**Support Document Guided Reading, Standard 7-2.3**

**The Enlightenment**

**Directions: Read the following paragraphs and answer the questions following each paragraph. Be sure to READ the whole paragraph before answering the questions.**

During the 1600’s and 1700’s, Absolutism was the basis of most governments in Europe. (An absolute government is an unlimited government which placed absolute power in the hands of the ruler.) These absolute monarchies were based on divine right, the belief that rulers received their power directly from God. The citizens were expected to obey the absolute monarchy and had very few rights.

**1. What type of government ruled Europe during the 1600’s and 1700’s?**

**2. What was divine right?**

**3. Did the citizens (people) have any power in an unlimited government?**

However, this was about to change when a group of “Enlightenment” philosophers came together to talk about the government. The philosophers sought to apply “reason” to society by switching from unlimited governments with absolutism to limited governments.

**4. What did the Enlightened Philosophers want to apply to society?**

**5. The Enlightened Philosophers wanted to switch the type of government from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Key players of the Enlightenment:**

**John Locke -- NATURAL RIGHTS!!!**

Locke believed all humans were born with natural rights. ( The right to life, liberty and property.) This challenged the idea of an unlimited government because Locke believed the citizens were BORN with rights and should have them! Locke believed the social contract was an agreement between the citizens and their government, and the government’s responsibility was to protect the rights of the people. Locke argued that if the government did not protect these rights, then the people had the right to break the contact by abolishing the government and creating a new one. Locke believed that the government got its approval or “consent” from the people. Locke’s writings influenced Thomas Jefferson and his writing in the declaration of independence.

6. Locke believed that all citizens had natural rights which were : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Jean-Jacques Rousseau -- GENERAL WILL OF THE PEOPLE!!!!**

Rouseau believe the role of the government was to protect the “general will” of the people. It was the government’s duty to make policies which would represent the decisions of the majority (most) of the citizens. Rousseau believed the government should be limited by what the majority of citizens wanted. Rousseau’s ideas led to the idea of popular sovereignty – the government gets their power based on what the people want. (What we have in the United States today). However, some totalitarian governments would later implement Rousseau’s ideas to appeal to the people.

7. What does the “general will” of the people refer to?

8. What is another name of the general will of the people?

**Baron de Montesquieu -- SEPERATION OF POWERS!!!!**

Montesquieu believed the government should have the power separated into branches and use a policy of checks and balance. By creating a separation of powers, a government must be limited as each branch checks the others’ powers. Montesquieu wanted three branched of governments. The executive (monarch or leader), legislative (representatives like Parliament), and Judicial ( judges/courts). This really influenced the United States Constitution.

9. What are the three branches of government that Montesquieu proposed?

10. Why did Montesquieu believe that power should be separated?

**Voltaire – FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND RELIGION!!**

Voltaire focused mainly on the rights of citizens, primarily freedom of speech and religion. He wrote many books to demonstrate the use of reason and to show his dislike for religious intolerance. Voltaire advocated for a separation of church and state, and modeled the right to express the personal opinion through free speech.

11. What two primary rights did Voltaire believe that all citizens should have?