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i Think : U.S. History

American Revolution



by Sharon Coletti

** It is the goal of InspirEd Educators to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

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Table of Contents



**OBJECTIVES
(TERMS, QUESTIONS, AND ANSWERS) ... PAGE 6**

VERY ENLIGHTENING! (EUROPEAN ENLIGHTENMENT) ... PAGE 8

MOUNTING PRESSURES (DEBT) ... PAGE 12

ACTING UP (NEW TAXATION) ... PAGE 17

IT WAS A MASSACRE! (BOSTON MASSACRE) ... PAGE 27

RE-ACTING (PROTESTS) ... PAGE 36

LISTEN! (LEXINGTON & CONCORD) ... PAGE 40

LOYALISTS & PATRIOTS (REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS) ... PAGE 46

**YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION
(DECLARING INDEPENDENCE) ... PAGE 51**

OUR FEARLESS LEADER (WASHINGTON) ... PAGE 57

**STRESS FOR SUCCESS
(ANALYZING REVOLUTIONS) ... PAGE 60**

KEEPING SCORE (ANALYSIS OF WAR DATA) ... PAGE 64

BOTH SIDES NOW (MAJOR BATTLES) ... PAGE 71

A PLACE IN HISTORY (BENEDICT ARNOLD) ... PAGE 73

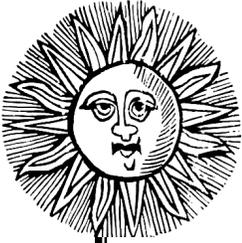
FRANKLIN, MY DEAR (FRENCH INVOLVEMENT) ... PAGE 79

V-I-C-T-O-R-Y (TREATY OF PARIS) ... PAGE 86

REVIEWING TERMS (VOCABULARY PUZZLE) ... PAGE 91

**DIFFERENTIATED ASSESSMENTS
(A - MODIFIED; B - AVERAGE; AND C - ACCELERATED) ... PAGE 93**

RESOURCES (BIBLIOGRAPHY) ... PAGE 98



Very Enlightening!

Springboard:

Students should study the “Early European Enlightenment” chronology and answer the questions. *(Answers will vary somewhat. The “Age of Reason” affected Europe, however students will later see that it also affected America.)*

Objective: The student will be able to explain some of the key ideas of the European Enlightenment.

Materials: Early European Enlightenment (Springboard handout)
Enlightened Thinkers (handout)
Enlightened Thoughts (handout)

Terms to know: **Enlightenment** - late 17th-18th century movement emphasizing reason and equal rights
chronology - a list of time-ordered events
tolerance - respect for differences among people (in religion, race, etc.)
philosophy - study of wisdom, values, and thought

Procedure:

- During discussion of the Springboard, have the student(s) support their definitions and answers with specific points from the chronology. Make sure they understand that during the Enlightenment (which is also called the Age of Reason), philosophers and writers were presenting new ideas that were quite different from the thinking of the time (focused exclusively on religion with great fear of such things as witches and demons). Then explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will learn more about the most important thinkers and ideas of the Enlightenment.*
- Distribute the “Enlightened Thinkers” and “Enlightened Thoughts” handouts. Have the student(s) work individually or in pairs to read about the figures highlighted and complete the second handout.
- Have the student(s) share their answers and discuss. *(Answers may vary somewhat but should demonstrate basic understanding of Enlightenment principles. Though philosophers’ views differed, their emphasis on reasoned thought versus emotion and hysteria - which had resulted in witch burnings, concern for individual rights and freedoms, and the idea of a social contract between government and the governed are key points. The student(s) should understand that the Enlightenment represented a shift from the superstitions of the day and was a reaction against absolute rulers who governed with little concern for their people. The period also marked the beginning of modern science.)*

A Chronology of the EARLY EUROPEAN ENLIGHTENMENT

1651	English writer Thomas Hobbes publishes <i>Leviathan</i> saying governments should rule with strength and care for the people ruled to gain support.
1687	Sir Isaac Newton (English) published <i>Principia Mathematica</i> offering scientific explanations of gravity and natural laws of motion.
1690	John Locke (English) writes <i>Two Treatises on Government</i> stating people have natural rights which governments should respect and protect.
1697	Mary Astell (English) writes <i>Serious Proposals to the Ladies</i> arguing the need for women to become better educated.
1721	Baron de Montesquieu (French) publishes <i>Persian Letters</i> , supporting reason as the means for freeing the mind.
1733	Francois Voltaire (French) publishes <i>Letters Concerning the English Nation</i> calling for tolerance of religious differences.
1739-40	Scot David Hume publishes <i>Treaties on Human Nature</i> stating the need for decisions and problem-solving based on reason and experience.
1748	Montesquieu publishes <i>The Spirit of Laws</i> to explain how laws are products of human beings with differing ideas and beliefs.
1751	Voltaire researches and publishes <i>The Age of Louis XIV</i> , a “history” looking beyond war and politics to examine arts and other achievements.
1751-65	Denis Diderot (French) publishes <i>The Encyclopedia</i> explaining the known world in a way that average people could understand.
1758	Voltaire publishes <i>Candide</i> , his most popular book, poking fun at religion, governments, armies, and even philosophy and philosophers.
1762	Jean-Jacques Rousseau (French) publishes <i>The Social Contract</i> about the need for balance between individual freedom and government power.
1763	Voltaire publishes <i>Treaties on Toleration</i> explaining the importance of religious freedom.
1764	Italian Cesare Beccaria publishes <i>On Crimes and Punishments</i> arguing that punishment should ensure peace and security in society.
1770	Baron d’Holbach (German/French) publishes <i>Systems of Nature</i> stating that the universe is made up of matter and motion.
1776	Adam Smith, a Scot, publishes <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> , the first book on economics arguing against monopoly in favor of free markets.

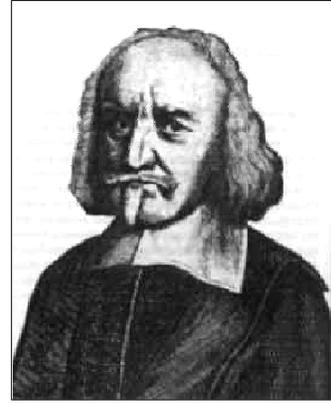
Based on the chronology, how would you define the European Enlightenment?

What places would you say were most affected by the European Enlightenment?

What people would you say were most affected by the European Enlightenment?

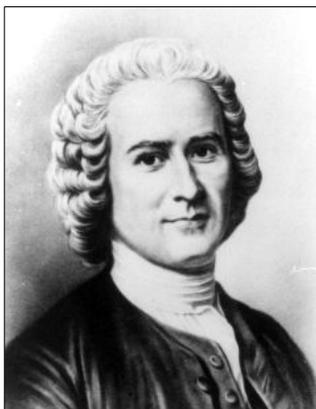
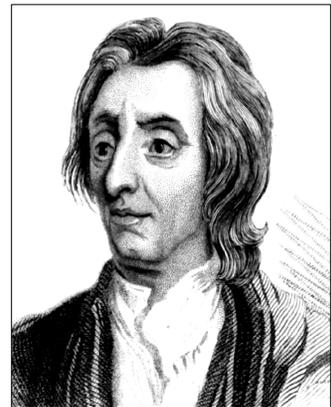
☆Enlightened Thinkers☆

I, Thomas Hobbes, am oft seen as one of the first philosophers of the time called the Enlightenment. 'Twas I who first wrote of the idea that people and their government should support one another in what I refer to as a "social contract." You see I view humans as selfish, so that without strong leadership they can cause great harm to one another in their quest for personal happiness. People, therefore, should obey laws and otherwise support their government, which should in turn ensure their safety and protect the rights of all citizens.



As a man of science and mathematics during the European Enlightenment, I, Isaac Newton, believed in the natural order of things and set about to prove my ideas and write thereof. Building upon the theories of scientists such as the Italian Galileo and the German Johannes Kepler, I found that the earth and all planets are governed by natural laws of motion -- gravity if you will -- proving for once and always that these bodies, each in its path, revolve around the sun. My other interests and works of science deal with light and prisms, and in mathematics, calculus.

While my writings agree in part with those of Thomas Hobbes, I, John Locke, view humans more kindly than he. Rather than being selfish in need of control, I instead believe people to be good for the most -- and equal. Believing as I do in the idea of a social contract, it is thus because people and their leaders working together can better serve the general welfare of all. Every person has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. 'Tis the role of government with public support to ensure these.



I, Jean Jacques Rousseau, am also an Enlightenment philosopher. Like others, I too believe in the social contract that must come to bear 'tween a government and its citizens. Man is born free with the will to do as he sees fit, yet it is only in the sharing of a lawful society with others that he can be truly happy. The time for strict social classes with extreme wealth and poverty should be of the past. All men are created equal and are, thus, so entitled to live in freedom under the rule of leaders who protect their rights and offer liberty and justice for all.

☆Enlightened☆Thoughts☆

DIRECTIONS: Use lesson information and other sources as needed to explain each of these Enlightenment philosophies and ideas.

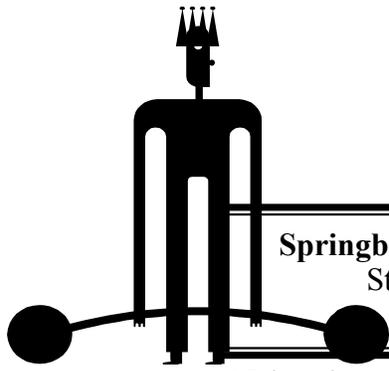
social contract -

equal rights -

natural laws -

reason -

NEXT: Select one additional Enlightenment philosopher or scientist (other than the four examined in the lesson) to briefly research. Explain why he/she represents the thinking of the time.



Mounting Pressures

Springboard:

Students should read “The Road to Riches Is Paved with Colonies” and answer the questions.

Objective: The student will be able to explain the effects mercantilist policies had on nations of Western Europe, and Great Britain in particular.

Materials: The Road to Riches ... (Springboard handout)
British Mercantilism (handout)
If You Advised His Majesty ... (handout)

Terms to know: **mercantilism** - economic principle that a nation’s power is based on wealth (and colonies bring wealth)

Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will examine British mercantilism and report to King George III of England.*
- Distribute the “British Mercantilism” and “If You Advised His Majesty King George III.” Explain that the student(s) should analyze the information related to Britain’s policy of mercantilism and use it to complete the handout. (**NOTE:** They CAN and should also consider whatever they know about the American Revolution, later history of the British Empire, and modern hindsight on empire-building.)
- The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to complete the problem-solving form.
- Have them share their responses and suggestions and discuss. (*Answers may vary, but benefits of Britain’s mercantilism included wealth, power, and support for the king from the growing merchant class. Costs included the great expenses of building and equipping ships and expeditions and of maintaining armies for gaining and defending lands, lost lives, injuries, and so forth. Most students will know that the American colonies rebelled as a result of taxation, and many may know that Britain continued building its empire for more than a century.*)



The Road to Riches Is Paved with Colonies

Mercantilism was an economic view which guided the actions of western European governments from the 16th to the late 18th centuries. A main principle of mercantilism was that nations had to be rich in order to be strong. Wealthy nations supported the growing fortunes of merchants, who in turn willingly paid taxes to their governments for their support and protection of the trade routes.

Beginning in the late 1400's, European governments financed explorers and ships to sail to the New World and elsewhere, claiming colonies for their mother countries. According to mercantilist thinking, colonies offered an excellent way for nations to increase their trade and wealth. Colonies provided the Europeans with raw materials, which they made into goods to be shipped back to colonists who greatly desired products from home.

During the mercantilist period, wars between nations were more frequent than at any other time in history. Scattered battles were fought over colonial lands, and all-out wars raged in Europe, the Americas, and elsewhere. Armies and navies of Britain, France, and Spain, the three strongest colonial powers, were kept on-the-ready to fight whenever needed at great cost to the governments that maintained them.

Mercantilism guided Western European thinking from the ___ to the ___.

- A. 1400's ... 1600's
- B. 1500's ... 1700's
- C. 1600's ... 1800's
- D. 1700's ... 1900's

According to mercantilist thinking, colonies brought wealth to countries because

- A. colonists paid high taxes to the governments.
- B. merchants supported the armies and navies.
- C. they provided ready markets for trade goods.
- D. many wars were fought over the colonies.

Which adjective do you think **BEST** describes the mercantilist period?

- A. wealthy
- B. colonial
- C. costly
- D. military

Why? _____



The Road to Riches Is Payed with Colonies Answers and Explanations

Mercantilism was an economic view which guided the actions of western European governments from the 16th to the late 18th centuries. A main principle of mercantilism was that nations had to be rich in order to be strong. Wealthy nations supported the growing fortunes of merchants, who in turn willingly paid taxes to their governments for their support and protection of the trade routes.

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Mercantilism guided Western European thinking from the ___ to the ___.

- A. 1400's ... 1600's *(Centuries are always one more than the*
- B. 1500's ... 1700's * *hundreds of years, since the first century*
- C. 1600's ... 1800's *was up to the year 100. Students should*
- D. 1700's ... 1900's *know that the 2000's are the 21st century.)*

According to mercantilist thinking, colonies brought wealth to countries because

- A. colonists paid high taxes to the governments.
- B. merchants supported the armies and navies.
- C. they provided ready markets for trade goods. *
- D. many wars were fought over the colonies.

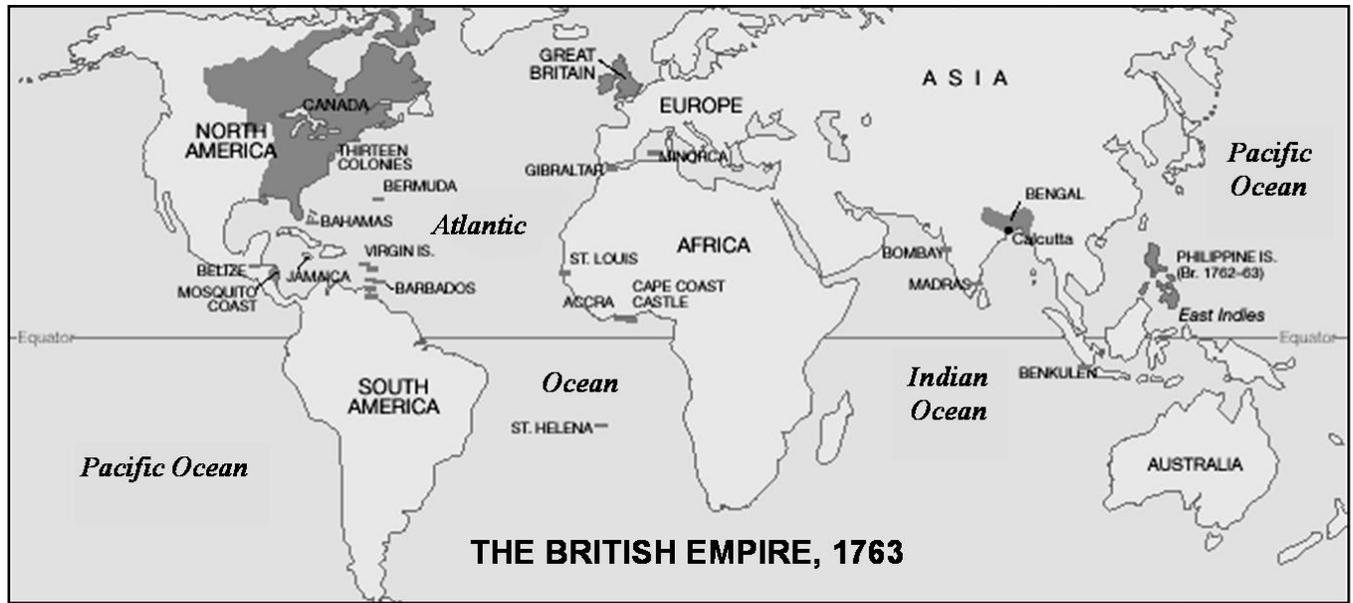
(Though choices A, B, and D were true, C states a main principle of mercantilism. Colonies offered raw materials and markets for European goods.)

Which adjective do you think **BEST** describes the mercantilist period?

- A. wealthy B. colonial C. costly D. military

Why? *(Answers will vary, since all of the choices are arguably correct. However, the student(s) must justify why they select the answers they do.)*

BRITISH MERCANTILISM



British Wars and Battles	Years
Britain conquered the Spanish colony of Jamaica.	1655
The British took New Amsterdam from the Dutch and renamed it "New York."	1664
Britain fought several battles with the French to defend their New England lands.	1688
The War for Spanish Succession was fought against Spain and France.	1701-3
The English defeated the French at the Battle of Blenheim to take Gibraltar.	1704
British forces won the Battle of Ramillies in France.	1706
British troops won the Battle at Oudenarde in France.	1708
English soldiers defeated the French once more at the Battle of Malplaquet.	1709
Britain captured French Acadia (which they renamed Nova Scotia).	1710
War broke out with the Tuscarora in North Carolina.	1711
Settlers and British had to defend against the Yamassee in South Carolina.	1715
A Scottish Jacobite rebellion against English rule was put down.	1715
Battles were fought in the Shenendoah Valley to drive out the Natives.	1717
The War of Jenkins' Ear was fought in Georgia against the Spanish.	1739
The British defeated the French at the Battle of Dettinghen.	1743
King George's War was fought with France over the St. Lawrence River area.	1744-8
Fort Louisburg was captured from the French.	1745
Scottish Jacobites rebelled again and were finally crushed at the Battle of Culloden.	1745-6
The British Navy defeated the French at Belle Isle.	1747
The Anglo-French War was fought in North America.	1754-63
The Seven Years War between England and France was fought in Europe.	1756-63
The British won the Battle of Plessy to gain control of the state of Bengal in India.	1757
England captured Quebec and Montreal from France.	1759
Britain seized Havana, Cuba from Spain.	1762
The Treaty of Paris ceded Canada, land east of the Mississippi, and India to Britain.	1763
British troops put down a revolt by many Native tribes against their "new" rulers.	1763
The British crush an Indian revolt in Bengal.	1764