

Ideas Shape Government

Trace how three thinkers influenced colonial self-government.

8.15.E “explain the role of significant individuals such as Thomas Hooker, Charles de Montesquieu, and John Locke in the development of self-government in colonial America.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each idea about how government should work. In the margin, write H, L, or M beside the idea connected to Thomas Hooker, John Locke, or Charles de Montesquieu.

Thinkers and Colonial Government

- ① Colonial self-government grew from the belief that people could help shape the rules under which they lived. In 1638, Connecticut minister Thomas Hooker preached that the people had the right to choose public officials. His ideas helped support the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut in 1639. This plan organized a colonial government with elected governors and representatives. It did not give every resident a vote, but it strengthened the idea that government should rest on the consent of eligible voters.
- ② English philosopher John Locke argued that people possess natural rights, including life, liberty, and property. He wrote that governments receive their power from the consent of the governed and must protect those rights. If a government failed, Locke said, the people could change it. His ideas reached educated colonists through books and discussions. His arguments gave colonial leaders language for defending representative assemblies and later challenging unfair British rule.
- ③ French writer Charles de Montesquieu studied how power worked in governments. In *The Spirit of the Laws*, published in 1748, he argued that liberty was safer when government powers were separated. For example, the people who make laws should not hold all the power to enforce or judge them. Colonial readers used this idea when thinking about assemblies, governors, and courts. Montesquieu's work encouraged limits on power, a principle that shaped later American plans for self-government.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did Thomas Hooker say people had the right to do, and how did this idea support the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut?

2 How did John Locke connect government power to the people it governed?

3 What was Montesquieu's idea about separated powers, and why did he think it mattered?

4 How were Hooker's and Locke's ideas alike in their influence on self-government?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine a colonial community is writing rules for its government. Write three sentences that propose one government feature and explain how ideas from two of these thinkers support it: Hooker, Locke, or Montesquieu.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each idea about how government should work. In the margin, write H, L, or M beside the idea connected to Thomas Hooker, John Locke, or Charles de Montesquieu. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Thomas Hooker say people had the right to do, and how did this idea support the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut?	Hooker said people had the right to choose public officials. His idea supported a government with elected governors and representatives.
2	How did John Locke connect government power to the people it governed?	Locke said governments receive power from the consent of the governed and must protect people's natural rights.
3	What was Montesquieu's idea about separated powers, and why did he think it mattered?	Montesquieu argued that government powers should be separated. He believed liberty was safer when no one group held all the power to make, enforce, and judge laws.
4	How were Hooker's and Locke's ideas alike in their influence on self-government?	Both connected government authority to the people. Hooker supported choosing officials, while Locke said government power comes from the consent of the governed.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our community should elect representatives who make local laws. Thomas Hooker's belief that people should choose officials supports elections. John Locke's idea that government gets power from consent supports this rule.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect Hooker to elected officials and consent, Locke to natural rights and consent of the governed, and Montesquieu to separated powers and limits on power. For Part 3, accept a reasonable government feature supported by accurate explanations of two thinkers' ideas.