

Ideas Into Independence

Trace how political ideas moved from English documents to American independence.

SS.5.A.5.3 "Explain the significance of historical documents including key political concepts, origins of these concepts, and their role in American independence."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the three document titles. Circle political concepts connected to those documents, then put a star beside the sentence that explains how the Declaration supported independence.

Documents That Shaped a Revolution

- ① In 1215, English nobles forced King John to accept the Magna Carta. This charter said the king had to follow the law, an idea called the rule of law. It also protected people from being punished without lawful judgment. Centuries later, colonists remembered that even a ruler's power could be limited by written promises like this one.
- ② After England's Glorious Revolution, Parliament approved the English Bill of Rights in 1689. The document limited the monarch and said the ruler could not suspend laws or raise certain taxes without Parliament's consent. It strengthened the idea that representatives should share power. Colonial assemblies used this tradition when they argued that British taxes needed the consent of the people's representatives.
- ③ In 1776, the Declaration of Independence announced that the colonies were free from Britain. Thomas Jefferson wrote that people have natural rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This idea was influenced by English thinker John Locke. The Declaration also said governments get their just power from the consent of the governed. These claims gave colonists reasons to separate from British rule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 How did the Magna Carta limit a king's power, and why did this idea matter to colonists?

2 What did the English Bill of Rights say about certain taxes, and what idea about representatives did it strengthen?

3 Which thinker influenced the idea of natural rights in the Declaration of Independence? Name one natural right listed in the passage.

4 How did the idea of consent of the governed give colonists a reason to separate from British rule?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose one document from the passage. Write exactly three sentences arguing why it gave colonists the strongest support for independence. Name one political concept connected to the document and use evidence from the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the three document titles. Circle political concepts connected to those documents, then put a star beside the sentence that explains how the Declaration supported independence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Magna Carta limit a king's power, and why did this idea matter to colonists?	It said the king had to follow the law and protected people from punishment without lawful judgment. Colonists saw that a ruler's power could be limited by written promises.
2	What did the English Bill of Rights say about certain taxes, and what idea about representatives did it strengthen?	The ruler could not raise certain taxes without Parliament's consent. It strengthened the idea that representatives should share power.
3	Which thinker influenced the idea of natural rights in the Declaration of Independence? Name one natural right listed in the passage.	John Locke. Life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness.
4	How did the idea of consent of the governed give colonists a reason to separate from British rule?	It said governments receive their just power from the people. Colonists could argue that British rule did not have rightful authority without their consent.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I think the English Bill of Rights gave colonists the strongest support for independence. It strengthened the political concept that representatives should share power, including over certain taxes. Because colonial assemblies argued that British taxes needed their representatives' consent, this document gave them a reason to challenge British rule.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect each document to its political concept and to the colonists' arguments for independence. For the open response, accept any of the three documents if the student makes a supported three-sentence argument.