**The Influence of the Enlightenment on American Government**

* **Historical Background:** The Age of Enlightenment was an intellectual & philosophical movement that dominated the world of ideas in Europe during the 18th Century. This movement of ideas emphasized the use of human reason, individualism & skepticism to solve the problems of society. Their ideas & writings were a direct challenge to commonly held religious & political views espoused by religious & political authority figures of the 18th Century.
* **Directions:** Below are examples of several Enlightenment thinkers & their philosophies. First, read the quote from each Enlightenment philosopher. Second, interpret the quote by explaining it’s meaning in your own words. Lastly, give specific examples of how those Enlightenment ideas influenced the creation of our U.S. Constitution & the guiding principles of our nation’s Core Democratic Values.

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| **Enlightenment Philosophy Quote** | **Quote Interpretation – What does this mean???** | **Influence on our Constitution, the 5 Basic Concepts of Democracy &/OR our nation’s Core Democratic Values** |
| “The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve & enlarge freedom. For in all the states of created beings capable of law, where there is no law, there is no freedom”  -John Locke |  |  |
| “The people, in whom the supreme power resides, ought to have the management of everything within their reach: that which exceeds their abilities must be conducted by their ministers. But they cannot be said to have their ministers (agents), without the power of nominating them…therefore…the people should choose their ministers. -Baron de Montesquieu |  |  |
| “If we enquire wherein lies precisely the greatest good of all, which ought to be the goal of every system of law, we shall find that it comes down to two main objects, *freedom* and *equality*: freedom because any individual dependence means that much strength drawn from the body of the state, and equality because freedom cannot survive without it…Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.”  -Jean Jacques Rousseau |  |  |
| “The absolute rights of man…are usually summed up in one general appellation….acting as one thinks fit, without any restraint or control, unless by the law of nature: being a right inherent in us by birth, and one of the gifts of God to man at his creation, when he endued (provided) him with the faculty of free-will.” -William Blackstone |  |  |
| “No man has received from nature the right to give orders to others. Freedom is a gift from heaven, and every individual of the same species has the right to enjoy it as soon as he is in enjoyment of his reason.” -Denis Diderot |  |  |
| “Our wretched species is so made that those who walk on the well-trodden path always throw stones at those who are showing a new road.” -Voltaire |  |  |
| “The right of nature…is the liberty each man hath to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, his own life…During the time when men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition called war, as if every man, against every man.” -Thomas Hobbes |  |  |
| “For no government can have a right to obedience from a people who have not freely consented to it; which they can never be supposed to do, till either they are put in a full state of liberty to choose their government…or at least till they have such standing laws, to which they have by themselves or their representatives given their free consent…nobody can take away any part of it without their own consent, without which, men under any government are not in the state of freemen, but are direct slaves under the force of war.” -John Locke |  |  |