



# UNDERSTANDING JOHN LOCKE

US.1A

# Identifying Basic Rights

- Think of a right you believe all people should have. For example, you probably agree that everyone in the United States has the right to be protected from robbers and burglars. The belief that everyone should have this protection is shared by most people in the United States. We hear about it on television, in the newspaper, and in discussions.



# Think

- Individually explain how you think rights like the ones we have identified can be protected.

# Pair

- In a group of two, explain how you think rights like the ones we have identified can be protected.

# Share

- As a class, explain how you think rights like the ones we have identified can be protected.



# *Natural Rights*

- Most people in the American colonies believed that everyone had a right to life, liberty, and property. These rights were called **natural rights**.



# *Natural Rights*

- The idea of natural rights means that all persons have these rights just because they are human beings. Everyone is born with these rights and they should not be taken away without a person's agreement.

# *Natural Rights*

- Many of the Founders believed people receive these rights from God. Others believed that people have them just because it is natural for people to have them.

# Protecting Natural Rights

- Although people agreed on certain natural rights, they worried about how those rights could be protected.

# Protecting Natural Rights

- Locke and others thought about what life would be like in a situation where there was no government and no laws.

# Protecting Natural Rights

- They called this situation a **state of nature**. They were afraid that in a state of nature their rights would be taken away.

# Problem Solving

- ◎ Imagine what life might be like in a state of nature. Think what your classroom might be like if there were no rules. Think what might happen if the teacher didn't have the right to tell anyone what to do.

# Problem Solving

- Work together in groups of three to answer the following questions about such a situation. Then choose a person to explain your answers to the rest of the class.

# Problem Solving

1. What might be the advantages and disadvantages of living in a state of nature?
2. What might happen to people's rights?
3. What might life be like for everyone?



What might be the advantages and disadvantages of living in a state of nature?

What might happen to people's rights?

What might life be like for everyone?

# John Locke's List

- The stronger and smarter people might try to take away other people's lives, liberty, or property.
- Weaker people might band together and take away the rights of the stronger and smarter people.
- People would be unprotected and insecure.

# *The Social Compact*

- John Locke and other philosophers developed a solution to the problems that exist in a place without government.
- In a state of nature, people might feel free to do anything they want to do. However, their rights would not be protected and they would feel insecure.

# *The Social Compact*

- Locke argued that people should agree with one another to give up some of their freedom in exchange for protection and security.
- They should **consent** to follow some laws in exchange for the protection that these laws would give them. This agreement is called a **social compact** or **social contract**.

# *The Social Compact*

- A social compact is an agreement people make among themselves to create a government to rule them and protect their natural rights.
- In this agreement the people consent to obey the laws created by that government.

# Declaration of Independence

In a later lesson, you will study the Declaration of Independence. You will see how the Founders included all of the ideas you have studied in this lesson in the Declaration.