



■ Essential Question:

–What were the key ideas of the Enlightenment?

■ Do Now:

–What do you think is the biggest issue facing NSAA?

–What suggestions do you have to make this school better?

From 1650 to 1800, European philosophers began rethinking old ideas about gov't, religion, economics which led to an era known as the Enlightenment (also called the Age of Reason)



The intellectuals of the Enlightenment were called philosophes & they shared some basic beliefs

New truths could be discovered by using logic & reason

Everything could be explained by observing universal truths known as natural laws

A belief in progress, that the world can be improved, & that life should be enjoyed

People are born with natural rights (personal freedoms that protect liberty)



# Why did the Enlightenment begin?

During the Renaissance, people began to question medieval ideas, emphasize individual potential (humanism), & encourage education

During the Age of Exploration, the discovery of new lands & trade routes led Europeans to search for other “new” things

During the Protestant Reformation, people began to question church teachings, freely explore new ideas, & tolerate other religions

During the Age of Absolute Monarchs, powerful kings spent lavishly, fought expensive wars, & ruled without regard to their nation's people

...This gave Enlightenment philosophes a model to follow to make new theories about society

new discoveries that shattered old ideas...

## Changing Idea: The Right to Govern

### Old Idea

A monarch's rule is justified by divine right.

### New Idea

A government's power comes from the consent of the governed.

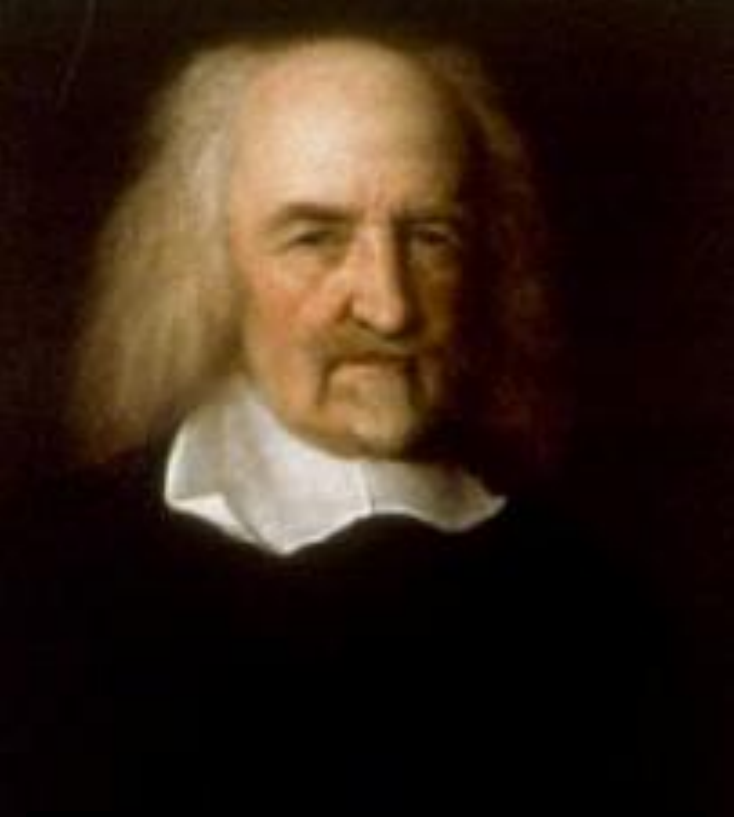
The most important Enlightenment ideas were those that challenged rule by absolute monarchs & presented new theories about government

# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment

One of the first political thinkers of the Enlightenment was Thomas Hobbes

Hobbes was bothered by the English Civil War & chaos that plagued England after the beheading of King Charles I

Hobbes believed that humans are naturally cruel, selfish, & hungry for power; Hobbes argued that people need to be protected from themselves



What kind of government do you think Hobbes supported?

# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment



Hobbes supported rule by absolute monarchs; He used scientific reasoning to argue that only kings with absolute power could maintain order in society

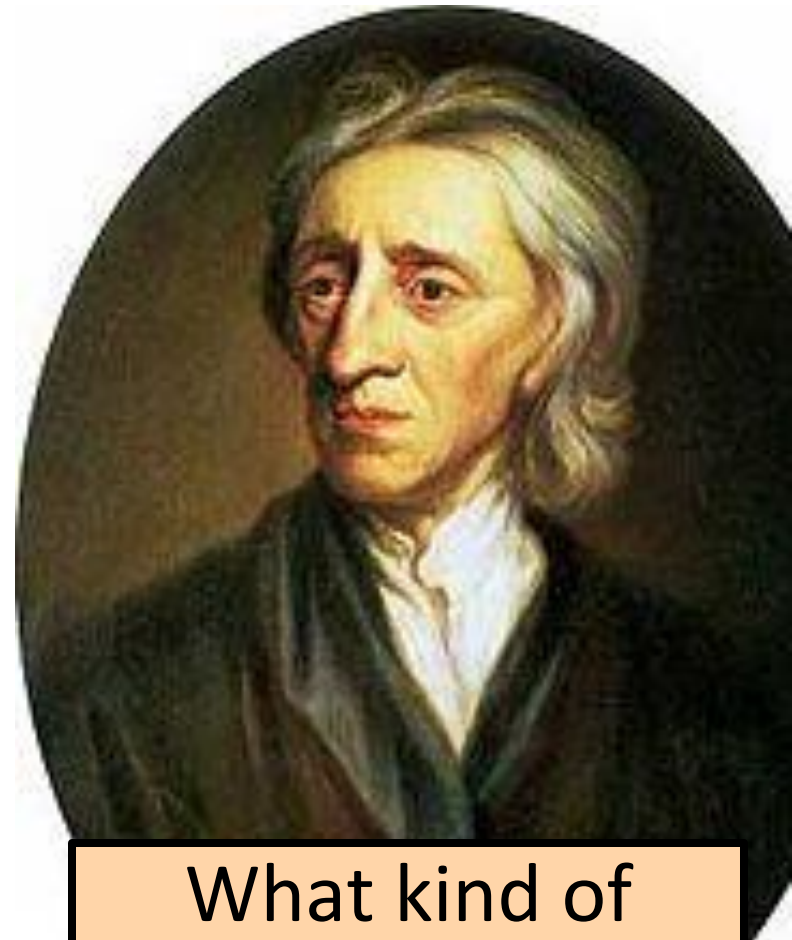
Hobbes believed in an idea called the social contract: people give up power & rights to a king who provides law & order

# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment

English philosophe John Locke disagreed with the ideas of Thomas Hobbes

He was influenced by the Glorious Revolution when the Bill of Rights was created to protect citizens' rights

Locke believed that people are born with natural rights, including life, liberty, property; Locke argued that kings could be overthrown if they violated peoples' rights



What kind of government do you think Locke supported?



# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment

Locke supported limited or constitutional monarchies

Locke believed that gov't power came from the consent of the governed (approval of the people) & that kings should protect the rights of the people

The English Bill of Rights (1689)

- The king cannot tax or overturn Parliament's laws
- Protected freedom of speech
- The army cannot be used as a police force
- No excessive bail

## Quick Writing Prompt:

Whose ideas are right: Hobbes or Locke?

### Hobbes

- People are naturally selfish & act out of self-interest
- Without gov't control, society would be chaotic
- People are like children & need a strong "father" to keep them in line

### Locke

- People are reasonable & able to make decisions
- Freedom & liberty are more important than order & safety
- People should be able to overthrow kings who abuse their power

# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment



The French philosophe Voltaire was one of the most famous writers of the Enlightenment

Voltaire argued for the rights of freedom of speech & religion; He criticized intolerance, prejudice, & oppression

Voltaire was jailed twice in France for criticizing the gov't but his letters to European monarchs helped introduce new reforms & freedoms

Quick Writing Prompt:  
*Do you agree with Voltaire?*

Voltaire once said:

“I may disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.”

When, if ever, should freedom of speech be restricted?

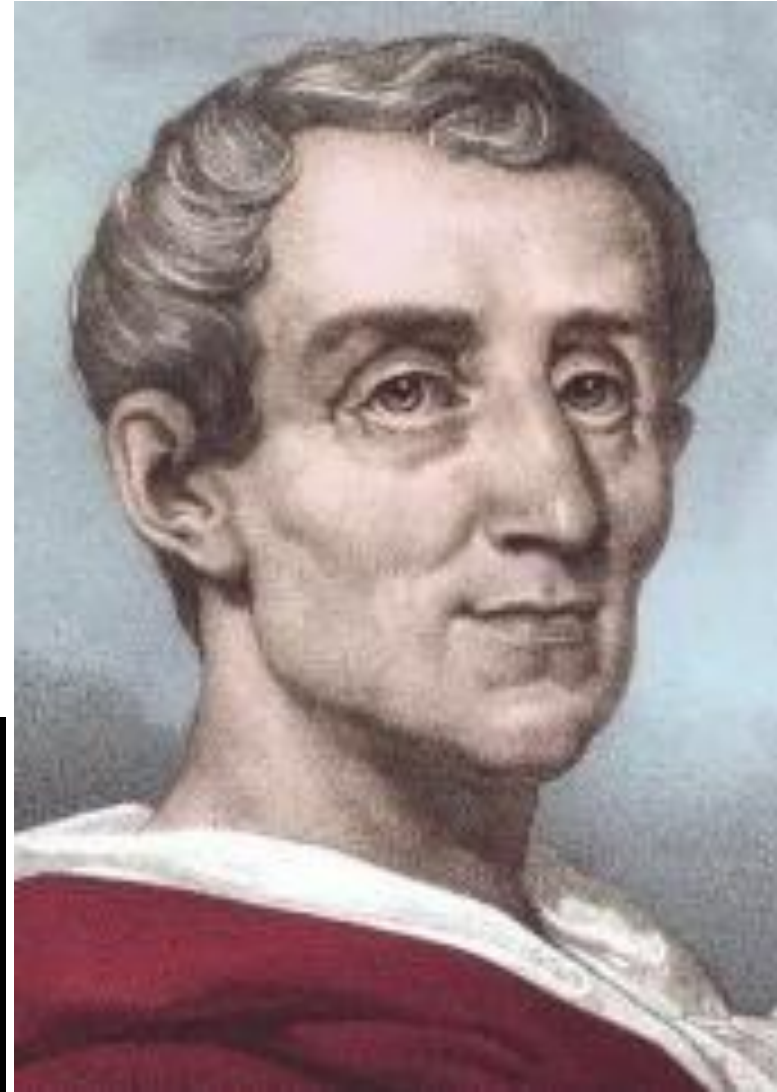
Consider schools, TV, radio, wartime, etc.



# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment

Baron de Montesquieu agreed with John Locke that government should protect individual liberties & that too much power led to tyranny

Montesquieu believed in separation of powers: divide power among 3 branches of government

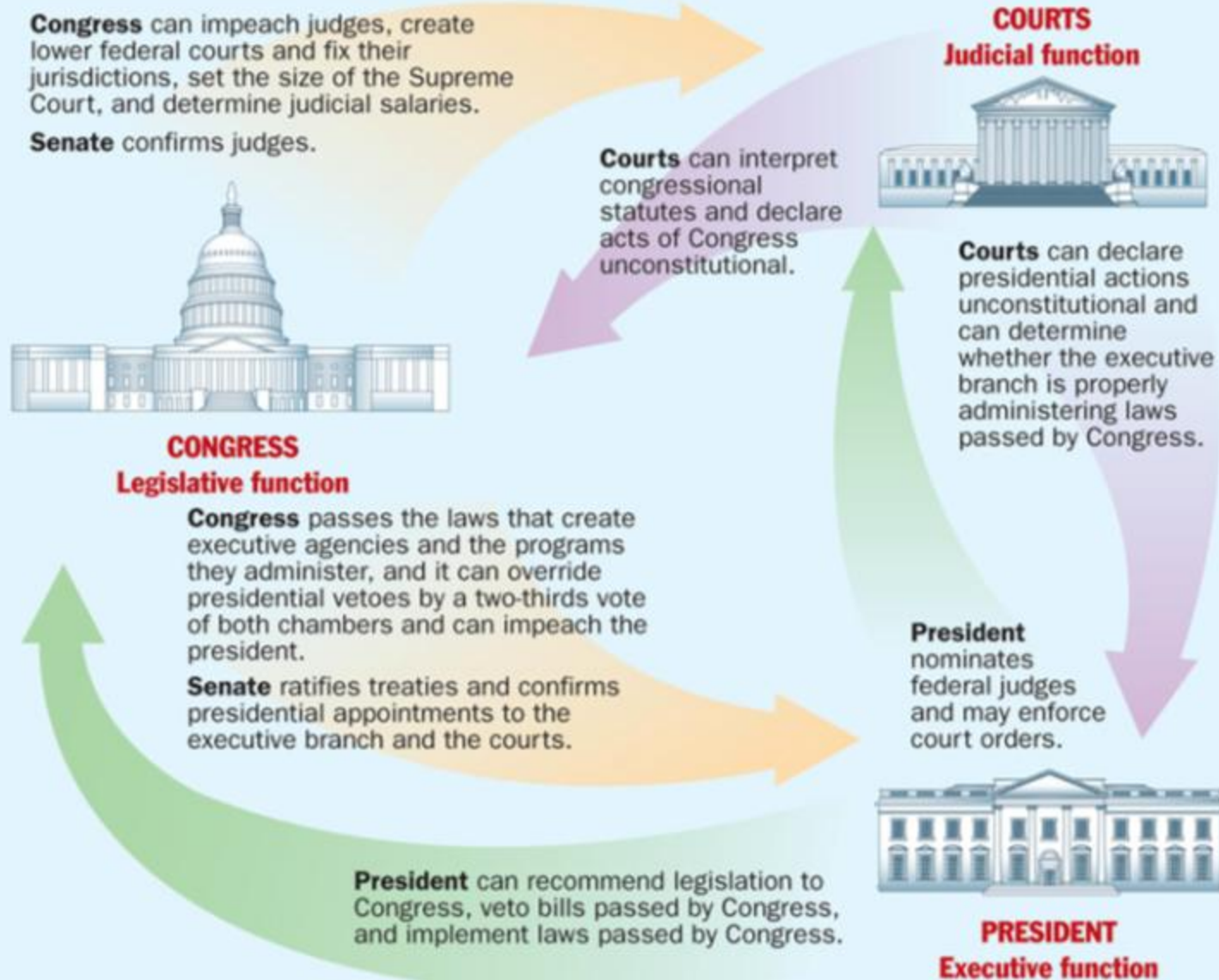


**Legislative**  
(makes laws)

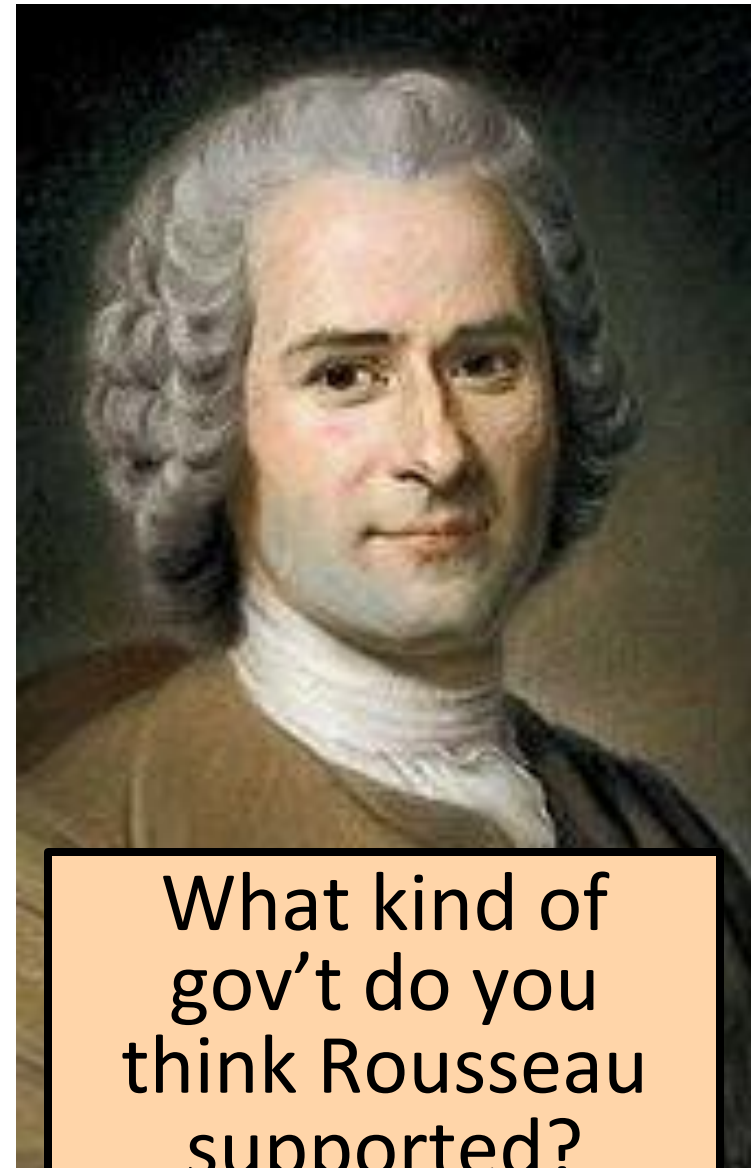
**Executive**  
(carries out laws)

**Judicial**  
(evaluates laws)

Montesquieu's model of gov't also included a system of checks & balances in which each branch of gov't could limit the power of the other branches



# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment



The Swiss philosophe Jean-Jacques Rousseau believed in individual freedom

Rousseau believed that people are naturally good, but power corrupts them; Free people form a social contract & gov't based on the common good

What kind of gov't do you think Rousseau supported?

Rousseau argued for a direct democracy that is guided by the general will of the majority of citizens

## Quick Writing Prompt:

Which form of gov't is better:  
Separation of powers or direct democracy?

### Montesquieu

- Take power from one king & divide it among 3 branches of gov't that each can limit other branches

### Rousseau

- Let the people make all decisions directly to ensure what the majority wants, the majority gets



# Political Ideas of the Enlightenment

Italian philosophe  
Cesare Beccaria criticized  
abuses in the justice system

Beccaria was upset with the  
use of torture, corrupt  
judges, secret trials, & severe  
punishments for crimes

Beccaria argued that people  
accused of crimes should be  
given a fair & speedy trial and  
that capital punishment &  
torture should be abolished

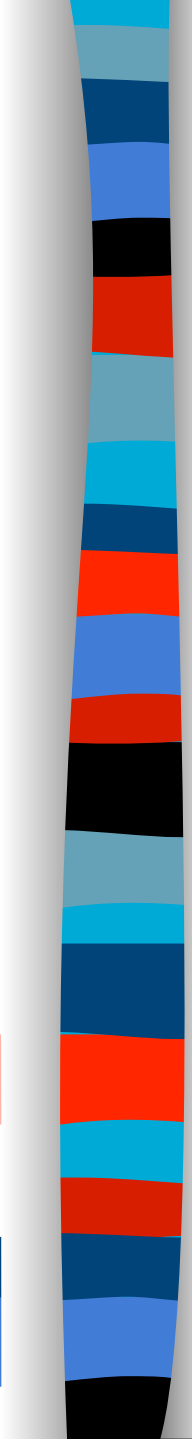


*Quick Writing Prompt:*  
*Do you agree with Beccaria?*

Is capital punishment  
an acceptable form of  
punishment for crimes?



# Closure Activity

- 
- Creating an Enlightenment *Wikipedia*:
    - Create an entry into *Wikipedia* about one key idea or person of the Enlightenment
    - Use the template provided to provide a summary of the person/idea & create a brief sketch
    - Be sure to write your summary with complete thoughts and ideas. No bulleted lists!
    - When finished, I will hang it up in the room to create a classroom *Wikipedia*



# Wikipedia Entries

1. Enlightenment (Age of Reason)
2. Reasons for the Enlightenment
3. Thomas Hobbes
4. John Locke
5. Baron de Montesquieu
6. Jean Jacques Rousseau
7. Voltaire
8. Cesare Beccaria

# Closure Activity

- Which Enlightenment philosopher?
  - Working in teams, analyze excerpts from famous documents & match them to the correct Enlightenment thinker
  - The group with the most correct answers wins & receives bonus points



# 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.

—Declaration of Independence, 1776

# Cesare Beccaria

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed.

—U. S. Bill of Rights

# Voltaire

The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may thus speak, write, and print with freedom, but shall be responsible for such abuses of this freedom as shall be defined by law.

—Declaration of the Rights of Man and  
Citizen, 1789



# Montesquieu

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America.

The judicial Power shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may ordain and establish.

—U.S. Constitution

# Jean-Jacques Rousseau

In 2003, the communities of Freetown and Lakeville, Massachusetts held their annual town meetings and voted on the budget for the school district. Freetown voters approved a budget that reduced their contribution by \$100,000 from what the School Committee asked for.

# Voltaire

Congress shall make no law respecting  
an establishment of religion, or  
prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

—U.S. Bill of Rights, 1791

# Cesare Beccaria

As all persons are held innocent until they have been declared guilty, if arrest is considered essential, all harshness not necessary for the securing of the person shall be severely repressed by law.

—Declaration of the Rights of Man and  
Citizen, 1789

# John Locke

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, and to institute  
new Government.

—Declaration of Independence, 1776

# Montesquieu

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall...proceed to reconsider it.

—U.S. Constitution