**A.P. GOVERNMENT**

Unit 1
Foundation of American Government

# "Fundamentals of Government"

Mr. Ahlberg

Notes #1

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## Word Association

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- What come to mind when you hear the words "government" and "politics"?
- Do these words have a more positive or negative connotation?

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## Government

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- 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?

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## Politics

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- 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.

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## State of Nature

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What would life be like without government?

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

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## Philosophers

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- 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"