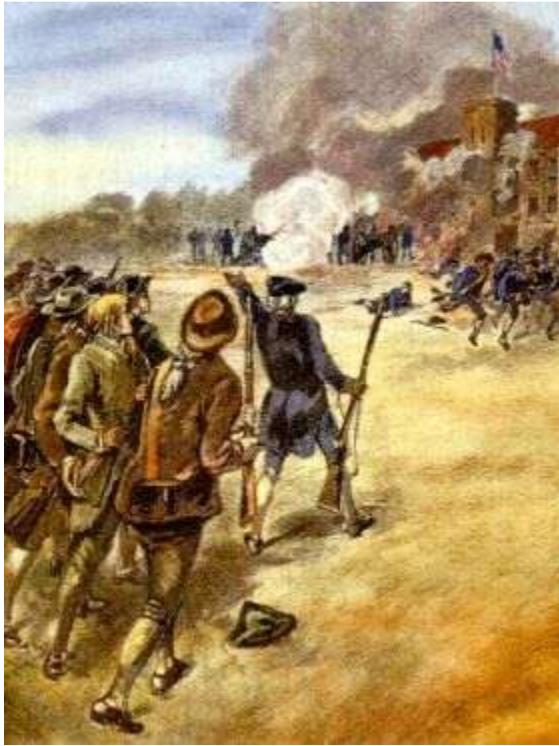
Complete

The weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation are:

The Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation

A weak national government	Congress could not tax or regulate commerce among states	No common currency	Just one vote per state, size didn't matter	No executive or judicial branch
----------------------------	--	--------------------	---	---------------------------------

There is a rebellion near Boston. A group of farmers take over some courthouses. The government can't respond. They have no money to pay the soldiers... no president to give orders. The Articles are doomed. This is called Shay's rebellion. It makes a new Constitution necessary.



The American states meet again in Philadelphia to make a new Constitution. They have so many problems! The first they need to deal with is the idea of power. How do they divide power so that they aren't so weak... but so they don't end up with a president who is like a king? They look to the Enlightenment for the answer.



Complete

1. The _____ Rebellion proves that the US government is too weak.
2. The Shays Rebellion is the end of the _____ as the document that governs the USA.
3. The delegates gather in Philadelphia to create a new _____. They look to ideas from the _____ for the answer.

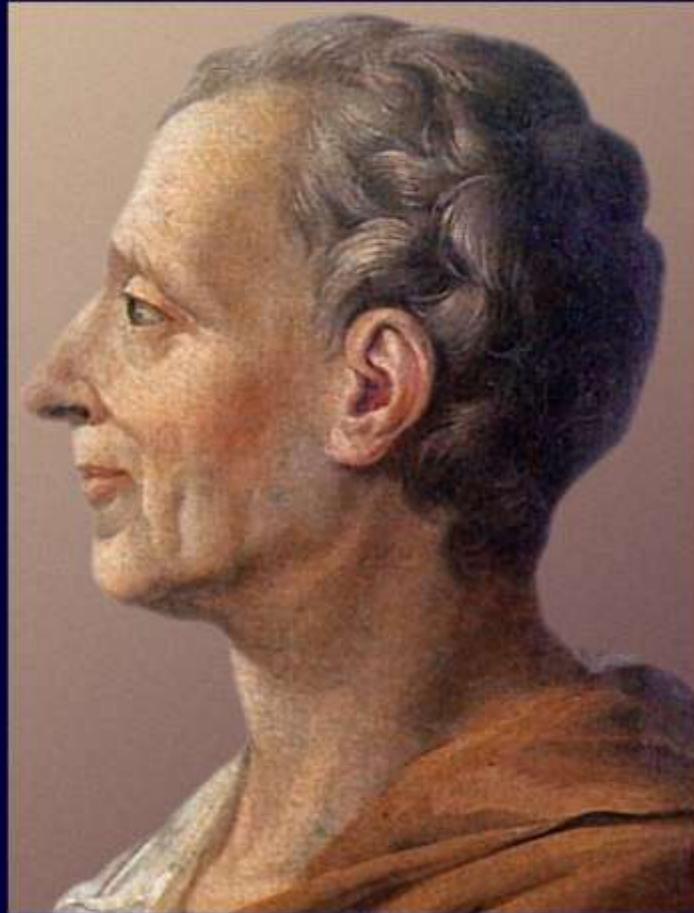
The Americans look to the Enlightenment Philosophers again for ideas. How do we make a government that gives natural rights and protects the social contract? First, they look at a philosopher named Montesquieu. He only has one name, like Ronaldinho.



Montesquieu believed in natural rights. But he also knew that usually, when people try to make a popular government, it ends up becoming a dictatorship. Popular government means democracy. So, whenever people try to make a government with voting and equal rights, it always fails: Someone steals all of the power.

There is no
greater tyranny,
than that which is
perpetrated under
the shield of law
and in the name
of justice

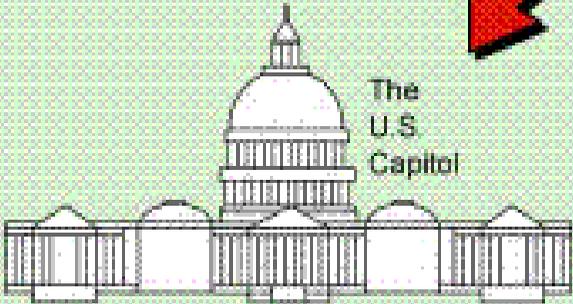
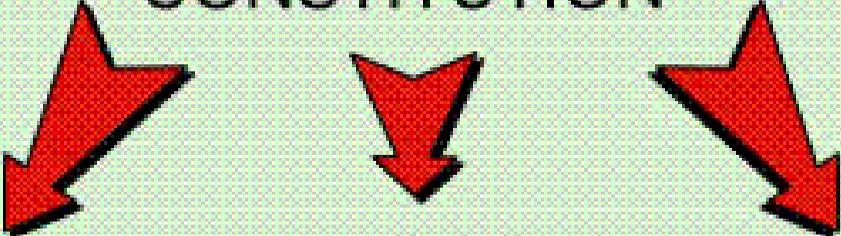
- Montesquieu



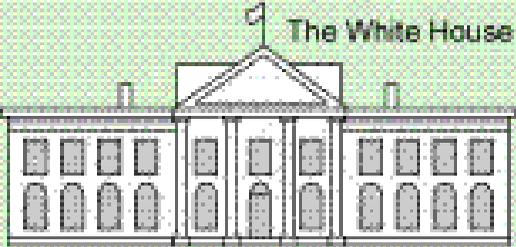
Montesquieu wrote the answer in his *Spirit of Laws*. He wrote that the best government has a separation of powers. There should be:

- *One part of the government that *legislates* the laws (makes laws)
- *One part of the government that *executes* the laws (enforces laws)
- *One part of the government that *judges* the laws

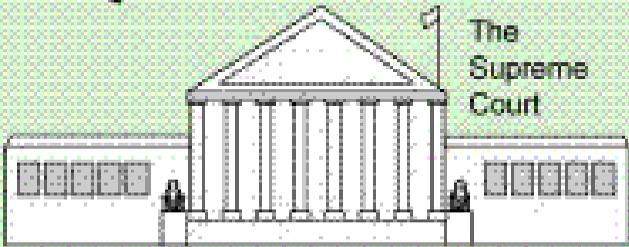
CONSTITUTION



The U.S. Capitol



The White House



The Supreme Court

LEGISLATIVE

EXECUTIVE

JUDICIAL

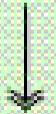
↓
CONGRESS



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



SENATE



PRESIDENT



VICE PRESIDENT



SUPREME COURT

Complete

1. Montesquieu writes the book called _____.
2. Montesquieu believes in the _____ of powers
3. He believes there should be ____ branches of government
4. Why should there be a separation of powers?
5. What are the three branches called?

The Americans copied this. We have a President who is the leader; A Congress that makes laws; And the Supreme Court that interprets whether they are good laws or not. All of these people work under the Constitution of the United States of America. Our Constitution was ratified in 1789. It is the oldest still-used Constitution in the world.

Our three branches have checks and balances against each other. This is the system of checks and balances that Montesquieu suggested, to keep the president or congress from getting too powerful.

Complete

1. What are the 3 branches in the USA?
2. Who did the Americans get the idea of separation of powers from?
3. What was ratified in 1789?
4. The 3 branches keep each other controlled through a system of _____ and _____.

Power needed to be separated. It also needed to be balanced between large states and small states. It also had to be balanced between states that had many slaves and states that didn't. This was a problem that the Enlightenment didn't specifically address. The delegates came up with a way to handle both problems.

Virginia Plan

- It called for a *bicameral* legislature, in which the number of representatives in each house would depend on the population of the state.

New Jersey Plan

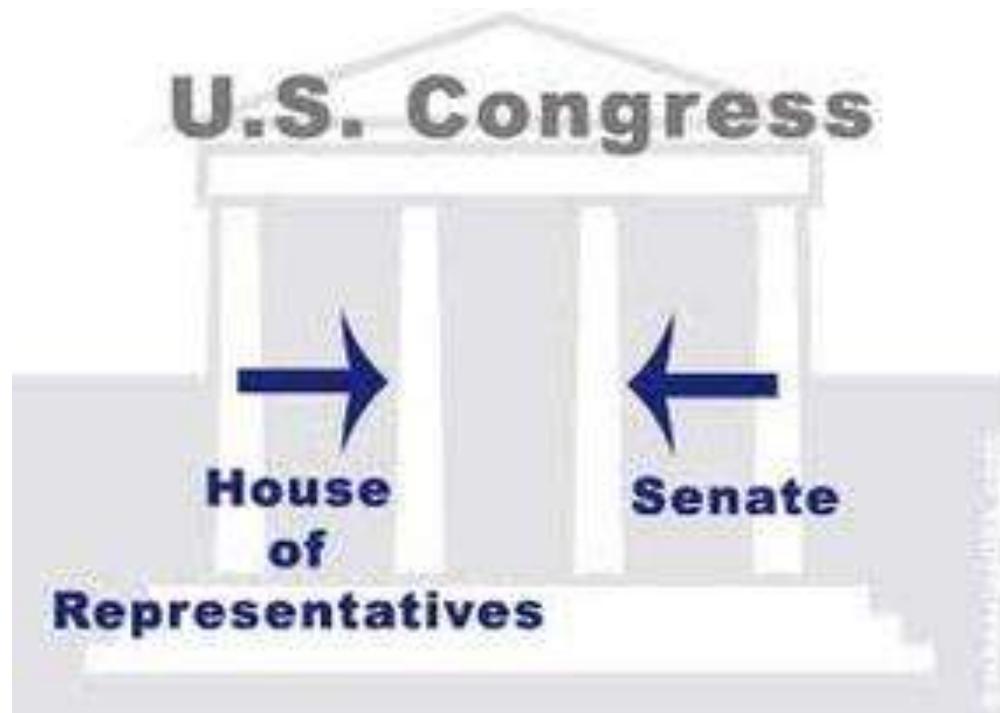
- It called for a *unicameral* legislature, in which every state received one vote.

- Both plans called for a strong national government with 3 branches.

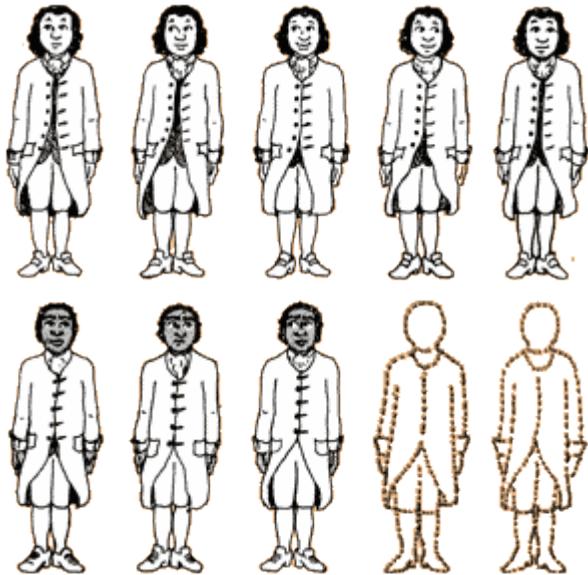
Great Compromise

- It provided for a bicameral Congress.
 - A. House of Representatives – each state is represented according to its population (satisfied the VA Plan)
 - B. Senate – each state has 2 Senators (satisfied the NJ Plan)
- * Both houses of Congress must pass every law.

They created a bicameral legislature made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Each state got 2 senators; the number of representatives depended on the population. This is called the Great Compromise.



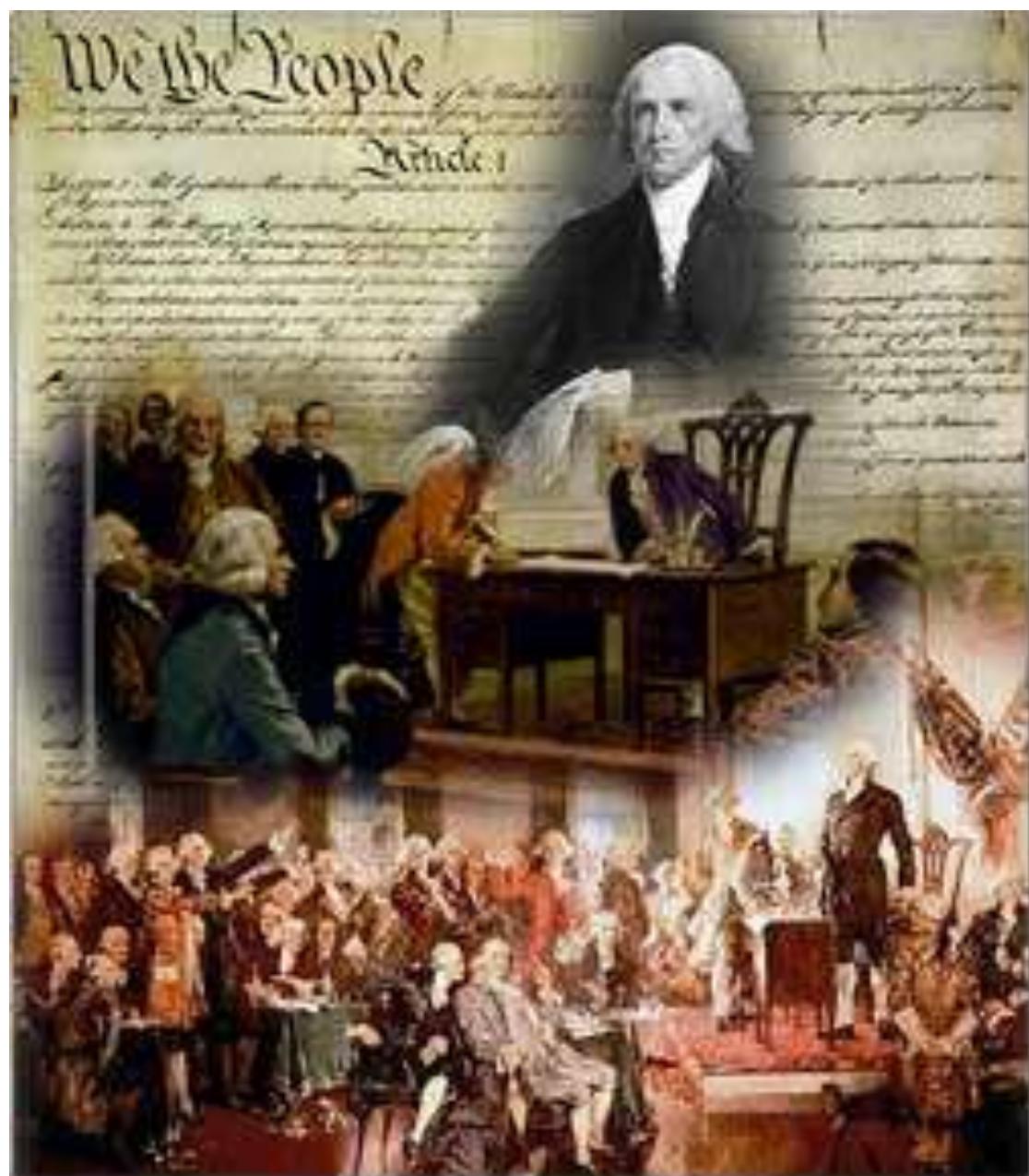
They decided to count slaves as $\frac{3}{5}$ of a person, so that the population of the Southern states wasn't so small. This is called the $\frac{3}{5}$ compromise.



Complete

1. There was a disagreement about representation between the big states and the _____ states.
2. The _____ Compromise created a bicameral legislature with a House of Representatives and Senate.
3. Each state gets _____ Senators; the House of Representatives is based on _____.
4. The _____ Compromise solved the problems between the Northern states and the Southern states regarding slavery.

They made so many compromises, but people still weren't satisfied. The people who support the Constitution are called Federalists. They don't want a king, but they do want a strong central government. They dominate the Constitutional Convention. They include George Washington and James Madison. They created a system that shares power between the federal (national) and state governments. This is called Federalism. Power is shared in federalism, but federal law is supreme.



J J

Complete

1. Federalism is sharing the power between the _____ and _____ governments.

2. This chart is an example of _____.





Jefferson and the Americans copied another Enlightenment Philosopher about religion. They copied Voltaire, who was a French writer. Voltaire didn't like religious fanaticism. He didn't like all of the wars over religion.

Voltaire influenced the American Constitution. He influenced Thomas Jefferson about how to describe religion in the Constitution. One of the rights that is guaranteed is Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech.

These rights are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. But, they come from Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom. Thomas Jefferson was indeed an Enlightenment man.

Complete

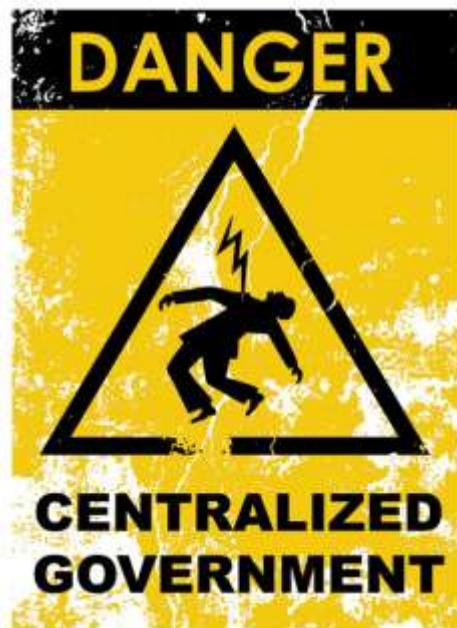
1. Voltaire's ideas are about _____ freedom.
2. Voltaire influenced the American _____, who wrote his own Virginia document on religious freedom.
3. The Virginia _____ guarantees religious freedom. It was later incorporated in the Bill of Rights.

The Bill of Rights is an Enlightenment document, actually, more than the Constitution. So let's look at it:



The Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of speech, religion, press; it guarantees fast trials and prohibits quartering of soldiers. Why did they need to get so specific about this? Well, because there was a group of Americans who did not trust the Constitution. They didn't trust the direction American was going with this new Constitution...

They are called the Anti-Federalists. The Anti-Federalists don't trust central government. The Anti-Federalists don't want Americans to give up their rights. They include Patrick Henry and George Mason. They don't trust the government. They don't trust the Constitution. So, they won't sign the Constitution without the Bill of Rights.



George Mason is a famous anti-federalist. He is from Virginia. His Virginia Declaration of Rights became a model for the Bill of Rights.



Complete

1. The Anti-Federalists don't trust the _____ or centralized government.
2. Some famous people who are anti-federalists include _____.
3. Anti-federalists insist on adding the _____ to the Constitution. This document guarantees rights.

