

Enlightenment Ideas about Government	
Subject Question	Belief of the Enlightenment Thinkers
Sources of Government Power?	The Consent of the Governed The Will of the Majority
Structure of Government?	A Separation of Powers Checks and Balances
Power of Government?	Absolute Power or Limited Power?
When the Government Fails?	People have the right to Overthrow the Government
Purpose of the Government?	To Protect Natural Rights
Goal of Government?	Material Well-Being Social Justice
Government and the Economy?	Laissez Faire economics A Free Market economy

Three Key Enlightenment Thinkers – their ideas and own words			
	Locke	Montesquieu	Rousseau
Important Ideas	<p>People have certain natural rights, including liberty, life, and ownership of property</p> <p>Government can be justified by protecting rights of citizens, citizens have a right to find new rulers</p>	<p>Political freedom should be advanced by separating powers into legislative, executive, and judicial</p> <p>Each branch of government should be able to check the power of the other branches</p>	<p>People are naturally good, but are corrupted by society</p> <p>Controls on people are important, but should be minimal</p> <p>The good of the community should be placed above individual interests</p> <p>Faith in “General Will”</p>
In their own words	<p>“The power of the Society, or [Legislature] constituted by them, <i>can never be supposed to extend farther than the common good.</i>”</p> <p><i>Two Treatises of Government</i></p>	<p>“. . . in order for [the citizen] to have [political] liberty the government must be such that one citizen cannot fear another citizen.”</p> <p><i>The Spirit of Laws</i></p>	<p>“. . . whoever refuses to obey will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. This means nothing less than that he will be forced to be free. . . .”</p> <p><i>The Social Contract</i></p>