

Name _____

Eurasian History: The Enlightenment

Due:

Directions: Please read Chapter XXII, Section II “The Enlightenment in Europe” (pages 629-632) and respond to the prompts below.

Rationale: Thus far we have talked about Machiavelli’s political philosophy. His work was focused on how a monarch should seek to keep power and was written in the early 1500s. Beginning in the 1600s, various political philosophers also addressed the issue of political power. Their work set the stage for what is often called “The Enlightenment.” The ideas and events of The Enlightenment have had a profound effect on our political philosophy and governmental systems. This reading and your response to these prompts will focus our study of the key concepts that grew out of The Enlightenment.

1. What was Thomas Hobbes’ view of human nature and how did that influence his political philosophy?

2. How did John Locke’s view of human nature and his political philosophy differ from that of Thomas Hobbes?

3. To what extent do you hold the same core concepts as the *philosophes* of The Enlightenment? In other words, do you find that you have the same perspective on the human condition as they did? Please explain your answer.

4. How vital do you think Voltaire’s statement on liberty is to a free society?

5. How did Montesquieu’s idea about power seek to create and preserve a “just society”?

5. How did Jean Jacques Rousseau's belief in human nature and his political philosophy differ from the view of other Enlightenment thinkers?
6. Consider the list of "Major Ideas of the Enlightenment" on page 632. If you were asked to make a hierarchical list of the ideas – in order of their importance to a just society – which of these ideas would be most critical to a just society? Make a numbered list with the ideas that are most important first and the ones of lesser importance following in order of importance. (Another way to conduct this thought experiment is for you to consider living without some of these ideas. Which of them are most vital to your vision of a just and harmonious society?)