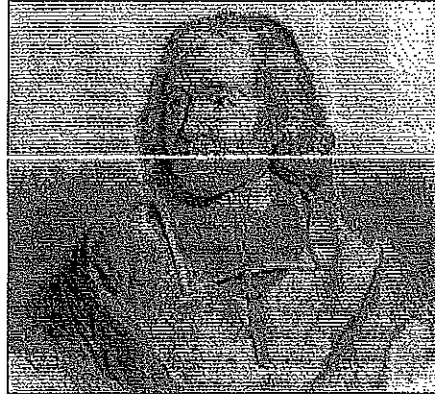


## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.1*



## **Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)**

### Education:

University of Oxford, England.

### Early Life:

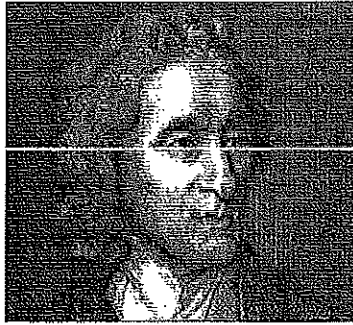
Hobbes was born in England. He did much traveling through France and Italy. During his travels, he met the astronomer Galileo and the French philosopher René Descartes. Hobbes was worried about being arrested by the government of England because of his beliefs, so he moved to France for eleven years. He worked as a scientist, philosopher, and math tutor.

### Beliefs:

Hobbes is known as one of the first modern Western thinkers. He believed that religion should be separate from politics. He supported a strong government based on reason. Hobbes also tried to separate knowledge from faith, which eventually got him into trouble with the British Parliament. He was the first philosopher to emphasize reason instead of religious faith. Hobbes' major belief was that all people are fearful and predatory (greedy). As a result, they must submit to the absolute power of the state. By allowing the state to have absolute power, the people would live by reason and gain lasting preservation.

## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.2*



## **John Locke (1632-1704)**

### Education:

Christ Church College, University of Oxford, England.

### Early Life:

Locke was born in England. His father fought in the English Civil war on the Parliament side. His father's views about the people's role in government influenced Locke's views.

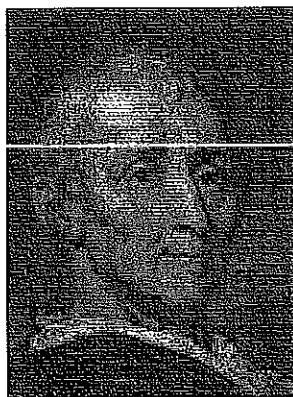
### Beliefs:

He disagreed with Thomas Hobbes about human nature. Hobbes felt all people were selfish. Locke believed that all people were born good and were given natural rights by God. These were rights to life, liberty, and owning property. Locke believed that the king's power should be limited by laws enacted by the people. This type of government is called a constitutional monarchy.

He argued that the agreement between the government and the people was a social contract. If the government did not uphold its part and protect the people's rights, the people should revolt.

Freedom of religion was a right that the government should protect. People should be allowed to choose which church to attend.

These ideas were used by American colonists in 1776 as a reason for the American revolution, and they helped shape the US Constitution. The ideas also influenced the French revolution in 1789.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.4*****Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755)****Education:**

College of Juilly, France.

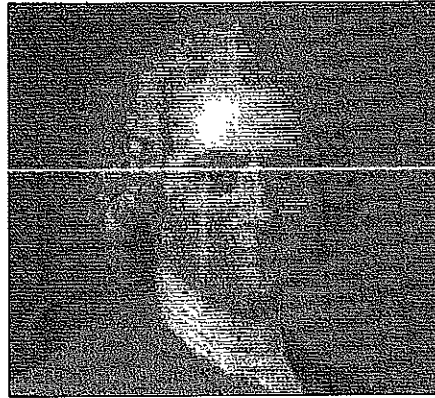
**Early Life:**

He was born in France. His uncle died in 1714 and left Montesquieu his riches and his title. He became a lawyer and was famous as a writer who criticized the French king and the Catholic Church. His most famous book was *The Spirit of Laws*. It explained how the government should be organized.

**Beliefs:**

He agreed with Locke in many ways about the role of government. Montesquieu admired the system in England that limited the power of the king. He said the government should be broken into different sections and that each should have some power to control the others. He wanted government to split into three branches. One branch would make laws, another would interpret the laws, and the third would enforce the laws. This system is called separation of powers, and was the model for the US government.

One of the most important ideas from his system is that each branch has some control over another branch. For example, the legislature makes laws, but the head of state (president) enforces them. Montesquieu believed this system would prevent a leader from becoming a tyrant.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.5*****Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)****Education:**

Self-educated; also served an apprenticeship as engraver and notary.

**Early Life:**

He was born in Geneva, Switzerland. His mother died when he was born, so he was raised by an aunt. When Rousseau turned thirteen, he worked as an apprentice for an engraver but ran away after three years. He became a secretary for a wealthy woman, who subsequently had much influence on his life. He moved to Paris where he became a music teacher.

**Beliefs:**

He believed that individuals should have certain rights. His ideas supported the French revolution. Rousseau felt that whatever the majority of the people wanted should become law. Rousseau's ideas of individual freedom spread throughout Europe and the United States. He was against the absolute power or control of the Church and government, and he believed that the government should do what the majority of the people wanted. He also argued that if the people were in control, then the rules should be strictly enforced. Rousseau felt that education needed to be changed. He believed that children should be allowed to show their emotions in order to become well-rounded and freethinking individuals. Rousseau supported the ideals of the Enlightenment by defending the importance of reason and individual rights. Individuals, according to Rousseau, should be allowed to experience and explore life.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.6*****Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)****Education:**

Franklin was a printer, author, diplomat, philosopher, inventor, and scientist. He learned his jobs through experience. He did not graduate from a college or university.

**Early Life:**

Franklin was born in Boston, Massachusetts. He was the tenth son of seventeen children. His parents were middle class. Franklin learned how to read and loved it. He used his love of reading to teach himself to write. When he turned twelve, he was sent to his brother to work as an apprentice in his printing shop. At the age of seventeen he ran away to start his own life. He traveled to London for a while, then came back to Philadelphia and opened his own print shop.

**Beliefs:**

Franklin believed in a government that had a single legislature with an advisory board. The board of people would also work for the government. He did not believe the people in charge should be paid for their services. He also felt that slavery was morally wrong and should be abolished. He was a very tolerant man. He could listen quietly but could talk when he was asked to. Because of these qualities, he was asked to represent the United States government during the Revolutionary war. Franklin believed in a simple lifestyle that used common sense and reason to make decisions and guide a person's life. He was the creator of numerous inventions.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.7*****Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)****Education:**

College of William and Mary, Virginia.

**Early Life:**

Jefferson was born in Virginia. His parents were wealthy landowners. Jefferson received most of his early education from private tutors. His family did not live in the city but on a large estate on the frontier. There were few neighbors in the area to socialize with. When Jefferson was fourteen, his father died, leaving him in charge of the family and the estate. His family consisted of six sisters and one younger brother; Thomas was the oldest. At sixteen he left home to attend college in the capital city of Williamsburg, Virginia. It was at college that Jefferson met the influential leaders of the American revolution and became their friend.

**Beliefs:**

Jefferson believed that the majority of the people would make the right choices when given the chance. He did not want a government that had too much power. He also believed that individual freedom and rights should be protected by government. He felt that all people should be involved in making decisions for the country. He believed that everyone should be allowed to get an education regardless of social status. During the French revolution, he supported the people that wanted to make sure the king would no longer have total control.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.9*****Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797)****Education:**

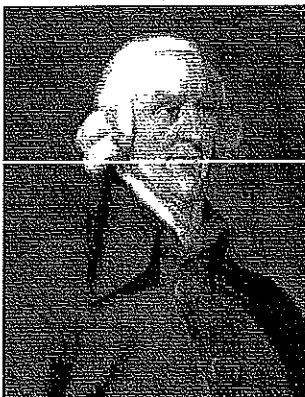
She was self-educated.

**Early Life:**

Mary was born in England. She was the second child of seven in a middle-class family. Her father was known to be abusive and harsh to the family. Mary tried to leave the family and to support herself, but she found she was limited in the types of jobs she could get because she was female. She worked as a companion and teacher. She was called back home to take care of her younger sisters and sick mother.

**Beliefs:**

Mary was not the first woman to recognize the inequalities between men and women during her lifetime, but she became the most popular. While she focused on fighting for the rights of women and against the inequalities in education, she also worked for the equal treatment of all human beings. She emphasized that education for men and women should be based on reason. Mary believed that people should be judged based on individual merit and moral virtue, not on gender. She wrote two books that discussed women's rights. Mary wanted men to treat their wives as equals, not as property. She also strongly urged that women be given equal opportunity when trying to get a job.

**Lesson 3*****Student Handout 3.10*****Adam Smith (1723-1790)****Education:**

University of Glasgow and Balliol College, University of Oxford.

**Early Life:**

Smith was born in a small village in Scotland. He was raised by his widowed mother and left home for school at the age of fourteen.

**Beliefs:**

Smith was a philosopher who focused on the role of economics. His most famous book, *The Wealth of Nations*, was published in 1776. The book had a significant impact on modern economics and concepts of individual freedom. In this book he argued that self-interest guides the most efficient use of resources. *The Wealth of Nations* established the study of economics as a separate and important topic. With this book, Smith became the first philosopher to focus on the role economics played within society. His beliefs of “free enterprise” set a new standard.

Smith also gave lectures and discussed topics such as ethics, human motives, and society. He believed that someone working to earn money benefited himself but also benefited society as a whole. He claimed that charity was a virtuous act but that society should not depend upon charity.

Smith’s travels brought him into contact with Voltaire, Rousseau, and the philosopher David Hume. Parts of Smith’s work on economics can be found in the writings of Karl Marx, the founder of Marxism.