



# The Age of Reason

The Scientific Revolution helped start a new era called the Enlightenment, or the Age of Reason. People believed reason and logic could be used to study all areas of life, not just science. Scientists talked about the laws that govern nature, so philosophers looked for laws of human behavior. Some Enlightenment thinkers studied government and politics.

Thomas Hobbes and John Locke were two English political thinkers who started the Enlightenment. Both men had seen the Civil War and political changes of England in the 1600s. However, they came up with two very different ideas about government and human nature.



After seeing the violence of the English Civil War, Thomas Hobbes believed that all humans were naturally selfish. He thought that the best government was one with total control over the people. Hobbes thought that people needed government to keep law and order. Without it, they would fight each other all the time. To avoid this type of life, people invented government and gave up their rights to a strong ruler. Hobbes said that this agreement was a social contract.

John Locke had different ideas about government. He thought that people were responsible beings who had the natural ability to govern themselves. Locke said all people were born equal and had three natural rights: life, liberty, and property. He believed that a government's job was to protect these rights. The best government had limited power and was accepted by all people. If a government did not protect its citizens' rights, citizens could overthrow the government. Locke's idea that a government's power came from its people was the beginning of modern democracy.

In France in the mid-1700s, the Enlightenment reached its height. The Baron de Montesquieu, a French writer, studied politics. He admired Britain's government and spent a lot of time studying it. In his book, *The Spirit of Laws*, Montesquieu wrote about the British system of government. The book talked about the ideas of executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government; separation of powers; and checks and balances. Later, Americans used these ideas to write the U.S. Constitution.

The thinkers of the Age of Reason did not like old beliefs. They thought things like the divine right of kings and strict class systems were unreasonable. Enlightenment thinkers came up with new ideas about government, religion, economics, and society. These theories inspired the American and French Revolutions and other revolutions of the 1800s.



# The Age of Reason

## Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

1. Philosophers of the Enlightenment wanted to use \_\_\_\_\_ in all areas of life.

- A. government
- B. economics
- C. politics
- D. reason

2. \_\_\_\_\_ believed that without government, people would fight each other all the time.

- A. Locke
- B. Hobbes
- C. Montesquieu
- D. Smith

3. Locke believed that a government's power came from its \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. army
- B. power
- C. people
- D. science

4. Americans used \_\_\_\_\_'s ideas to write the U.S. Constitution.

- A. Montesquieu
- B. Hobbes
- C. Rousseau
- D. Voltaire

5. Enlightenment thinkers and theories inspired \_\_\_\_\_.

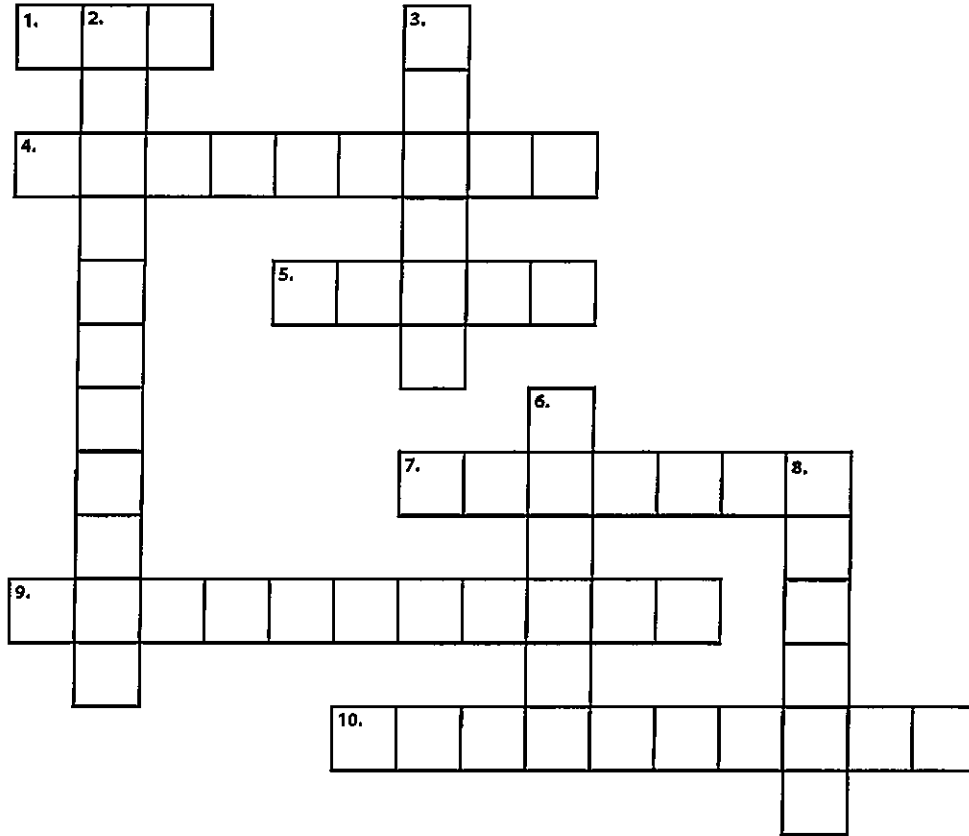
- A. the French Revolution
- B. the American Revolution
- C. other revolutions of the 1800s
- D. all of the above



# The Age of Reason

## Crossword Puzzle

Write the best answer in each blank, and complete the crossword puzzle.



### ACROSS

1. Thomas Hobbes and John Locke had both seen the violence of the English Civil \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Locke's idea was the beginning of modern \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ thought the best government had limited power and was accepted by all the people.
7. Montesquieu wrote about the \_\_\_\_\_ system of government.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ described branches of government, separation of powers, and checks and balances.
10. Locke and Hobbes had different ideas about \_\_\_\_\_.

### DOWN

2. The Enlightenment is also called the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Enlightenment reached its height in \_\_\_\_\_ in the mid-1700s.
6. Ideas like the \_\_\_\_\_ right of kings and class systems were considered unreasonable.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ thought that the best government was one with total control over the people.



# The Age of Reason

## Chart – Ideas of the Enlightenment

Use the chart to answer the following questions. Write the answers in complete sentences.

Thinker	Idea	Effect
Locke	natural rights: life, liberty, property	basic point of U.S. Declaration of Independence
Montesquieu	separation of powers	France, the United States, and Latin American countries use separation of powers in their new constitutions.
Voltaire	freedom of thought and expression, freedom of religion	guaranteed in the U.S. Bill of Rights and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen
Wollstonecraft	women's equality	women's rights groups form

1. What was the effect of Locke's idea?

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2. Which thinker wrote about women's equality?

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3. What ideas led to rights being guaranteed in the U.S. Bill of Rights and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen?

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# The Age of Reason

## Extension Activities

*Choose one of the following activities to complete. Write the answer in complete sentences.*

1. Who was Adam Smith? What did he write about? Look in your textbook, on the Internet, or at the library to find out.
2. Would you rather have been a scientist during the Scientific Revolution or a political thinker during the Enlightenment? Explain your answer.
3. Look on the Internet or at the library to find out three facts about Mary Wollstonecraft.

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# Quiz: The Age of Reason

## True/False

Decide if each statement is true or false, and write "true" or "false" in the blank.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Montesquieu used American ideas to write the U.S. Constitution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Locke believed that a government's power came from its people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Hobbes believed that without government, people would govern themselves peacefully.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The Enlightenment reached its height in England in the 1600s.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Thinkers of the Age of Reason believed that the divine right of kings was a good idea.

## Multiple Choice

Circle the best answer, and write the letter in the box.

6. Montesquieu described \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. branches of government
  - B. separation of powers
  - C. checks and balances
  - D. all of the above

7. \_\_\_\_\_'s idea was the beginning of modern democracy.
- A. Hobbes
  - B. Locke
  - C. Montesquieu
  - D. Wollstonecraft

## Short Answer

Answer the following question in complete sentences.

8. What political event in England had a strong effect on Thomas Hobbes and John Locke?

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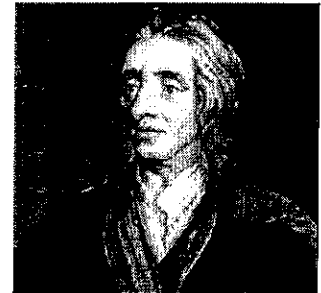
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Enlightenment Thinkers

Thinker	Major Belief (s)	Book Name	Example (s)
Hobbes			
Locke			
Montesquieu			
Voltaire			
Rousseau			

Locke Resource Card

John Locke was a British philosopher who lived from 1632-1704. In 1690 Locke published one of his more famous books, *The Second Treatise of Civil Government*. The book addressed many areas including his views on the state of nature, civil society and the dissolution of government. His writings and beliefs greatly influenced many later revolutions including the American and French Revolutions.



Quotes from Locke's Works

- *All mankind...being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty [freedom] or possessions [things they own].*
- *The end [purpose] of law is not to abolish [end] or restrain [hold back], but to preserve [protect] and enlarge freedom.*
- *[A] ruling body [government] if it offends against natural law must be deposed [removed].*
- *For he that thinks absolute power purifies men's blood, and corrects the baseness [immorality] of human nature, need read but the history of this, or any other age, to be convinced of the contrary [opposite].*



In 1830 Eugène Delacroix created a huge painting *Liberty Leading the People* to commemorate the July Revolution of the same year. His painting has become the symbol of the revolutions that ended feudal rule in France and is now regarded as the symbol of the French Revolution of 1789.





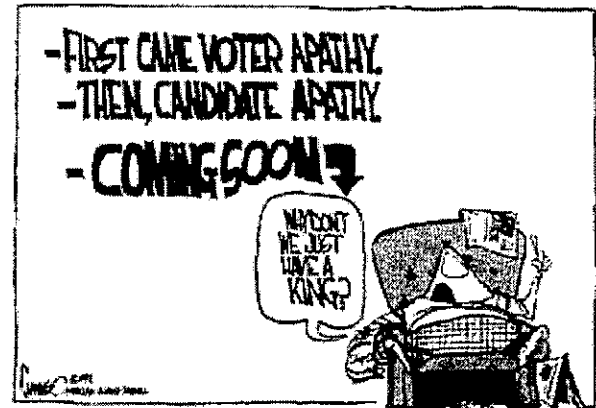
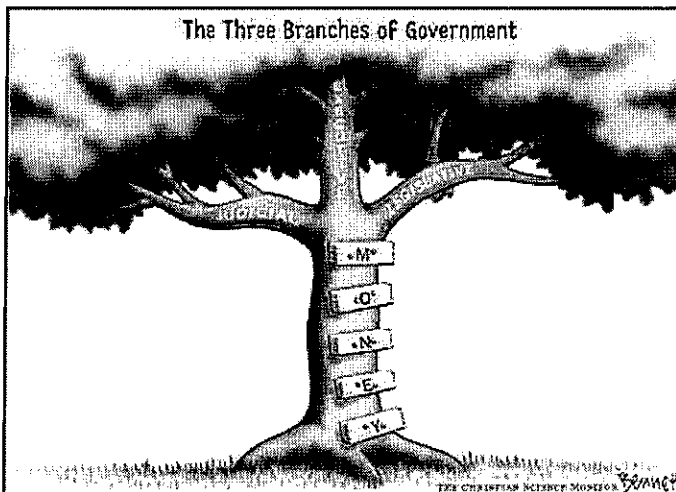
Montesquieu Resource Card

Charles Louis de Secondat, the Baron de Montesquieu, was a French philosopher who lived from 1689-1755. *The Spirit of the Laws*, his master work, was originally published anonymously in 1748 and quickly rose to a position of enormous influence. In France, it met with an unfriendly reception from both supporters and opponents of the government. The Roman Catholic Church banned *The Spirit of the Laws*, but from the rest of Europe, especially Britain, it received the highest praise. Montesquieu's ideas greatly influenced the American Revolution.



Quotes from Montesquieu's Works

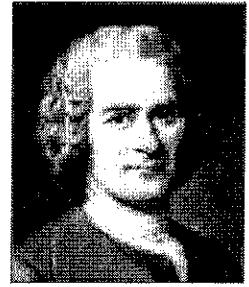
- *The tyranny [harsh rule] of a prince in an oligarchy [government in which power is held by a few people] is not so dangerous to the public welfare [well-being] as the apathy [lack of interest] of a citizen in a democracy.*
- *When the legislative [law-making] and executive [decision-making] powers are united in the same person...there can be no liberty [freedom]...Again, there is no liberty, if the judiciary [judging] power be not separated from the legislative and executive.*
- *In the state of nature [without or before the existence of government] ...all men are born equal, but they cannot continue in this equality. Society makes them lose it, and they recover it only by the protection of the law.*



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Rousseau Resource Card

Jean Jacques Rousseau, a Swiss-born French philosopher, lived from 1712-1778. While Rousseau authored novels and opera, he is most well-known for his political writings in his 1762 work *The Social Contract*. Rousseau's views were not popular with French and Swiss authorities, so he fled to Prussia and then to England. He later returned to France under an assumed (false) name. Rousseau's political writings greatly influenced later revolutions, including the French Revolution.

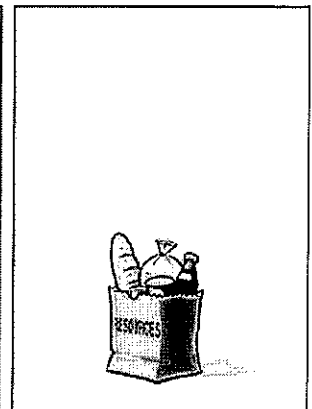


Quotes from Rousseau's Works

- *Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains.*
- *No man has any natural authority over his fellow men.*
- *Only the general will can direct the energies of the state in a manner appropriate to the end for which it was founded, i.e., the common good.*
- *I prefer liberty with danger to peace with slavery.*
- *The English think they are free. They are free only during the election of members of parliament.*



Be fruitful and multiply...



Now divide.

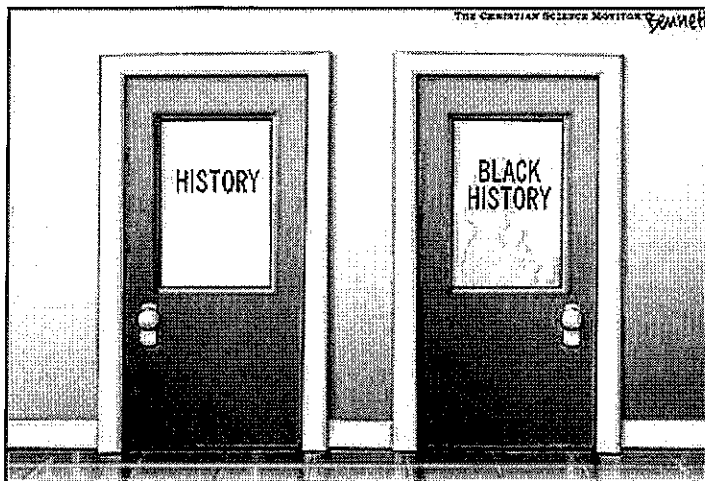
Voltaire Resource Card

Francois Marie Arouet, who took the pen name Voltaire, was a French philosopher who lived from 1694-1778. Voltaire spent several years in exile in England, and was influenced by his experience there as well as by his French background. In his early twenties he spent eleven months in the Bastille for writing satiric verses about the aristocracy. Voltaire's ideas greatly influenced revolutions, including the French Revolution and the American Revolution.



Quotes from Voltaire's Works

- *It is dangerous to be right in matters on which the established authorities are wrong.*
- *I detest what you write, but I would give my life to make it possible for you to continue to write.* (Letter to Monsieur le Riche, 1770)
- *Liberty of thought is the life of the soul.* (from Essay on Epic Poetry, 1727)
- *The way the English run their country is excellent. This is not normally the case with a monarchy [government ruled by a king or a queen], but because there is a parliament [elected body of representatives, also known as a legislature], English people have rights. They are free to go where they wish; they can read what they like. They have the right to be tried properly by law, and all individuals are free to follow the religion of their choice.*
- *I say that we should regard all men as our brothers. What? The Turk my brother? The Chinaman my brother? The Jew? The Siam? Yes, without doubt; are we not all children of the same father and creatures of the same God?*



'Today we'll learn about segregation in America.'



## Enlightenment DBQ

### Historical Context

The discoveries made in science during the 1500s and 1600s led European thinkers to raise questions about the conditions of human life itself. Many of the thinkers of the European Enlightenment moved away from medieval thinking toward more modern thoughts regarding government and the role of women in society.

### Document 1

*Second Treatise on Government* - John Locke

. Political power is that power, which every man having in the state of nature, has given up into the hands of the society, and therein to the governors, whom the society hath set over itself, with this express or tacit trust, that it shall be employed for their good and preservation of their property...

. . . So that the end and measure of this power, when in every man's hands in the state of nature . . . it can have no other end or measure, when in the hands of the magistrate, but to preserve the member of that society in their lives, liberties, and possessions; and so cannot be absolute, arbitrary power over their lives and fortunes...

**1. Based on this document, what is the reason for political power?**

**2. What does Locke say political power cannot be?**

**3. How is this a change from past governments in Europe?**

### Document 2

*The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu

In every government there are three sorts of power; the legislative; the executive, in respect to things dependent on the law of nations; and the executive, in regard to things that depend on the civil law.

By virtue of the first, the prince or magistrate enacts temporary or perpetual laws, and amends or abrogates those that have been already enacted. By the second, he makes peace or war, sends or receives embassies; establishes the public security, and provides against invasions. By the third, he punishes criminals, or determines the disputes that arise between individuals. The latter we shall call the judiciary power, and the other simply the executive power of the state.

The political liberty of the subject is a tranquility of mind, arising from the opinion each person has of his safety. In order to have this liberty, it is requisite the government be so constituted as one man need not be afraid of another.

When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner.

Again, there is no liberty, if the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers. Were it joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary control, for the judge would then be the legislator. Were it joined to the executive power, the judge might behave with all the violence of an oppressor.

**4. How does Montesquieu believe government should be divided?**

**5. Why does he believe this is necessary?**

**6. How is this different than previous ideas?**

### Document 3

*The Social Contract*, Jean Jacques Rousseau

The social contract's terms, when they are well understood, can be reduced to a single stipulation: the individual member alienates himself totally to the whole community together with all his rights. This is first because conditions will be the same for everyone when each individual gives himself totally, and secondly, because no one will be tempted to make that condition of shared equality worse for other men....

Once this multitude is united this way into a body, an offense against one of its members is an offense against the body politic. It would be even less possible to injure the body without its members feeling it. Duty and interest thus equally require the two contracting parties to aid each other mutually. The individual people should be motivated from their double roles as individuals and members of the body, to combine all the advantages which mutual aid offers them....

7. **According to Rousseau, when individuals agree to the social contract, what happens to their rights?**
  
8. **What is the motivation of the people when they submit to the social contract?**
  
9. **Do you believe this type of setting will benefit people overall?**

### Document 4

*A Treatise on Toleration*, Voltaire

It does not require great art, or magnificently trained eloquence, to prove that Christians should tolerate each other. I, however, am going further: I say that we should regard all men as our brothers. What? The Turk my brother? The Chinaman my brother? The Jew? The Siam? Yes, without doubt; are we not all children of the same father and creatures of the same God?

10. **What is Voltaire advocating in *A Treatise on Toleration*?**
  
11. **How is this a departure from previous attitudes throughout the world?**
  
12. **Do you think we as a world are any closer to his vision today than we were 500 years ago? Why?**

## ENLIGHTENED DESPOTS

**Directions:** Examine the following primary and secondary sources on the Enlightened Despots and answer the guiding questions.

### FREDERICK II:

Frederick II (the Great) was king of Prussia from 1740 to 1786, and he stands as one of the greatest of the Enlightened Despots. He was an absolute ruler, but he lived under the principle that he was the "**first servant of the state.**" He consequently did not rule by his own personal whims, but always under the guidance of what was most beneficial for Prussia, and he expected his people to possess the same devotion.

As king, Frederick issued a series of domestic reforms that modernized Prussia and built her up from within. He continued the work of his predecessors to consolidate power by giving the territorial princes a place in the **governmental bureaucracy**. He established **universal religious toleration** and granted **freedom of the press**. He established **individual protections against the law** by speeding up the legal process, abolishing torture, and making sentences of death legal only with his personal sanction. Prussian judges were educated and the courts gained a reputation as the most honest in Europe. He established the **first German law code** and enforced **general education rules** across Prussia. Frederick financed the rebuilding of towns through **agricultural reforms** and built thousands of miles of roads. Frederick built Prussia into one of the strongest nations in Europe and left a legacy of absolute devotion to the fatherland that continued to shape German history into the 20th century.

### **Primary Source:**

*"Rulers should always remind themselves that they are men like the least of their subjects. The sovereign is the foremost judge, general, financier, and minister of his country, not merely for the sake of his prestige. Therefore, he should perform with care the duties connected with these offices. He is merely the principal servant of the State. Hence, he must act with honesty, wisdom, and complete disinterestedness in such a way that he can render an account of his stewardship to the citizens at any moment. Consequently, he is guilty if he wastes the money of the people, the taxes which they have paid, in luxury, pomp and debauchery. He who should improve the morals of the people, be the guardian of the law, and improve their education should not pervert them by his bad example.*

*Princes, sovereigns, and king have not been given supreme authority in order to live in luxurious self-indulgence and debauchery. They have not been elevated by their fellow-men to enable them to strut about and to insult with their pride the simple-mannered, the poor and the suffering. They have not been placed at the head of the State to keep around themselves a crowd of idle loafers whose uselessness drives them towards vice. The sovereign is the representative of his State. He and his people form a single body. Ruler and ruled can be happy only if they are firmly united. The sovereign stands to his people in the same relation in which the head stands to the body. He must use his eyes and his brain for the whole community, and act on its behalf to the common advantage."*

1. According to Frederick, what is his role as a monarch? What reforms did he enact?
2. What examples does he give of a flawed or corrupt leader?
3. Frederick declares himself as the "first servant of the state." What does he mean by this?

### CATHERINE II:

On August 21, 1744 Catherine married Peter III, the Grand Duke of Holstein and heir apparent to the Russian throne, in the biggest ceremony ever performed in Europe. Catherine proceeded to "Westernize" Russia. Her reforms went even farther after a failed peasant revolt in 1773 led by Yemelian Pugachev threatened Eastern Russia. As a result, Catherine the Great instituted several drastic reforms within the Russian society. First, she established the **Free Economic Society** (1765) to encourage

the modernization of agriculture and industry. Second, she encouraged **foreign investment in economically underdeveloped areas**. Third, Catherine **relaxed the censorship law** and **encouraged education** for the nobles and middle class.

**Primary Source:**

*"The Sovereign is absolute; for there is no other Authority but that which centers in his single Person*

*33. The Laws ought to be so framed, as to secure the Safety of every Citizen as much as possible. The Equality of the Citizens consists in this; that they should all be subject to the same Laws. This Equality requires Institutions so well adapted, as to prevent the Rich from oppressing those who are not so wealthy as themselves 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.*

*123. The Usage of Torture is contrary to all the Dictates of Nature and Reason...That Law, therefore, is highly beneficial to the Community where it is established, which ordains that every Man shall be judged by his Peers and Equals. For when the Fate of a Citizen is in Question, all Prejudices arising from the Difference of Rank or Fortune should be stifled; because they ought to have no Influence between the Judges and the Parties accused.*

*194. (1.) No Man ought to be looked upon as guilty, before he has received his judicial Sentence; nor can the Laws deprive him of their Protection, before it is proved that he has forfeited all Right to it.*

*253. And therefore, to shun all Occasions of reducing People to a State of Slavery, except the utmost Necessity should inevitably oblige us to do it."*

4. What were three reforms that Catherine II passed in Russia during her reign?

5. Where do you see Enlightenment influence in her new law code?

6. What type of government do you think she favors and why?

**JOSEPH II:**

Following Maria Theresa's death in 1780, Joseph II reigned in his own right until his death in 1790. The Edict of Tolerance, issued in 1781, granted Protestants almost equal status with Catholics; other decrees lifted restrictions on Jews and opened up communities, trades, and educational opportunities previously barred to them. The reforms **created an administrative, fiscal, and judicial bureaucracy** directly responsible to the monarch. As the seat of the new centralized institutions, Vienna grew from merely being the sovereign's place of residence to a true political and administrative capital.

**Primary Source:**

*"I determined from the very commencement of my reign to adorn my diadem 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....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 that beneficent 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... and which. fortunately for mankind. has now become the highway of monarchs."*

7. What were some of the reforms passed under Joseph II?

8. Why can he be considered an Enlightened despot?