Where Ideas Began

Trace the roots and spread of Enlightenment ideas

SS24.8.18 "Summarize the main ideas of the Enlightenment and describe their emergence in European society. 18a Trace the origins of Enlightenment ideas to earlier eras and movements, including Classical Greece and Rome, Christianity, the Renaissance..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two Enlightenment ideas, circle earlier traditions or movements that helped shape them, and number one way the ideas spread in European society.

Old Ideas, New Questions

1. Imagine a European reader in the 1700s asking, "Who should have a voice in making laws?" The Enlightenment did not appear from nowhere. In ancient Greece, some city-states held public debates and practiced forms of citizen government, although many people could not participate. Roman writers discussed law and duties shared in a republic. Christianity taught that each person had moral worth before God, even as churches and rulers disagreed about power. Later thinkers drew on these older traditions to ask whether rulers should answer to the people they governed.

2. During the Renaissance, European scholars studied Greek and Roman texts and debated what those works meant for their own times. The Reformation challenged the authority of the Catholic Church, and some reformers urged people to read scripture for themselves; reformers still differed over religious freedom. In the Scientific Revolution, investigators such as Galileo used observation and mathematics to test claims about nature. These movements did not produce one shared political program. Together, they gave later thinkers old questions to revisit and reasons to examine claims instead of trusting authority alone.

3. By the 1700s, European writers used reason to argue about how people should be governed. John Locke defended natural rights and government based on the consent of the governed. Montesquieu argued that dividing government power could limit abuses. Others called for greater religious tolerance. Printed books and newspapers carried these arguments, while readers discussed them in places such as coffeehouses and salons. These spaces did not include everyone, but they helped ideas move beyond courts and universities. The Enlightenment grew as people combined inherited ideas, new methods of inquiry, and public debate about society.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did ancient Greek and Roman traditions give later thinkers ways to question who should make laws?

2. How did Christianity and the Reformation offer different starting points for debates about people and authority?

3. How did the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution offer different ways to examine accepted ideas?

4. Choose one Enlightenment idea from the passage. How could it reach people beyond courts and universities?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you edit a newspaper in an eighteenth-century European town. Write five or six sentences proposing a change to a town rule about government or religious worship. Connect your proposal to one Enlightenment idea and two earlier traditions or movements from the passage, then explain how people could discuss it.

ANSWER KEY

Where Ideas Began

GRADE 8 · SS24.8.18

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two Enlightenment ideas, circle earlier traditions or movements that helped shape them, and number one way the ideas spread in European society. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did ancient Greek and Roman traditions give later thinkers ways to question who should make laws?	**Greek public debate and forms of citizen government, along with Roman writing about law and republican duties, offered ways to ask whether rulers should answer to the people.**
2	How did Christianity and the Reformation offer different starting points for debates about people and authority?	**Christianity taught that each person had moral worth before God. The Reformation challenged Catholic Church authority, and some reformers urged people to read scripture for themselves.**
3	How did the Renaissance and Scientific Revolution offer different ways to examine accepted ideas?	**Renaissance scholars studied and debated Greek and Roman texts. Scientific Revolution investigators used observation and mathematics to test claims about nature.**
4	Choose one Enlightenment idea from the passage. How could it reach people beyond courts and universities?	**For example, an argument for religious tolerance could appear in a newspaper and then be discussed in a coffeehouse or salon.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town should stop punishing neighbors for worshiping differently. This proposal follows the Enlightenment call for religious tolerance. Christianity's teaching that people have moral worth gives us a reason to respect each neighbor. The Reformation showed that religious authority could be questioned, even though reformers did not always welcome disagreement. Let us print this argument in the newspaper and debate it at the coffeehouse.

Accept other accurate connections between an earlier tradition or movement and an Enlightenment idea. For the open task, look for a specific proposed rule change, two distinct earlier sources, and a plausible way people would discuss the proposal.