Power and Markets

How Enlightenment ideas shaped government and free enterprise

MWH.C.3.3 "Analyze the impact of the Enlightenment on modern government and economic institutions. Explain how the major ideas of enlightened philosophy influenced the concepts of natural rights and consent of the governed..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline claims about where government gets its authority, circle ways to limit political power, and box two claims about how markets work.

Who Should Hold Power?

1. Imagine a ruler who closes a newspaper and raises taxes without asking the public. Enlightenment writers challenged such unchecked power. John Locke argued that people possess natural rights to life, liberty, and property. Government exists to protect those rights and gains authority through the consent of the governed. If it fails, people may replace it. Jean-Jacques Rousseau also located political authority in the people, but emphasized laws expressing the general will, or the common interest.

2. Thomas Hobbes feared that life without a strong government would become violent. He defended a powerful sovereign created through an agreement among people, not a monarch's claim that God granted the throne. Unlike Locke, Hobbes gave subjects little room to resist that sovereign. Montesquieu proposed dividing power among branches so each could check the others. Voltaire defended freedom of expression and religious toleration. Such ideas shaped constitutions that limit rulers and protect public debate.

3. Political freedom also raised questions about economic control. In *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith argued that specialization can increase production and that competition among sellers can help guide prices and supply. He criticized many trade restrictions that favored select groups. Modern free enterprise reflects his case for private exchange and competition, though governments still enforce contracts and rules. His account offered an alternative to economic systems in which officials heavily directed trade.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Locke and Rousseau agree about political authority, and what did each emphasize?

2. How did Hobbes's view differ from both divine right and Locke's view?

3. How could Montesquieu's and Voltaire's ideas each limit a modern government's power?

4. How do Smith's ideas appear in modern free enterprise, and what role does government still play?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A new town plans to let its mayor make all laws and grant one company the sole right to sell bread. Write four sentences proposing a different plan: use two Enlightenment thinkers to justify government rules, apply Smith to the bread market, and contrast your plan with Hobbes's view of power.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.3.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline claims about where government gets its authority, circle ways to limit political power, and box two claims about how markets work. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Locke and Rousseau agree about political authority, and what did each emphasize?	**Both located authority in the people. Locke emphasized consent and protection of natural rights; Rousseau emphasized laws expressing the general will.**
2	How did Hobbes's view differ from both divine right and Locke's view?	**Hobbes grounded a sovereign's authority in an agreement among people, not God's grant to a monarch. Unlike Locke, he gave subjects little room to resist.**
3	How could Montesquieu's and Voltaire's ideas each limit a modern government's power?	**Branches could check one another, as Montesquieu proposed. Protections for expression and religious toleration could prevent rulers from silencing dissent, as Voltaire urged.**
4	How do Smith's ideas appear in modern free enterprise, and what role does government still play?	**Private sellers compete, helping guide prices and supply. Government still enforces contracts and rules.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Following Montesquieu, I would give a council lawmaking power and let courts check the mayor's actions. Following Locke, I would require officials to protect residents' rights and govern with their consent. Following Smith, I would let several bakeries compete instead of granting one company an exclusive privilege. Unlike Hobbes's powerful sovereign, this government would divide power and allow residents to replace leaders who violate their rights.

Accept other accurate thinker pairings and government rules. The bread policy should apply competition or private exchange, and the comparison with Hobbes should accurately address the power of the sovereign.