



**Big Era Six**  
**The Great Global Convergence**  
**1400 – 1800 CE**



**Closeup Teaching Unit 6.6.1**  
**The Enlightenment: Ideas and Action**  
**1650–1800 CE**

Lessons in this teaching unit relate to more than one Big Era.  
This unit is cross-listed in Big Eras Six and Seven.

**Table of Contents**

Why this unit?	2
Unit objectives	2
Time and materials	2
Authors	2
The historical context	3
This unit in the Big Era timeline	5
Lesson 1: Enlightenment vocabulary	6
Lesson 2: Roots of the Enlightenment (accompanying PowerPoint presentation)	8
Lesson 3: Who were the Enlightenment thinkers?	10
Lesson 4: Democratic thought and “enlightened despots”	25
This unit and the Three Essential Questions	39
This unit and the Seven Key Themes	39
This unit and the Standards in Historical Thinking	39
Resources	40
Correlations to National and State Standards	41
Conceptual links to other lessons	42

## Why this unit?

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The Enlightenment is credited with changing the way Europeans thought about **government**, politics, property, and liberty. Influenced by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the **Scientific Revolution**, these thinkers wanted to apply a new perspective, using reason, to examine the way society functioned. The exchange and diffusion of ideas on government, religion, and human rights led to changes in the structure of society and government in Europe. Many of the ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers influenced the political reforms and revolutionary ideas of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Enlightenment remains today a vital part of the world's intellectual, cultural, and political heritage.

## Unit objectives

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*Upon completing this unit, students will be able to:*

1. Explain how the main ideas of the Enlightenment can be traced back to the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution.
2. Identify, compare, and contrast Enlightenment thinkers and their ideas.
3. Describe how major political reforms and revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were influenced by Enlightenment thinkers
4. Analyze the diffusion of Enlightenment ideals and their influence globally.
5. Formulate and support a hypothesis using evidence.

## Time and materials

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This unit is designed to be completed within 5 days of 55-minute classes. Materials are specified within each lesson.

## Authors

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## The historical context

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The Enlightenment was a period of intellectual ferment and discussion amongst scholars in Western Europe, leading to new ideas about human behavior. These ideas changed the way Europeans viewed society, politics, government, and the economy. The ideals of liberty and justice, which modern democracies now consider essential, grew out of the eighteenth-century Atlantic Enlightenment. These ideas, promoted initially by French intellectuals known as *philosophes* but later embraced by other Europeans, changed the way people thought about government and individuals' roles in preserving or overthrowing the ruling regime. They changed the common perception of individual rights. These ideas about liberty and the right of the governed to choose their governments encouraged colonists to break away from the tyranny of an unfair government and, as the American Declaration of Independence states, "to throw off such Government, and to provide new guards for their future security." In this unit, students will examine some of the more influential Enlightenment figures, including Adam Smith, John Locke, Baron de Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Cesare Beccaria, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Hobbes, Benjamin Franklin, Father Miguel Hidalgo, Simón Bolívar, and Mary Wollstonecraft. As with most intellectual movements, these ideas did not develop in isolation or instantaneously.

### Origins of the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment's immediate roots can be found in the Scientific Revolution. Just as Isaac Newton applied rational analysis to nature leading to the discovery of natural laws, Enlightenment thinkers applied these techniques to human behavior. They examined political, social, and economic problems and tried to establish solutions based on the scientific method established by Newton and others. While the ideas and principles of the Scientific Revolution helped inform the Enlightenment, they were not the only source of inspiration. The Enlightenment has longer roots, going back to the ideas of classical Greece and Rome.

The Enlightenment was also shaped by the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation. During the Renaissance, humanists argued for the importance and worth of the individual. Reformers questioned the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and argued that individuals should think for themselves. Of course, the ideas of the Renaissance were shaped by the Renaissance thinkers' admiration of classical Greece and Rome. Enlightenment thinkers also found inspiration in some of the ideals of Greece and Rome. The idea that people should have a voice in their government finds parallels in the republican governments of Athens and Rome. Similarly, the belief in humans' ability to use reason and observation finds parallels in ancient Greece. It was not only intellectuals who adopted these Enlightenment ideals; they also spread to some of Europe's rulers.

### Enlightened Despots

Because of the writings of Locke, Montesquieu, and others, we may have the impression that the Enlightenment led quickly to the creation of liberal societies having rules about justice and equality similar to those modern democracies have. All of the ideas of Enlightenment thinkers, however, were not necessarily liberal, and in fact some of the ideas were supported by those who had a conservative outlook and a desire to maintain the status quo. A number of European

leaders styled themselves as “enlightened” and attempted to implement some of these ideas in their regimes. Catherine the Great, Joseph II of Austria, and Frederick II are among the rulers who attempted to bring the benefits of Enlightenment to their rule. Some of their commitments were short-lived, as when Catherine took away reforms after the serfs rebelled. The Enlightenment’s most lasting influences can be seen in the governments of Western Europe and North America.

### **The Atlantic Enlightenment**

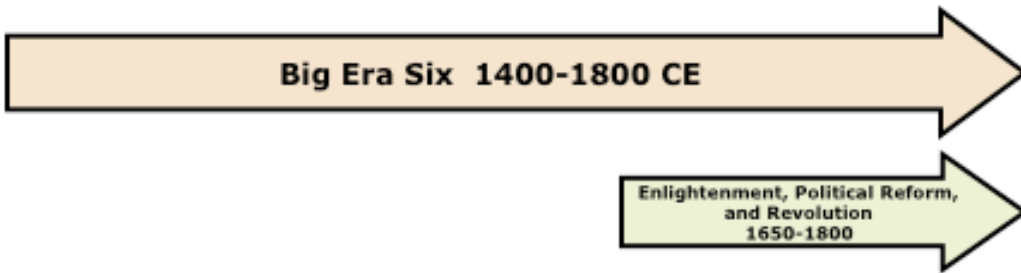
John Locke’s influence on the Declaration of Independence is readily identifiable in its emphasis on natural rights. In the US, the historiography of the Enlightenment’s influence has focused more on political and social reform rather than on improvements in other areas.

English Enlightenment thinkers, especially John Locke, are credited with inspiring the ideals that formed the foundation for the Declaration of Independence and many of the rights protected by the US [Constitution](#) and its Bill of Rights. It was the application of Enlightenment ideas in the North American British colonies that helped transfer the political ideas of the Enlightenment from theory to reality. Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin were two of the most prominent North American scholars. Their work in creating the framework for the government of the United States may be credited as inspiring subsequent revolutionary political changes in France, Haiti, and Latin America. The influence of the Enlightenment was felt into the nineteenth century as colonies overthrew their colonial governments and reform movements took hold in various countries.

North American colonists were not the only ones to embrace the ideas of the Enlightenment. These ideas can also be seen in the political reforms and [revolutions](#) promoted by Simón Bolívar and Father Hidalgo. The Latin American countries were inspired by both the words and deeds of the Enlightenment. It was these ideas that propelled Mexico and other Latin American countries to embark on their own fight for individual rights and political independence.

## **This unit in the Big Era Timeline**

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## *Lesson 1*

### *Enlightenment Vocabulary*

#### **Preparation**

Have available large Post-it notes, paper, textbooks, and dictionaries. Divide class into pairs.

#### **Objectives**

Create six posters, each with one of the following terms defined:

- Enlightenment
- *philosophe*
- natural rights
- absolutism
- liberty
- deism

Students will be able to explain the Enlightenment vocabulary terms in their own words.

#### **Introduction**

This lesson is designed to be completed in one 55-minute class period. Students will work in pairs to look up definitions of key Enlightenment terms and rewrite them in their own words.

#### **Activities**

1. Students will be assigned a vocabulary term. Working with a partner, students will look up the definition in a textbook glossary or dictionary.
2. Students will rewrite the definition in their own words and create a sentence using the term appropriately to demonstrate correct usage.
3. Students will write their own definition and sentence on Post-its and put it on the poster that matches the term.
4. The teacher will lead a full-classroom discussion of the terms, modeling the correct definition and use of each term for students.
5. Students will fold the paper lengthwise and then divide it into 6 equal parts.
6. Students will write the term on the outside and copy the correct definition inside foldable paper.

### **Assessment**

Student assessment will be at the end of the teaching unit when students demonstrate the ability to use the terms correctly in a written essay.

## *Lesson 2*

### *Roots of the Enlightenment*

#### **Preparation**

Download the PowerPoint presentation titled [Roots of the Enlightenment](#). Set up an LCD projector for the PowerPoint lecture. Have enough construction paper for one piece of 12 x 18 inch paper per student. (Color code per class for easy tracking.)

#### **Objectives**

Students will explain the main ideas of the Enlightenment and how they drew on such earlier movements as the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, and ultimately Greek and Roman [civilization](#).

#### **Introduction**

The Enlightenment was a period when the ideas and principles of the Scientific Revolution began to be applied to human behavior. The Scientific Revolution encouraged people to look at the natural world and seek natural laws through tests and observation. These same principles led John Locke to declare that humans had “natural rights.”

#### **Activities**

1. Pass out paper to students.
2. Instruct students to fold paper in half vertically, and then fold it again in thirds.
3. Open paper so that it is folded vertically. Students write Renaissance on the top section, Reformation on the middle section, and Scientific Revolution on the bottom section.
4. As students are listening to the teacher’s lecture and watching the PowerPoint presentation on the origins and influences of the Enlightenment, they will take notes on the inside of their foldable paper.
5. Ask students to do a quick-write in response to the prompt: How did the Scientific Revolution contribute to the Enlightenment? Use specific details.
6. Have students share their ideas with their partners.
7. Hand out construction paper to create larger foldables upon which to attach the notes. Lightly fold in half, pinch the end, and then fold the edges into the center. See diagram at the end of this lesson.

8. For extra credit, students can decorate the cover of the foldable with appropriate images.

### **Assessment**

Student assessment should take place with a multiple-choice test at the end of unit.

## *Lesson 3*

### *Who Were the Enlightenment Thinkers?*

#### **Preparation**

Divide students into groups of three. Make copies of Student Handouts 3.1-3.12 for distribution. Each Student Handout focuses on one of the following individuals: Hobbes, Locke, Beccaria, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Franklin, Jefferson, Voltaire, Wollstonecraft, Smith, Hidalgo, and Bolívar. Each group of students receives one packet. Make copies of Student Handout 3.13 (Enlightenment Thinkers Graphic Organizer) for all students.

#### **Objectives**

Students compare the ideas and influence of these twelve thinkers.

#### **Introduction**

This lesson is designed to be completed in one 55-minute class period. Students will work in groups of three to research information about these thinkers. Each student will complete the Enlightenment Thinkers Graphic Organizer (Student Handout 3.13) and a Venn diagram.

#### **Activities**

1. Warm-up quick-write: On the top half of Enlightenment Thinkers Graphic Organizer, students describe the natural rights they believe *all* people should have.
2. Ask students to share the ideas they expressed in quick-writes with their neighbor and then share with the whole class.
3. Divide students into groups of three.
4. Hand out a copy of the Enlightenment Thinker packet to each group (Student Handouts 1-12).
5. Have students use reciprocal reading techniques to read and analyze documents.
6. After reading the document, ask each student to list the main ideas associated with this thinker.
7. Have students continue to read and complete the Enlightenment Thinkers Graphic Organizer.

8. Have students write a one-paragraph essay on the top half of the graphic organizer (below the quick-write), responding to this prompt: Which Enlightenment thinker do you believe was most influential? Why?
9. Homework: Create a Venn diagram comparing the ideas of two different Enlightenment thinkers.

### **Assessment**

Student assessment will be at end of this unit in written essay and test.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.1*****Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)****Education:**

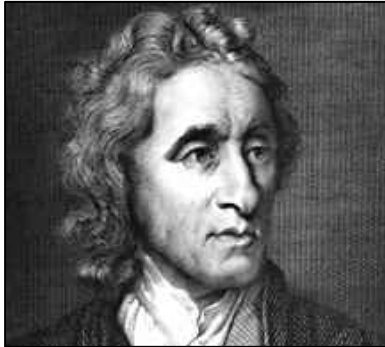
University of Oxford, England.

**Early Life:**

Hobbes was born in England. He did much traveling through France and Italy. During his travels, he met the astronomer Galileo and the French philosopher René Descartes. Hobbes was worried about being arrested by the government of England because of his beliefs, so he moved to France for eleven years. He worked as a scientist, philosopher, and math tutor.

**Beliefs:**

Hobbes is known as one of the first modern Western thinkers. He believed that religion should be separate from politics. He supported a strong government based on reason. Hobbes also tried to separate knowledge from faith, which eventually got him into trouble with the British Parliament. He was the first philosopher to emphasize reason instead of religious faith. Hobbes' major belief was that all people are fearful and predatory (greedy). As a result, they must submit to the absolute power of the **state**. By allowing the state to have absolute power, the people would live by reason and gain lasting preservation.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.2*****John Locke (1632-1704)**Education:

Christ Church College, University of Oxford, England.

Early Life:

Locke was born in England. His father fought in the English Civil war on the Parliament side. His father's views about the people's role in government influenced Locke's views.

Beliefs:

He disagreed with Thomas Hobbes about human nature. Hobbes felt all people were selfish. Locke believed that all people were born good and were given natural rights by God. These were rights to life, liberty, and owning property. Locke believed that the king's power should be limited by laws enacted by the people. This type of government is called a constitutional monarchy.

He argued that the agreement between the government and the people was a social contract. If the government did not uphold its part and protect the people's rights, the people should revolt.

Freedom of religion was a right that the government should protect. People should be allowed to choose which church to attend.

These ideas were used by American colonists in 1776 as a reason for the American revolution, and they helped shape the US Constitution. The ideas also influenced the French revolution in 1789.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.3*****Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794)****Education:**

Jesuit College at Parma, Italy.

**Early Life:**

Cesare Beccaria was born in Milan, Italy. He studied the writers of the eighteenth-century French Enlightenment, especially the words of Baron de Montesquieu.

**Beliefs:**

Beccaria believed that people who were accused of a crime should have rights. He did not like the death penalty and believed torture was wrong. He believed that education would reduce the crime rate. The right to a fair and speedy trial was one of his ideas. He also believed that the punishment should be the same for everyone who commits the same crime. His ideas led to changes in European and American criminal laws.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.4*****Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755)****Education:**

College of Juilly, France.

**Early Life:**

He was born in France. His uncle died in 1714 and left Montesquieu his riches and his title. He became a lawyer and was famous as a writer who criticized the French king and the Catholic Church. His most famous book was *The Spirit of Laws*. It explained how the government should be organized.

**Beliefs:**

He agreed with Locke in many ways about the role of government. Montesquieu admired the system in England that limited the power of the king. He said the government should be broken into different sections and that each should have some power to control the others. He wanted government to split into three branches. One branch would make laws, another would interpret the laws, and the third would enforce the laws. This system is called separation of powers, and was the model for the US government.

One of the most important ideas from his system is that each branch has some control over another branch. For example, the legislature makes laws, but the head of state (president) enforces them. Montesquieu believed this system would prevent a leader from becoming a tyrant.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.5*****Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)****Education:**

Self-educated; also served an apprenticeship as engraver and notary.

**Early Life:**

He was born in Geneva, Switzerland. His mother died when he was born, so he was raised by an aunt. When Rousseau turned thirteen, he worked as an apprentice for an engraver but ran away after three years. He became a secretary for a wealthy woman, who subsequently had much influence on his life. He moved to Paris where he became a music teacher.

**Beliefs:**

He believed that individuals should have certain rights. His ideas supported the French revolution. Rousseau felt that whatever the majority of the people wanted should become law. Rousseau's ideas of individual freedom spread throughout Europe and the United States. He was against the absolute power or control of the Church and government, and he believed that the government should do what the majority of the people wanted. He also argued that if the people were in control, then the rules should be strictly enforced. Rousseau felt that education needed to be changed. He believed that children should be allowed to show their emotions in order to become well-rounded and freethinking individuals. Rousseau supported the ideals of the Enlightenment by defending the importance of reason and individual rights. Individuals, according to Rousseau, should be allowed to experience and explore life.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.6*****Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)****Education:**

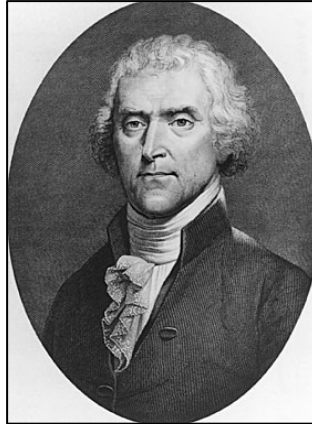
Franklin was a printer, author, diplomat, philosopher, inventor, and scientist. He learned his jobs through experience. He did not graduate from a college or university.

**Early Life:**

Franklin was born in Boston, Massachusetts. He was the tenth son of seventeen children. His parents were middle class. Franklin learned how to read and loved it. He used his love of reading to teach himself to write. When he turned twelve, he was sent to his brother to work as an apprentice in his printing shop. At the age of seventeen he ran away to start his own life. He traveled to London for a while, then came back to Philadelphia and opened his own print shop.

**Beliefs:**

Franklin believed in a government that had a single legislature with an advisory board. The board of people would also work for the government. He did not believe the people in charge should be paid for their services. He also felt that slavery was morally wrong and should be abolished. He was a very tolerant man. He could listen quietly but could talk when he was asked to. Because of these qualities, he was asked to represent the United States government during the Revolutionary war. Franklin believed in a simple lifestyle that used common sense and reason to make decisions and guide a person's life. He was the creator of numerous inventions.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.7*****Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)****Education:**

College of William and Mary, Virginia.

**Early Life:**

Jefferson was born in Virginia. His parents were wealthy landowners. Jefferson received most of his early education from private tutors. His family did not live in the city but on a large estate on the frontier. There were few neighbors in the area to socialize with. When Jefferson was fourteen, his father died, leaving him in charge of the family and the estate. His family consisted of six sisters and one younger brother; Thomas was the oldest. At sixteen he left home to attend college in the capital city of Williamsburg, Virginia. It was at college that Jefferson met the influential leaders of the American revolution and became their friend.

**Beliefs:**

Jefferson believed that the majority of the people would make the right choices when given the chance. He did not want a government that had too much power. He also believed that individual freedom and rights should be protected by government. He felt that all people should be involved in making decisions for the country. He believed that everyone should be allowed to get an education regardless of social status. During the French revolution, he supported the people that wanted to make sure the king would no longer have total control.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.8*****Voltaire (1694-1778)****Education:**

Jesuit College Louis-le-Grand, France.

**Early Life:**

Voltaire was born in Paris, France. He began to make friends with wealthy aristocrats in Paris. He became a writer because of his ability to make sarcastic jokes. He was sent to prison for eleven months because he made a political cartoon of one of the French government leaders. He continued to ridicule political leaders and was thrown in prison a second time. In order to get out of prison, he had to promise to leave France, so he went to England.

**Beliefs:**

Voltaire is often described as generous, enthusiastic, sentimental, and often distrustful. He felt that all things must be explained logically and reasonably. He fought against intolerance, tyranny, and superstition. He believed in freedom of thought and respect for all individuals. Most importantly, he believed that religion was too powerful and defended individuals who suffered because of their beliefs. He was against any form of religion that was too strict and did not accept the view of others, even though he did believe in God. He thought literature could be used to help understand the problems of the day.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.9*****Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797)****Education:**

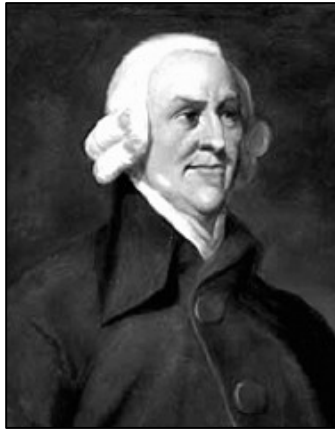
She was self-educated.

**Early Life:**

Mary was born in England. She was the second child of seven in a middle-class family. Her father was known to be abusive and harsh to the family. Mary tried to leave the family and to support herself, but she found she was limited in the types of jobs she could get because she was female. She worked as a companion and teacher. She was called back home to take care of her younger sisters and sick mother.

**Beliefs:**

Mary was not the first woman to recognize the inequalities between men and women during her lifetime, but she became the most popular. While she focused on fighting for the rights of women and against the inequalities in education, she also worked for the equal treatment of all human beings. She emphasized that education for men and women should be based on reason. Mary believed that people should be judged based on individual merit and moral virtue, not on gender. She wrote two books that discussed women's rights. Mary wanted men to treat their wives as equals, not as property. She also strongly urged that women be given equal opportunity when trying to get a job.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.10*****Adam Smith (1723-1790)****Education:**

University of Glasgow and Balliol College, University of Oxford.

**Early Life:**

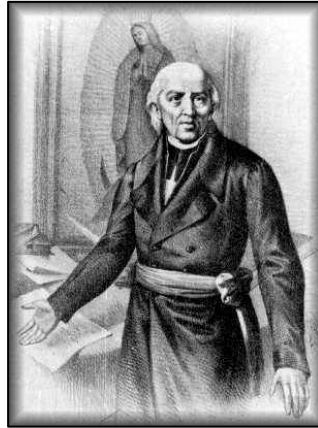
Smith was born in a small village in Scotland. He was raised by his widowed mother and left home for school at the age of fourteen.

**Beliefs:**

Smith was a philosopher who focused on the role of economics. His most famous book, *The Wealth of Nations*, was published in 1776. The book had a significant impact on modern economics and concepts of individual freedom. In this book he argued that self-interest guides the most efficient use of resources. *The Wealth of Nations* established the study of economics as a separate and important topic. With this book, Smith became the first philosopher to focus on the role economics played within society. His beliefs of “free enterprise” set a new standard.

Smith also gave lectures and discussed topics such as ethics, human motives, and society. He believed that someone working to earn money benefited himself but also benefited society as a whole. He claimed that charity was a virtuous act but that society should not depend upon charity.

Smith’s travels brought him into contact with Voltaire, Rousseau, and the philosopher David Hume. Parts of Smith’s work on economics can be found in the writings of Karl Marx, the founder of Marxism.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.11*****Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla (1753-1811)****Education:**

Valladolid, Mexico.

**Early Life:**

Miguel Hidalgo grew up on a *hacienda* where his father was a supervisor. He was sympathetic to the problems of the **Amerindians** and **mestizos** (people of mixed race) in Mexico. After he was ordained as a priest in 1778, he worked to improve the economic conditions of his parishioners. He was also able to teach the people how to work the vineyards. Hidalgo helped the local brick-makers operate their small businesses.

**Beliefs:**

After France invaded Spain and Napoleon replaced the Spanish king with his brother, Hidalgo formed ideas about freeing Mexico from the harsh rule of foreigners. Early in the morning on September 16, 1810, he delivered the “Grito de Dolores,” a fiery speech in which he urged people to fight for Mexico’s independence. Later that day he carried a banner with the picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe and announced his crusade. Thousands of Mexicans joined him as he marched through the streets.

By October Hidalgo was able to capture the towns of Guanajuato and Guadalajara. His victories were short-lived. By January the Spanish army had captured his troops. Hidalgo was able to run north, but he was quickly captured and then shot. Hidalgo not only fought for Mexican independence but also questioned many of the policies of his own Church. He was a well-educated, liberal priest who urged his parishioners to fight for independence.

## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.12*



## **Simón Bolívar (1783-1830)**

### Education:

Private tutors.

### Early Life:

Bolívar was born in Caracas, Venezuela. He was a *criollo*, that is, a person of Spanish descent born in the colonies. The family had a large fortune and owned estates, mines, and city property. Simón was orphaned at the age of nine and subsequently raised by relatives, who provided tutors.

### Beliefs:

Bolívar's tutors emphasized the importance of reason, science, and respecting humanity. In 1799, he was sent to Spain to finish his formal education. While he was there, he fell in love with María Teresa Rodríguez de Toro, and in 1802 they were married. They returned to Venezuela, where María Teresa died of a fever in 1803. Bolívar decided to return to Spain and then went to France. In France he watched Napoleon become emperor and then left for Italy. His travels took him again to France, to the United States, and then back to Venezuela in 1807. It was during his travels that Bolívar decided it was time to break away from Spain. He was only twenty-three years old at the time.




Bolívar believed in a strong central government. He admired the parliamentary system of Britain and thought that political power should be divided among different branches of government. He was afraid that if power was not divided one branch of government would become too strong. He was not willing to give all the people the power to vote until they were properly educated in how the political process worked. He also encouraged all the countries in Spanish America to join together as one nation to guarantee prosperity and security.

**Lesson 3**

***Student Handout 3.13—Enlightenment Thinkers Graphic Organizer***

Warm-up: What natural rights should *all* people have?

Which Enlightenment thinker was most influential? Why?

	Thomas Hobbes	John Locke	Cesare Beccaria	Baron de Montesquieu	Three rights I think are essential to a successful society: 1.	
 Big Ideas:						2.
 Big Ideas:	Jean-Jacques Rousseau	Benjamin Franklin	Thomas Jefferson	Voltaire		
 Big Ideas	Mary Wollstonecraft	Adam Smith	Father Hidalgo	Simón Bolívar		3.

## *Lesson 4*

### *Democratic Thought and “Enlightened Despots”*

#### **Preparation**

Divide students into pairs. Make copies of Student Handouts 4.1-4.6.

#### **Objectives**

Students analyze how Enlightenment ideas were adapted by European rulers in the eighteenth century.

#### **Introduction**

This lesson is designed to be completed in two 55-minute class periods. Students will work in pairs to analyze [primary sources](#).

Teacher Resources 4.1-4.3 are provided for teachers’ use.

#### **Activities**

1. Warm-up: Show the image of Voltaire with his student Frederick the Great (Teacher resource 4.1). Students do a quick-write explaining the benefits of a political leader studying with an Enlightenment thinker.
2. Discuss the warm-up.
3. Divide students into pairs.
4. Distribute copies of Student Handouts 4.1-4.5 to each pair.
5. Have students use reciprocal reading techniques to read and analyze the documents. Student Handout 4.4 is a Glossary. Terms that appear in boldface in Student Handouts 4.1-4.3 are defined in the Glossary.
6. After students have read the documents, ask each pair to complete Student Handout 4.5 (Analyzing Primary Source Graphic Organizer).

**Assessment**

Write a 3-paragraph essay explaining which of the three enlightened despots best represented Enlightenment ideals. Use specific examples from Lesson 3 Venn diagram to complete your essay.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.1—Frederick the Great*

Frederick II ruled Prussia (roughly present-day Germany and Poland). He called himself the first servant of the state. He studied with Voltaire for three years beginning in 1749. Voltaire is credited with giving him the name Frederick the Great. Under his rule there was more religious toleration and greater freedom of the press. He also outlawed torture. This excerpt is from a book he wrote in 1752.

#### **Rise of the Great Powers**

Politics is the science of always using the most convenient means in accord with one's own interests. In order to act in **conformity** with one's interests, one must know what these interests are, and in order to gain this knowledge, one must study their history and application. ... One must attempt ... to know the ... people which one wants to govern in order to know if one must treat them **leniently** or severely. ...

[The Prussian nobility] has sacrificed its life and goods for the service of the state; its loyalty and merit have earned it the protection of all its rulers, and it is one of the duties [of the ruler] to aid those noble families which have become **impoverished** in order to keep them in possession of their lands. ...

A well-conducted government must have an underlying concept ... that it could be likened to a system of philosophy. All actions taken must be well-reasoned, and all financial, political, and military matters must flow towards one goal, which is the strengthening of the state and the furthering of its power. ... A **sovereign** is not elevated to his high position; supreme power has not been confined to him in order that he may live in lazy luxury, enriching himself by the labor of the people, being happy while everyone else suffers. The sovereign is the first servant of the state. He is well-paid ... but one demands that he work efficiently for the good of the state, and that he ... pay personal attention to the most important problems. ...

You can see, without doubt, how important it is that the King of Prussia govern personally. ... All parts of the government are ... linked with each other. Finance, politics, and military affairs are inseparable; ... a Prince who governs personally, who has formed his [own] political system, will not be handicapped when occasions arise where he has to act swiftly. ...

Catholics, Lutherans, ... Jews, and other Christian sects live in this state, and live together in peace. If the sovereign ... declares himself for one religion or another ... heated **disputes ensue** and, in the end, the religion **persecuted** will leave the fatherland, and millions of subjects will enrich our neighbors.

It is of no concern in politics whether the ruler has a religion or whether he has none. All religions ... are founded on **superstitious** systems. ... It is impossible for a man of good sense

... not to see their error; but these prejudices ... were made for men, and one must know enough to respect the public and not to outrage its faith, whatever religion be involved.

Source: "Frederick II, Political Testament," in Dennis Sherman, ed., *Western Civilization: Sources, Images, and Interpretations*, Vol. II (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 41-2.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.2—Catherine the Great*

Catherine II, known as Catherine the Great, ruled Russia from 1762 to 1796. She believed in Enlightenment ideas and set guidelines based on the theories of Montesquieu. She opened hospitals and schools, including one for girls, and supported the arts. When serfs (farmers who were not allowed to leave the estate on which they worked) rebelled, she took away the reforms and gave the nobles absolute power over the serfs.

#### **Proposals for a New Law Code**

11. Every other Form of Government whatsoever [other than monarchy] would not only have been **prejudicial** to Russia, but would even have proved its entire Ruin.
12. Another Reason is: That it is better to be subject to the Laws under one Master, than to be **subservient** to many.
13. What is the true End of Monarchy? Not to deprive People of their natural Liberty; but to correct their Actions, in order to attain the supreme Good.
14. The Form of Government, therefore, which best attains this End, and at the same Time sets less Bounds than others to natural **Liberty**, is that which coincides with the Views and Purposes of rational Creatures, and answers the End, upon which we ought to fix a steadfast Eye in the Regulations of **civil Polity**.
15. The Intention and the End of Monarchy, is the Glory of the Citizens, of the State, and of the Sovereign.
16. But, from this Glory, a Sense of Liberty arises in a People governed by a Monarch; which may produce in these States as much Energy in transacting the most important Affairs, and may contribute as much to the Happiness of the Subjects, as even Liberty itself. ...
33. The Laws ought to be so framed, as to secure the Safety of every Citizen as much as possible.
34. The Equality of the Citizens consists in this, that they should all be subject to the same Laws.
35. This Equality requires Institutions so well adapted, as to prevent the Rich from oppressing those who are not so wealthy as themselves, and converting all the Charges and Employments entrusted to them as **Magistrates** only, to their own private **Emolument**. ...
37. In a State or **Assemblage** of People that live together in a Community, where there are Laws, Liberty can only consist in doing that which every One ought to do, and not to be **constrained** to do that which One ought not to do.
38. A Man ought to form in his own Mind an exact and clear Idea of what Liberty is. Liberty is the Right of doing whatsoever the Laws allow: And if any one Citizen could do what the Laws forbid, there would be no more Liberty; because others would have an equal Power of doing the same.

Source: "Proposals for a New Law Code," *Internet Modern History Sourcebook*, Paul Halsall, ed., <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/18catherine.html>

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.3—Joseph II*

Joseph II ruled Austria from 1780 to 1790. He was influenced by the Enlightenment ideals of equality and freedom, and he made numerous reforms during his rule. He outlawed torture, abolished the death penalty, and allowed freedom of both religion and the press.

I determined from the very **commencement** of my reign to **adorn** my **diadem** (crown) with the love of my people, to act in the administration of affairs according to just, **impartial**, and liberal principles; consequently, I granted toleration [in 1781], and removed the **yoke** which had oppressed the Protestants for centuries.

**Fanaticism** shall in future be known in my states only by the **contempt** I have for it; nobody shall any longer be exposed to hardships on account of his **creed**; no man shall be **compelled** in future to profess the religion of the state if it be *contrary* to his persuasion. ...

Tolerance is an effect of the increase of knowledge which now enlightens Europe and which is owing to philosophy and the efforts of great men; it is a convincing proof of the improvement of the human mind, which has boldly reopened a road ... which, fortunately for mankind, has now become the highway of monarchs.

Source: "Letters of Joseph II," *Internet Modern History Sourcebook*, Paul Halsall, ed.,  
<http://web.archive.org/web/20000623132851/www.humanities.ccny.cuny.edu/history/reader/josef2ideal.htm>

**Lesson 4*****Student Handout 4.4—Glossary***

<b>Adorn</b>	Add decoration to
<b>Assemblage</b>	Gathering together, assembly, meeting
<b>Civil polity</b>	The state, the national society, and government
<b>Commencement</b>	Beginning, start
<b>Compelled</b>	Forced, required
<b>Conformity</b>	In agreement with expectations
<b>Constrained</b>	Limited, restricted
<b>Contempt</b>	Dislike, scorn, hatred
<b>Creed</b>	Religious beliefs or principles
<b>Diadem</b>	Jeweled headband or crown
<b>Disputes</b>	Disagreements
<b>Emolument</b>	Payment for work done
<b>Ensnare</b>	Follow, as a result
<b>Fanaticism</b>	The holding of extreme beliefs
<b>Impartial</b>	Not biased, not favoring one side or another

<b>Impoverished</b>	Extremely poor
<b>Leniently</b>	Not strictly
<b>Liberty</b>	Freedom, autonomy
<b>Magistrates</b>	Judges
<b>Prejudicial</b>	Causing disadvantage or harm to something
<b>Sovereign</b>	Head of a state, ruler, especially a king or queen
<b>Subservient</b>	Of lesser importance, submissive, dependent
<b>Superstitious</b>	Holding irrational or illogical beliefs
<b>Yoke</b>	Restrictive burden, something that is felt to be oppressive

**Lesson 4*****Student Handout 4.5*****Analyzing Primary Source Graphic Organizer**

	<b>Student Handout 4.1</b>	<b>Student Handout 4.2</b>	<b>Student Handout 4.3</b>
<b>Author, location, and date</b>			
<b>What type of document is this?</b>			

<b>What is the purpose of this document?</b>			
<b>Which words or phrases in the document show that the individual was an enlightened despot?</b>			
<b>Which Enlightenment thinker(s) is (are) represented in the ideas of the document?</b>			

## Lesson 4

### *Teacher Resource 4.1*



### **Voltaire and Frederick the Great**

Source: <http://massthink.files.wordpress.com/2008/12/frederick-ii-and-voltaire.jpg>

**Lesson 4*****Teacher Resource 4.2*****Enlightenment Essay Rubric**

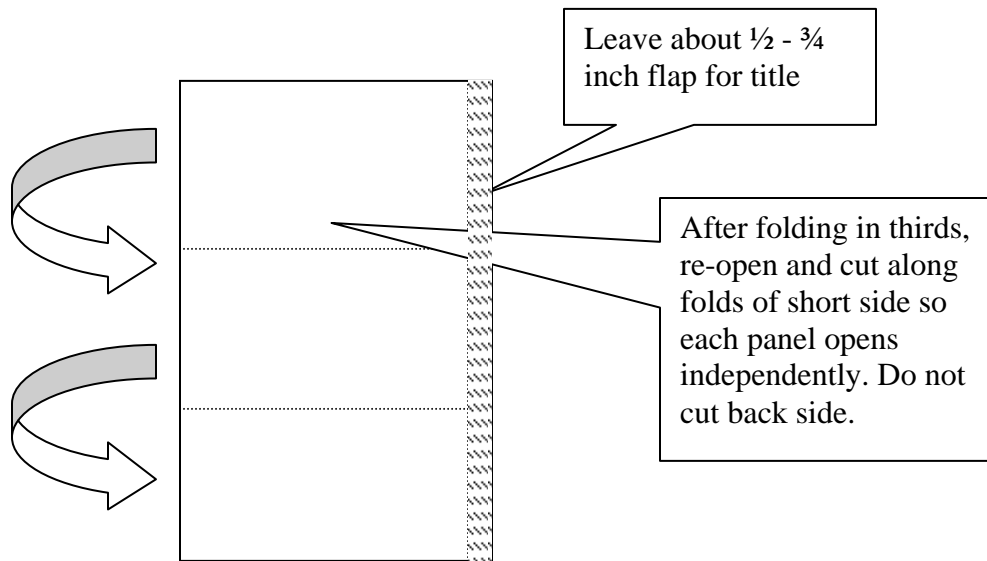
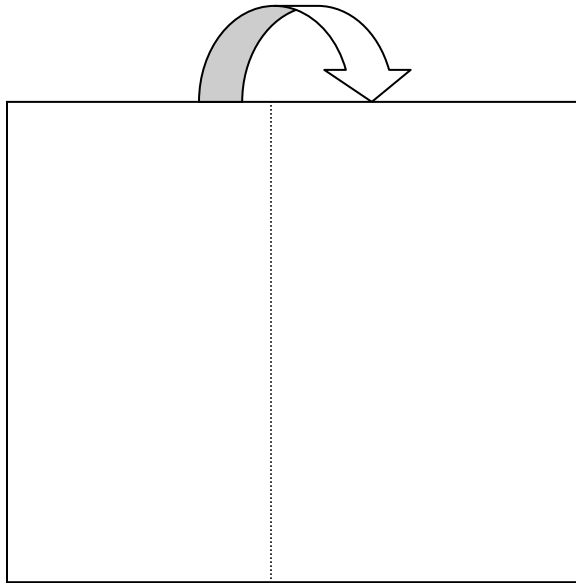
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Organization	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.	Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed.	The information appears to be disorganized.
Quality of Information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	A few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.

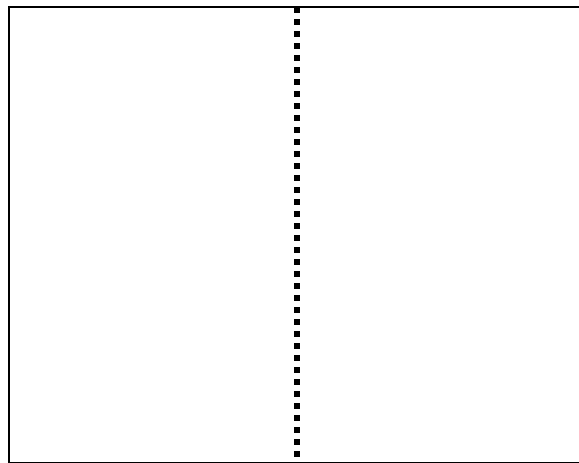
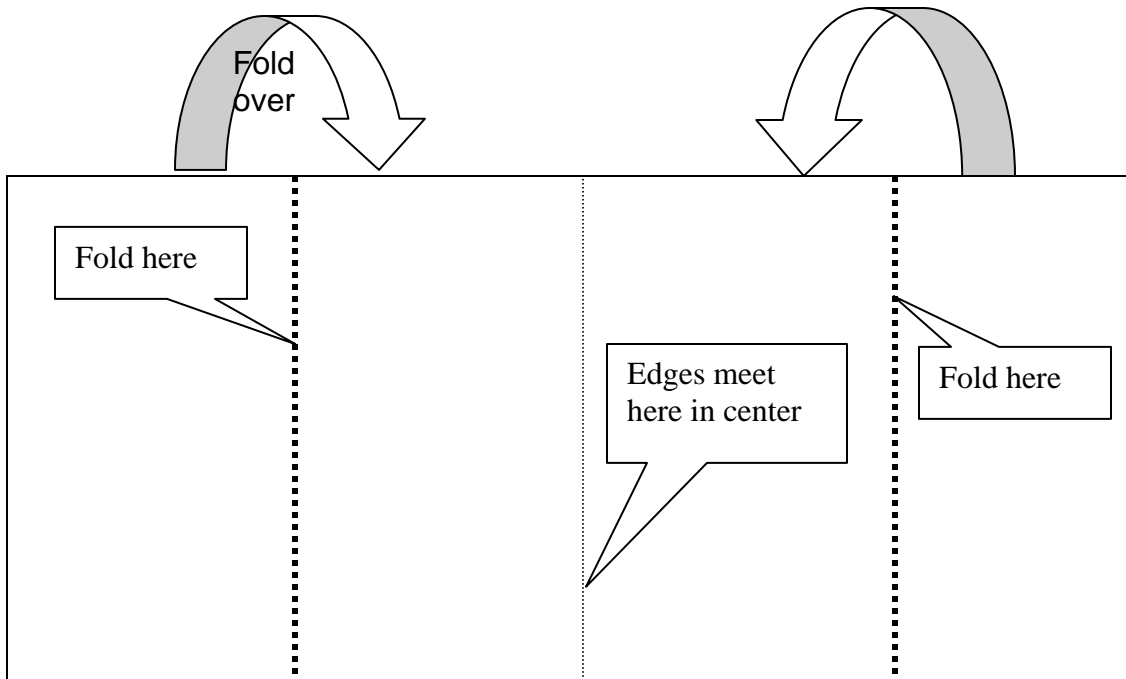
**Lesson 4**

**Teacher Resource 4.3**

**Foldable Diagram #1**






**Foldable Diagram #2**



## This unit and the Three Essential Questions

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	<p>Enlightenment thinkers often described certain aspects of life as “natural.” What do you think they meant when they wrote about “natural history,” “natural philosophy,” “natural rights,” or “natural liberties?” Were they using the word “natural” to mean the same thing in every case?</p>
	<p>Torture of criminals and political prisoners was common in many parts of the world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What did some of the Enlightenment thinkers have to say about torture? Why do you think some opposed it?</p>
	<p>What influences do you think ideas of the Enlightenment have on society and government today?</p>

## This unit and the Seven Key Themes

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This unit emphasizes:

Key Theme 3: Uses and Abuses of Power

Key Theme 4: Haves and Have-Nots

Key Theme 6: Science, Technology, and the Environment

Key Theme 7: Spiritual Life and Moral Codes

## This unit and the Standards in Historical Thinking

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Historical Thinking Standard 1: Chronological Thinking

The student is able to (F) reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration in which historical developments have unfolded, and apply them to explain historical continuity and change.

Historical Thinking Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

The student is able to (A) identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility.

Historical Thinking Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation

The student is able to (A) compare and contrast differing sets of ideas.

Historical Thinking Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities

The student is able to (A) formulate historical questions.

#### Historical Thinking Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making

The student is able to (A) identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.

## Resources

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### *Resources for teachers*

Andrew, Edward G. *Patrons of Enlightenment*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Andrew explains the role patrons played in supporting Enlightenment thinkers and their relationships. The focus is on England, Scotland, and France.

de Madariaga, Isabel. *Catherine the Great: A Short History*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1990. While there are no footnotes in this source, it is a readable overview and analysis of Catherine's reign. Eighteenth-century Russian society and Catherine's educational and legal reforms are among the topics de Madariaga addresses.

Goodman, Dena and Kathleen Wellman, eds. *The Enlightenment*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2004. This volume is an excellent source, including chapters devoted to seven topics related to the Enlightenment. Each chapter begins with a short introduction and then primary and secondary sources addressing the topic. At the end of the book are a series of short biographies about some of the Enlightenment thinkers.

Onuf, Peter S. *The Mind of Thomas Jefferson*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007. This work is a collection of essays that aims to put Jefferson in perspective. Onuf reviews the Jefferson historiography and then examines his writings to attempt to explain his feelings and thoughts on many topics, including slavery. The study does not shy away from Jefferson's racist writings, but it also gives credit for his accomplishments.

Waldstriker, David. *Runaway America: Ben Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2004. This excellent study of Franklin's early years and his involvement in colonial and early national politics provides insight into one of the most famous Americans through the lens of radical politics and slavery. Waldstriker examines Franklin's stance on slavery and finds that while he was an abolitionist, he was not often willing publicly to state his support of abolition.

### *Resources for students*

Ashby, Ruth. *Around the World in 1800*. New York: Benchmark Books, 2003. An overview of important events in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas around the year 1800.

Halliwell, Sarah, ed. *The Eighteenth Century: Artists, Writers, and Composers*. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1989. An accessible book for students to introduce some major artists, writers, and composers of the eighteenth century, including Mozart, Voltaire, and Jonathan Swift.

Kennedy, Susan, Michael Kerrigan, and Peter Lewis. *The Age of Reason, 1700-1800*. Danbury, CT: Grolier, 2005. An illustrated exploration of important events, places, individuals, and ideas from 1700 to 1800.

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## **Correlations to National and State Standards**

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### ***National Standards for World History***

Era 6: The Emergence of the First Global Age, 1450-1770. 2E: The student understands the significance of the Enlightenment in European and world history. Era 7: An Age of Revolutions, 1750-1914. Standard 1: The causes and consequences of political revolutions in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### ***California: History-Social Science Content Standard***

Grade Seven, 7.11.4. Explain how the main ideas of the Enlightenment can be traced back to the Renaissance, Reformation, and Scientific Revolution ...; 7.11.5. Describe how democratic thought and institutions were influenced by Enlightenment thinkers (e.g., John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, American founders). Grade Ten, 10.2.1. Compare the major ideas of philosophers and their effects on the democratic revolutions in England, the United States, France, and Latin America (e.g., John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Simón Bolívar, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison).

### ***Michigan High School Content Expectations: Social Studies***

WHG Era 5. The Emergence of the First Global Age, 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries. 5.3.5: Analyze how the Renaissance, Reformation, Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment contributed to transformations in European society; WHG Era 6. An Age of Global Revolutions, 18<sup>th</sup> Century – 1914. 6.2.1: Analyze the Age of Revolutions by comparing and contrasting the political, economic, and social causes and consequences of at least three political and/or nationalistic revolutions.

### ***Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning***

WHII.6. The student will demonstrate knowledge of scientific, political, economic, and religious changes during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries by d) explaining the political, religious, and social ideas of the Enlightenment and the ways in which they influenced the founders of the United States.

## Conceptual links to other teaching units

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PANORAMA

### Big Era Six Panorama Teaching Unit

#### The Great Global Convergence, 1400-1800 CE

The Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment centered in Europe were among several movements of intellectual and cultural fermentation that occurred in all the major agrarian and urbanized societies of Afroeurasia in connection with the Great World Convergence—the creation of a a single global network of commercial, cultural, biological, and demographic exchange.



### Big Era Six Landscape Teaching Unit 6.6

#### The Scientific Revolution, 1500-1800

The Scientific Revolution was an intellectual movement centered in western Europe, but it drew on expanding knowledge among educated Europeans of the societies, geography, flora, and fauna of the entire world, as well as on the intellectual heritage of Afroeurasia in general, notably the mathematical and scientific synthesis that predominantly Muslim scholars had achieved in the previous several centuries.



LANDSCAPE



### Big Era Six Closeup Teaching Unit 6.6.1

#### The Enlightenment: Ideas and Action, 1650-1800

The Enlightenment was a European intellectual and cultural movement that developed from a number of currents of thought, including the Scientific Revolution and, more broadly, widening knowledge of the world, both human and natural.



CLOSEUP