

Unit 1 Foundation of American Government

"Fundamentals of Government"

Mr. Ahlberg

Notes #1





Government

- Definition
 - The institutions and procedures through which people are ruled



There are many types of governments. Can you name some?

What type of Government does the United States have?



Politics

- Definition
 - Process by which individuals and groups reach agreement on a common course of action even as they continue to disagree on the goal that action is intended to achieve
- A simplified way to put it is that your politics are your opinions about anything.





State of Nature

What would life be like without government?

A question that many people (philosophers) theorized an answer to during the Enlightenment.

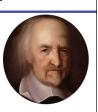






Philosophers

- · Thomas Hobbes
 - Answer to the "State of Nature" question
 - Humans are inherently "bad"
 - Will always resort to violence and chaos if not governed
 - Strongly suggested that total power should be vested in an Absolute Monarch





Philosophers

- · John Locke
 - · Answer to the "State of Nature" question
 - People have a Natural right to "Life, Liberty and Property"
 - People on their own will respect each others natural rights
 - All men are created equal
 - Governments must respect and protect the "Natural Rights" of men
 - People also have the right to revolt if their government does not respect and protect the "Natural Rights"



More Philosophers

- · Charles de Montesquieu
 - Advocated for the separation of government power into three branches
 - Power to make laws (Legislative)
 - Power to enforce laws (Executive)
 - Power to judge or interpret laws (Judicial)
 - Each branch would be given powers to keep the other branches in check and therefore balanced.





More Philosophers

- Jean Jacques Rousseau
 - The only good government is one formed freely with the consent of the people
- · Social Contract
 - People are willing to give up some individual rights in exchange for the governments protection of their "natural rights"

