

The Beliefs and Values of Enlightenment Philosophers

Instructions: Read the primary source quotes of the Enlightenment Philosophers below. Answer the open response question. Type **TWO PARAGRAPHS**. Each paragraph needs **AT LEAST 3 complete sentences**.

Documents #1: “The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it... that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions.” - **John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, (1689).**

Commentary: Here, Locke argues that a just government must protect your life, your freedom, and the things you own.

Documents #2: “There is no liberty if the judiciary power be not separated from the legislative and executive.” - **Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, (1748).**

Commentary: Montesquieu argues that the judges **MUST** be separated from the power of the Executive (like the current USA President) and the Legislators (like the current USA Congress) so the judges can hold other branches accountable. This is the only way citizens can be free from tyranny, according to Montesquieu.

Documents #3: “(Religious) Toleration has never provoked a civil war; intolerance has covered the earth with carnage.” -**Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance*, (1763).**

Commentary: Here, Voltaire is NOT arguing all religions should agree they believe the same thing. Rather, he is saying all people should agree ALL others should have religious freedom as long as they practice their beliefs peacefully. He asserts religious toleration leads to peace and intolerance destroys peace in society.

Documents #4: “The general will is always right and always tends toward the public good...” - **Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, (1762).**

Commentary: Here, Rousseau argues the government must know what the majority of people generally want and then try and guide the government goals toward that direction, like how a republic allows citizens to vote to find the general will for who gets to be in leadership.

Based on the sources above, describe some values and beliefs of the Enlightenment Philosophers on how the government should function.

Paragraph 1: Use citations to answer the question in your paragraph #1.

Paragraph 2: Do it again with different content. Use citations to answer the question in your paragraph #2.

Answers may vary, but here is an example:

Based on the sources above, describe some values and beliefs of the Enlightenment Philosophers on how the government should function.

Paragraph 1: Use citations to answer the question in your paragraph #1.

Two values of the Enlightenment Philosophers were protecting individual rights and separating powers. In document #1, Locke argues a just society would protect a person's right to property, for instance. In document #2, Montesquieu argues specifically that powers must be separated in the government, especially the judges who need to hold the other branches accountable.

Paragraph 2: Do it again with different content. Use citations to answer the question in your paragraph #2.

Two more values of the Enlightenment Philosophers were allowing the general will of people to guide society and supporting religious toleration. In document #4, Rousseau asserts the government should pursue what generally the people want so that society can achieve the common good. According to document #3, Voltaire argues a society without religious toleration leads to carnage, but toleration is present when there is peace.