

Enlighten Me

Grade Level: Sixth Grade World History
Presented by: Matt Swanson, Elbert County Charter School, Elizabeth, CO
Length of Unit: Five lessons in eleven to twelve fifty minute class periods

I. ABSTRACT

Cogito Ergo Sum! I think, therefore I am! That is the motto of this unit as students set out on a discovery filled trip back to the Age of Enlightenment. The great ‘thinkers’ and their ideas guide us on our to journey to better understand the movement that laid the groundwork for the American and French Revolutions. This unit uncovers the basis of natural rights, and search for reason. Join Locke, Hobbes, and Montesquieu as they watch their ideas inspire Jefferson and the birth of a new nation.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives

1. Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (Colorado State History Standard 3)
2. Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history. (C.S.H.S.4)
3. Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history. (C.S.H.S.6)

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. Faith in science and human reason, as exemplified by Isaac Newton and the laws of nature, and Descartes: “cogito ergo sum”
2. Two ideas of “human nature”: Thomas Hobbes and John Locke
 - a. Hobbes: the need for a strong governing authority as a check on “the condition of man... [which] is a condition of war of everyone against everyone”
 - b. Locke: the idea of man as a “tabula rasa” and the optimistic belief in education; argues against doctrine of divine right of kings, and for government by consent of the governed
3. Influence of the Enlightenment on the beginnings of the United States
 - a. Thomas Jefferson: the idea of “natural rights” in the Declaration of Independence
 - b. Montesquieu and the idea of separation of powers and government

C. Skill Objectives

1. Recognize the factors and situations that led to the Enlightenment
2. Analyze affects of Enlightenment thinkers on society.
3. Identify how Enlightenment views of science led to changes in political philosophy.
4. Analyze how Enlightenment ideas challenged the standing political views.
5. Recognize the colonists want for a new government.
6. Identify ideas and figures of the Enlightenment that influenced the American colonies push for Independence.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

A. For Teachers

1. Roberts, J.M., *The Illustrated History of the World, Volume Seven: The Age of Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. ISBN 0195215257
2. Tackett, T.N., "Enlightenment, Age of," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation
3. Hirsch, E.D., Jr. *What Your 5th Grader Needs to Know*. New York: Delta, 1993. ISBN 0385314647.

B. For Students

1. American Revolution (Fourth Grade)
 - a. Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson
2. Making a Constitutional Government (Fourth Grade)
 - a. Main ideas behind the Declaration of Independence
3. The Renaissance (Fifth Grade)
 - a. Islamic scholars translate Greek works and so help preserve classical civilization.
 - b. A "rebirth" of ideas from ancient Greece and Rome
 - c. New trade and new wealth
 - d. Italian city states: Venice, Florence, and Rome
 - e. Patrons of the arts and learning: the Medici Family and Florence; The Popes and Rome
 - f. Leonardo da Vinci; Michelangelo
 - g. Renaissance ideal and values embodied in *The Courtier* by Castiglione: the "Renaissance Man"; *The Prince* by Machiavelli: real world politics
4. The Reformation (Fifth Grade)
 - a. Guttenberg's printing press: the Bible made widely available
 - b. The Protestant Reformation; Martin Luther and the 95 Theses; John Calvin
 - c. The Counter-Reformation
 - d. Copernicus and Galileo; Conflicts between science and the church; Ptolemaic (earth-centered) vs. sun-centered models of the universe

IV. RESOURCES

- A. *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: The Way It Was

A. Daily Objectives

1. Concept Objectives
 - a. Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. The Renaissance (Fifth Grade)
 - b. Islamic scholars translate Greek works and so help preserve classical civilization.

- c. A “rebirth” of ideas from ancient Greece and Rome
 - d. New trade and new wealth
 - e. Italian city states: Venice, Florence, and Rome
 - f. Patrons of the arts and learning: the Medici Family and Florence; The Popes and Rome
 - g. Leonardo da Vinci; Michelangelo
 - h. Renaissance ideal and values embodied in *The Courtier* by Castiglione: the “Renaissance Man”; *The Prince* by Machiavelli: real world politics
 - i. The Reformation (Fifth Grade)
 - j. Guttenberg’s printing press: the Bible made widely available
 - k. The Protestant Reformation; Martin Luther and the 95 Theses; John Calvin
 - l. The Counter-Reformation
 - m. Copernicus and Galileo; Conflicts between science and the church; Ptolemaic (earth-centered) vs. sun-centered models of the universe
3. Skill Objective(s)
- a. Students will recognize the factors and situations that led to the Enlightenment

B. *Materials*

- 1. Blank map of Europe
- 2. Labeled overhead of Europe map, or student atlases.
- 3. Student journals
- 4. Appendix A

C. *Key Vocabulary*

- 1. Enlightenment

D. *Procedures/Activities*

- 1. Pass out blank map of Europe to the class. Have the students label the major countries of Western and Central Europe along with their capitols using an overhead or student atlases. Also add Venice and Florence.
- 2. When students have completed the maps, direct a discussion about what Europe was like in the Seventeenth Century. They should have prior knowledge of feudalism, the Reformation, and the Renaissance. Direct the dialogue to these points. Talk about who had power and authority in this area of the world. The greatest influence on people’s lives was the Church of Rome. Use map to remind students where Rome is in relation to the rest of Europe. Ruling the various kingdoms were the Monarchs who paid tribute to the Church and in return received its blessing and aid. The role of the individual was to be ruled by these two powers. Explain how the Church used its power to define how the world works, i.e. the sun revolving around the Earth.
- 3. Ask the class how many of them like hearing the answer, “Because I said so,” to their questions. Talk with the class about times they have heard that response. You might have even given it to the class recently. Explain that when things have to be a certain way, but people don’t know how to explain them, this is a common answer. Now guide their attention back to

Europe of the Enlightenment. Ask them what happens when a ball is thrown into the air. It has to eventually fall back to the Earth. Why? We know this as gravity, but a very long time it was explained as because that is how God made it. Another example was the idea that the Earth was the center of our universe. This belief was also very important to the Roman Church. But today we know differently.

4. Next, explain that the Enlightenment was a period in time where individuals began to try and find the reasons and explanations for all that happened around them. The Enlightenment thinkers did not set out to make the Church look bad, they did however want to prove why things happened, instead on relying on “because that is how it is.” Introduce the Enlightenment as the next topic to be studied.
5. In a journal, for homework or in class if time allows, have the students write what they think it would be like to live in this period of time based upon what they talked about in class. Suggestions include the feudal state, Kings and Queens, the time when people began looking at the world in a new light. Have them see if they can pinpoint any factors from that society that would cause people to change their way of thought.

E. *Evaluation/Assessment*

1. Teacher observations of the class discussion.
2. The students written journal assignment.

Lesson Two: Rise of Science

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Galileo and Copernicus (review fourth grade)
 - b. Faith in science and human reason, as exemplified by Isaac Newton and the laws of nature, and Descartes: “cogito ergo sum”
6. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Analyze affects of Enlightenment thinkers on society.

B. *Materials*

1. *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation
2. Student Journals
3. Appendix A
4. Appendix B
5. Appendix C

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. *Cogito ergo sum*- I think therefore I am
2. Ptolemaic- earth centered view of the universe
3. Isaac Newton- English scientist interested in the laws of nature
4. Rene Descartes- Father of modern philosophy

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Begin class by having some students share their journal views from the previous day.
2. Guide a discussion from the sharing to see if anyone felt they could see why individuals began to try and explain the way the world around them worked. Ask the class to create a list in pairs of items or ideas that they feel that the Enlightenment thinkers wanted to explain. This may need some guidance, so give a few examples like why do items always fall down towards the earth, or why does the sun move across the sky (summer and winter). After a few minutes have the class share some of their ideas and create a list up on the board or overhead.
3. Let the class know that now they are going to learn about some of those ‘thinkers’ and what questions of how the world worked they wanted to answer. Lecture/discuss the life and views of Newton and Descartes using Appendix A as reference. Be sure to point out that the ‘thinkers’ we are talking about today spent their time dealing with science and the role of man in the universe.
4. The next part of the lesson requires the use of the school library or computer lab. Have the students choose (or assign) different Enlightenment thinkers to do a quick research on. Appendix B provides a suggested list of Enlightenment thinkers. Please add or subtract as necessary for class size. If you have a large class, you may want to have the students double up on the “thinkers” but I suggest having them work alone on the exercise. I recommend using the Encarta CD-Rom encyclopedia for this exercise, but print encyclopedia’s work as well. Have the students take down quick notes on their thinker. Have the students do a mock interview with their person by filling out the bio or interview sheet, Appendix C.
5. Today’s journal assignment incorporates their Enlightenment figure and what they found in the encyclopedia. Have the students write what they feel their figures greatest achievement to society was and explain why they feel that way.

E. *Evaluation/Assessment*

1. Completed student bio/interview sheet of their Enlightenment figure.
2. Student journal entries.

Lesson Three: It’s All About Human Nature

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.
 - b. Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Two ideas of “human nature”: Thomas Hobbes and John Locke

- b. Hobbes: the need for a strong governing authority as a check on “the condition of man... [which] is a condition of war of everyone against everyone”
 - c. Locke: the idea of man as a “tabula rasa” and the optimistic belief in education; argues against doctrine of divine right of kings, and for government by consent of the governed
 - 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Identify how Enlightenment views of science led to changes in political philosophy.
 - b. Analyze how Enlightenment ideas challenged the standing political views.
- B. *Materials*
 - 1. Appendix A
 - 3. Student journals
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 - 1. Thomas Hobbes- English philosopher and author of *Leviathan*
 - 2. John Locke- English philosopher and author of *Two Treatises of Government*
 - 3. Tabula rasa- Locke’s idea that all people are born with a ‘clean slate’
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 - 1. Begin by having a few students share their journal thoughts from the day before. Discuss as a class how the Enlightenment figures affected society, past and present. You should hear from students who researched figures that focused on science and philosophy.
 - 2. Begin a discussion/lecture by informing the class that the Enlightenment was not just about advances in science and philosophy like the learned about with Descartes and Newton, but also those that were concerned about the role of people in society and governments.
 - 3. Introduce Thomas Hobbes and his thoughts about how citizens need to be ruled by a strong government because otherwise they will always fight one another. Then focus on John Locke and his ideas that citizens should create a government if they are to be ruled. Refer to Appendix A for all this information.
 - 4. After lecture is complete, ask the class who the science minded ideas of figures like Newton or Copernicus probably upset. You will most likely get answers all across the board and many I don’t know. Further ask what were some of the ideas that the science thinkers had. Possible answers should include Newton and the laws of nature (gravity) or Copernicus and the heliocentric model of the universe. Now ask them again, whom would these ideas upset. If they are still off track remind the class who explained the way things were in the world. What group was responsible for explaining how the world worked? The answer would be the Church.
 - 5. Have the students write in their journals who they think would be upset at the ideas that they learned about today. Who would disagree with Locke

and Hobbes ideas for government? Complete in class if time allows or as homework.

- E. *Evaluation/Assessment*
1. Teacher observation of class discussion.
 2. Students written work in journals.

Lesson Four: The Declaration of Independence

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
 - b. Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Influence of the Enlightenment on the beginnings of the United States
 - b. Thomas Jefferson: the idea of “natural rights” in the Declaration of Independence
 - c. Montesquieu and the idea of separation of powers and government
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Identify ideas and figures of the Enlightenment that influenced the American colonies push for Independence.
 - b. Recognize the colonists want for a new government.

B. *Materials*

1. Student journals
2. Appendix A
3. Student copies of Declaration of Independence

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Thomas Jefferson- creator of the Declaration of Independence
2. Declaration of Independence- document full of Enlightenment ideas that stated the reasons for the colonies split from Great Britain
3. Utopia- an ideal society
4. Charles Montesquieu- Enlightenment thinker whose ideas of the separation of powers helped shape the United States Constitution
5. Separation of Powers- the idea of spreading out the powers of government so one entity did not gain too much control

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Begin class by having a few students share their thoughts on the previous days journal assignment. As a class, discuss who would be upset with Locke and Hobbes views on government and citizens. Most likely to be upset were the monarchs and the church. Make sure to reiterate Locke’s view against the divine rights of kings.
2. When the discussion begins to settle down or points are repeated have the class open their journals. Have the class write about what they think a perfect society would be. Explain the idea of Utopia, and have them write about what they see as the perfect society. Encourage them to discuss the

role of government, and what kind of government it would be. They should touch on the role of all citizens in the society as well. Make sure the class really opens up and explains what they feel a perfect society needs to be like. They should think and write about this topic for at least twenty minutes. Have them be as specific as possible. After a while, have the class share some of their ideas. With middle school students, responses should vary from the extreme self-motivated view of no schools and no chores to the view of all people being equal in a democratic society. After you have heard a wide variety of views ask the class if it is possible to create their ideas of the perfect society. Do they feel that this is obtainable? You might hear a couple of yeses, but for the most part they should say no. Then ask the class to look at their utopias and ask them to identify in their journals any Enlightenment ideas that they have learned about. Once again the answers will vary. Now ask the class why do we study the Age of Enlightenment. Why are we studying thoughts, ideas, and intellectuals? The answer is because these ideas lead to changes in society, and governments

3. Pass out a copy of the Declaration of Independence to the students and have them follow along as you read aloud. Inform the students that Thomas Jefferson designed this document to be heard in large groups with the intent that citizens would rally to support the upcoming war with the British. Discuss the importance of this document. Explain that this piece was one of the first to take the ideas of Enlightenment thinkers and put those ideas into action. Jefferson expands on Hobbes ideas that people need a strong government and need to be ruled, but also incorporates Locke's idea that the government should meet the needs of those governed. The document is full of the discussion of the natural rights of man. Use Appendix A as a guide to introduce Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence.
4. Appendix A also contains information about Montesquieu, and his ideas about the separation of powers that had a major influence in the creation of the Constitution of the United States.
5. As time allows in class, or for homework, have the students write a response to the Declaration of Independence. The students should make connections to Enlightenment ideas and the Declaration. Have them find specific phrases in the piece that they feel relates to Enlightenment ideas.

E. *Evaluation/Assessment*

1. Teacher observation of class discussion.
2. Student journals about the connections of the Enlightenment and the Declaration of Independence.

Lesson Five: Putting Together the Puzzle

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.

- b. Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.
 - c. Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history.
2. Lesson Content
- a. Faith in science and human reason, as exemplified by Isaac Newton and the laws of nature, and Descartes: “cogito ergo sum”
 - b. Two ideas of “human nature”: Thomas Hobbes and John Locke
 - i. Hobbes: the need for a strong governing authority as a check on “the condition of man... [which] is a condition of war of everyone against everyone”
 - ii. Locke: the idea of man as a “tabula rasa” and the optimistic belief in education; argues against doctrine of divine right of kings, and for government by consent of the governed.
 - c. Influence of the Enlightenment on the beginnings of the United States
 - i. Thomas Jefferson: the idea of “natural rights” in the Declaration of Independence
 - ii. Montesquieu and the idea of separation of powers and government
3. Skill Objective(s)
- a. Recognize the impact of the Enlightenment on society and the changes that followed.
 - b. Identify the scientific and philosophical figures and thoughts that shaped the Enlightenment.

B. *Materials*

- 1. Three Foot Butcher Paper
- 2. Markers
- 3. Student journals
- 4. Student quick biographies of Enlightenment Figures
- 5. Construction paper of varying colors

C. *Key Vocabulary*

None

D. *Procedures/Activities*

- 1. Before class mark out a timeline on the butcher paper. The dates should range from around 1500-1850. The students will fill in the dates of their Enlightenment figures during class.
- 2. The students will be participating in three activities during this lesson. The first is writing a newspaper article about their figure. They should focus on one of their figure’s main ideas or points, or a main event that the figure was involved in. These article do not need to long in length, but should cover the main points
- 3. The second activity will be creating an entry for a wall of history. In our classroom we have a wall of history dedicated to the individuals that we cover in each unit. The wall of history deals with the life facts about the

figures. The students cover much of the basic information found in the biography research they did using the Encyclopedia. Unlike the newspaper article that focuses on the figures achievements, this will focus more on events in the person's life. We try and included photographs of the people when possible. These are usually found on Encarta. When photographs are not available, the students draw a picture dealing with some event in the figures life. Once the entry is complete, have the student glue it to a piece of construction paper for display.

4. The third activity is putting the information of their figure on the timeline that is in the front of the class. They should focus on their lifespan and the dates of any major events. The reasoning behind the three activities is that each one should not take too long. I suggest even having the students write out their newspaper piece and type it that night for homework. Because the space at the timeline is so limited, having the students work on all three of the projects at once should guarantee that everyone should have work to be doing.
5. As class begins, inform the students that they are going to tie together all the information they have learned about the Enlightenment and their scholars through a variety of exercises over the next couple of days. Explain each one of the activities. This may take two days for the students to complete these projects. Whatever is not completed will be due at the beginning of the following day and finished as homework.
6. On the third day, lead a discussion about the Enlightenment. Using the now completed timeline, point out the flow of the Enlightenment. You may want to add other dates, like the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Reformation, and the Middle Ages as reference points. Talk about the flow from one figure to the next and review the major events or written of from the Enlightenment.

E. *Evaluation/Assessment*

1. Teacher observation of class discussion about the major events of the Enlightenment and completion of the timeline.
2. Student work on the newspaper about their Enlightenment figures.
3. Student 'Wall of History' entry.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. The culminating activity for this unit is a short test on the Enlightenment ideas and figures. This will take place after the newspaper articles, wall of history entries, and timeline have all been completed.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A- Teacher background knowledge for unit
- B. Appendix B- Enlightenment figure list for student projects
- C. Appendix C- Question/Answer sheet for student research

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- D. Author Unknown, "Kant, Immanuel," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation
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Appendix A, page 1-Enlighten Me

Teacher Background Notes for Entire Unit

Lesson One

Many historians date the Enlightenment from the beginning of the Eighteenth Century up to the French Revolution. For the purposes of this unit we will begin well before that to include many of the Seventeenth Century Thinkers and Philosophers that had a great impact on the thought of the Eighteenth Century. The term Enlightenment was used by many of the ‘thinkers’ and writers of the time to describe what they thought was a period of new thought emerging from hundreds of years of darkness and mass ignorance. Because this is how they viewed the “Enlightenment” we must include the thinkers of the Seventeenth Century that paved the way.

Lesson One incorporates two main subjects taught in previous levels of the *Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence*. They include the Renaissance and the reformation both learned in the fifth grade. In the section on the Reformation, the students should have discovered two individuals that helped set the stage for the Enlightenment, Copernicus and Galileo. Both of these individuals focused their attention to science and the universe. Copernicus was a Polish scholar from the Sixteenth Century and founder of modern day astronomy. In the mid fifteen hundreds, he developed a model of the Solar System where the sun was the center and the planets, including Earth, revolved around it. This was quite the opposite view held by the “Scholars” of the day. Galileo lived from the late Sixteenth Century to the early Seventeenth Century. He followed Copernicus’ view of the universe and investigated the rate in which different masses fell to the Earth. He was one of the first scholars to use a telescope for astronomy and noticed the moons of Jupiter, sunspots, and found the mountains on Earth’s moons. Just like Copernicus, Galileo’s views went against the cultural norm of the time and Galileo was forced by the Roman Catholic church to renounce his views of Copernicus’ Universe and state that the Earth was the center of the Universe, and did not move.¹ In further review, the Reformation was an attempt to change and reform the Roman Catholic Church and ultimately led to the creation of the Protestant Churches. There are many individuals associated with the Reformation, most notably Martin Luther and John Calvin. The Reformation took place during the larger Renaissance (~1300-1650). The Renaissance was the rebirth of classical society based upon the works of ancient Rome and Greece. Many historians consider the Renaissance as the birth of modern times.

All of these early figures and events led to or influenced the Enlightenment. Also review feudalism and the ideas of Kings and Kingdoms found in the Middle Ages and covered in the Fourth Grade.

Lesson Two

The Age of Enlightenment was also known as the Age of Reason. This suitably describes what the figures and ‘thinkers’ of the time were doing. They were including reason into their lives and the world around them. What grew from this is the belief in human reason. The scholars of the time were posed to look again at and question everything that man knew. They set out to look at all ideas and values of their known world and set out in new directions. As the scholars set out to answer these new questions in countries all across Europe, they often contradicted one another.

¹ Hirsch, E.D. Jr., Kent, J., Trefil, J. *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993. ISBN 0395655978

Appendix A, page 2-Enlighten Me

However, this was all right in that they were using human reason to try and address the way the world and humans' function. Sir Isaac Newton unlocked the laws of nature, by discovering the laws of universal gravitation. This set the springboard of the Enlightenment in to action. If man could understand "God's Law", and the way of the universe, than he could understand and discover all law dealing with nature and society. The scholars believed in finding out the answers to the way the world worked through observation and experiment. They abandoned the previous technique of relying on the word of past sources, which happened to be the Church. The Enlightenment figures did not set out to end the Roman Catholic Church; many of the Enlightenment scholars were members of it. However they did see the Church as a form of chains inhibiting the minds of humans of the past. Most of the figures did not renounce religion itself. They began to see God as a great "Watchmaker" who created the universe and the laws that govern it, but God did not have a hand in the everyday functioning of the world. They held onto their belief of God but put aside much of Christian theology. The Enlightenment scholars could not justify living to reach the next life, but rather to get the most out of this life. As one can imagine, the Church did not take kindly to the questioning of its beliefs and powers by mere mortals and did as much as it could to suppress the spread of human reason to the masses. The Church was still a very formidable force and affected many of the Enlightenment scholars' decisions on what to publish and release. The Enlightenment pushed in until the French Revolution, where its ideas had a tremendous effect on the call for change in that country. Continue on for information about a few Enlightenment figures and their impact on society. The two main figures addressed in this lesson, aside from the further reviewing of Copernicus and Galileo, are Rene Descartes and Isaac Newton. These individuals pushed the ideas of human reason to new levels.²

Rene Descartes (1596-1650) like many of his fellow Enlightenment figures was a true Renaissance Man. He was well educated and accomplished in many different fields. He is sometimes referred to as the father of modern philosophy.

Descartes, born in France, came from a long line of educated family members. He received the best education and set out in Scholastic philosophy, which was the attempt to understand the doctrine of the Church through human reason. He studied law, joined the military, and traveled throughout all of Europe. Descartes wrote many long essays on science, math, and philosophy while holding onto his belief in the Roman Catholic Church. He even renounced the view of Copernicus' Universe once the Church said that view was heretical. His most famous work is the *Meditation on First Philosophy* (1641). In this, Descartes argues that a person can doubt all their sense experiences, even those of reason, but that a person cannot doubt the fact that they are a thinking being. He states *cogito ergo sum*, which translates "I think, therefore I am". Descartes further argues that there is a God that is a true entity, and therefore he can trust his sense experiences.

The profound statement "I think, therefore I am" greatly effected the thought process of those to follow.³

The second great mind in this lesson belongs to Sir Isaac Newton. Isaac Newton (1642-1727) was an English scientist, philosopher, and mathematician. Many consider him to be one of the most important scientists of all time. As mentioned earlier, Newton did extensive work on the laws of universal gravity. He also worked with light and optics, thus leading him to make the

² Tackett, T.N., "Enlightenment, Age of," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

³ Author Unknown, "Descartes, Rene," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

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first reflecting telescope. Newton mastered mathematics at school at Cambridge's Trinity College. He also published two very important scientific pieces, *Principia* (1687) and *Opticks* (1704). The impact that Newton had on the Enlightenment is that through his work, he encouraged other scholars to continue their work. As Newton covered the laws of nature, "God's Laws", he influenced others to set out and discover all of the laws of nature. This is a huge effect. There is no telling what the course of action might have been, if Newton did not help its initial force. He gave people the power to question, the unquestionable.⁴

Lesson Three

The trend of science minded talk of Newton led to the exploration of other ideas. The two main philosophers in this lesson are Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. They both looked at the role of citizens in society, and the importance of good government.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was an English philosopher who spent lots of time looking at political theory. Hobbes was one of the first Western philosophers that argued for and proved the necessity of a political state. Hobbes grew up in England and attended Oxford University's Magdalen Hall. After his education, he received the position of tutor for the future earl of Devonshire. This proved very important for it allowed and paid for Hobbes to make many tours across and through Europe. Hobbes studied and discussed science with many of the leading thinkers of his time, and, eventually, his student became the King of England. As much as Hobbes enjoyed thinking about all aspects of the world, the philosophy of politics is where he made his greatest contribution. While various changes were happening around Europe, like the English Revolution, Hobbes wrote about the theory of government. Two of his most notable works are *On Citizenship*, and *Leviathan*.

Trouble seemed to follow Hobbes where ever he traveled and never seemed to stay in one spot for too long, and his thoughts and ideas are reasons why. He wrote about the role of government in society, and used examples from the world around him. This angered most that were in power, thus forcing him to stay on the move. The biggest impact Hobbes left was his justification for government. Hobbes felt that all humans were addicted to power or the idea of power. Because of this addiction, humans would do anything to get power, even war. Hobbes states that man in nature is in perpetual war to achieve power, and that man will destroy man. Because humans have this natural instinct to fight for power, Hobbes believes that there is an incredible need for a strong government that regulates the society and has all the power. This government must appear to be strong, or others will revolt, and that is very negative for society. Hobbes' thoughts seemed to revolve and support a monarchy, but did not exclude a democracy or republic as long as the government was able to keep power and run the society. Hobbes believed in a strong central government.⁵

John Locke (1632-1704) too studied at Oxford, but took his life studies a slightly different direction than Hobbes. Locke had the opportunity to travel around Europe, and like Hobbes, often moved to avoid a displeased authority that was offended by Locke's views. Locke took the lead from Francis Bacon, another Englishman, and studied empiricism. This deals with the use of the senses to experience in the attempt to learn. Locke saw humans, especially their minds, as blank slates when they are born. He refers to this blank slate as *tabula rasa*. In order for a young

⁴ Westfall, R., "Newton, Sir Isaac," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

⁵ Author Unknown, "Hobbes, Thomas," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

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mind to develop and learn, it must experience with the senses the world around it, and that is how the human mind grows. Locke did not believe that there could be any marks on the slate of the person before they were born. People could not be born with intuition already set up. Locke did believe that all people were born good, and equal and that anything they became later was from what they experienced with their senses after birth.

Locke further made a name for himself, and caused lots of trouble, with his views on the power of kings. Many kings of the time related their power to the will of the God, and that God chose them to be the leader of their country. Locke's views on this differed from those of Hobbes. Locke believed that the government should reflect and represent the will of those that are governed. He argued that the state is bound to many natural laws of man. Many of Locke's views will be discussed in the next lesson because of their impact on the U.S. Constitution. Locke further argued that a revolution or revolt is not on a right that citizens have, but more so an obligation. If the government does not meet the needs of society, or if the government treats the citizens unfairly, than the governed must fix what is wrong. Locke was truly a renaissance man, but his biggest mark was left on political theory. Locke believed in some sort of system of checks and balances, much like Montesquieu. He also believed that the citizens should have religious freedom, and that the Church should stay out of state affairs. Locke set the groundwork that Jefferson, Washington, and the fore fathers of this country put into motion.⁶

Lesson Four

This lesson will introduce two men who greatly influenced modern government, as we know it here in the United States. These Enlightenment figures, Thomas Jefferson, and Charles Montesquieu, wrote and/or influenced two tremendous documents of American history, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) left a great impact on American history and society. He was one of the leaders of the American fight for independence from Great Britain, and later became the third President of the United States. Jefferson founded the University of Virginia, and oversaw the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. His left his biggest impact on world history with his writing of the Declaration of Independence. The document is full of Enlightenment ideals, thoughts, and principles. There is a call for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. There is a belief that all men are created equal. There is a notion that all government's should derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed." And there is a call and push for the recognition of the true natural rights of man. These ideas are not all originally Jefferson's. They stem from the very Enlightenment in which we have been discussing. However, the fact that they show up in Jefferson's words and thoughts, states how important the Enlightenment was to the creation of our country. These Enlightenment ideals pushed the colonies to fight for what is right. They had to revolt to change a government that did not derive its powers from the consent of the governed.

The other figure is Montesquieu (1689-1755). He was born in France and studied at some of the finest schools there. Montesquieu took an immediate love form politics and history. By his mid thirties he was actively involved in the local politics of the Bordeaux parliament. He is known for his writing of *Persian Letters* (1721), *Thoughts on the Causes of the Greatness and the Downfall of the Romans* (1734), and *The Spirit of Laws* (1748). These works looked at politics

⁶ Author Unknown, "Locke, John," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

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not only in France (*Persian Letters*), but also around Europe and throughout history. *The Spirit of Laws* was arguably his greatest work, for it left the greatest impact on the changes in the world to follow. He argued that a certain government does not come to power because of the geography of the area around it. This attacks many of the arguments of the time that there had to be a monarchy in France. He goes on further to stress the utmost importance for there to be a separation in powers in any government. These views ultimately led to the structure of the Constitution of the United States. In the U.S. there are three branches of the government that spreads the power out so one group or section does not have the ability to take supreme power. This system of checks and balances provides a way for the government to regulate its own actions. At the time this view was contrary to the beliefs of those in power, for the monarchs loved the way they ruled. However, this view added to the power of those wanting change in government around Europe and in the American colonies. Montesquieu's work played quite an important role in the Eighteenth Century.⁷

⁷ Author Unknown, "Montesquieu, Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de la Brede et de," *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000*. 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation

Appendix B-Enlighten Me

List of Enlightenment Figures for student quick research, newspaper articles, and wall of fame biography sheets.

Bacon, Francis
Beccaria, Cesare
Berkeley, George
Descartes, Rene
Diderot, Denis
Frederick II
Galileo
Hegel, Georg
Hobbes, Thomas
Kant, Immanuel
Lamernnais, Felicite Robert de
Lessind, Gotthold Ephraim
Locke, John
Machiavelli, Niccolo
Mazoni, Alessandro Fransesco Tommaso Antonio
Mill, John Stuart
Montesquieu, Charles Louis de Secondat
Newton, Isaac
Rousseau, Jean Jacques
Schopenhauer, Arthur
Spinoza, Baruch
Voltaire

Appendix C- Enlighten Me

Enlightenment Thinker Interview Sheet

Please fill in the following required information using the Encarta or Encyclopedia about your Enlightenment figure.

Name:

Lifespan (years born and died):

Origin (what country were they born):

Interesting facts about their childhood or education:

Famous Works (list anything that they wrote or published):

Issues (what issues did your figure spend their time thinking about):

What was their impact on the world? (how did their work affect the people of their time or even people today):