Should government's power be strong or limited?

Supporting Questions

1. What did Thomas Hobbes believe about the role of government?
2. What did John Locke believe about the role of government?
3. How do Locke's and Hobbes's philosophies on government and compare and contrast?
Should government's power be strong or limited?

Inquiry Standard

SS:IS.6.6-8.LC. Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging their strengths and limitations.
SS.CV.4.6-8.MdC: Analyze the ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States and other countries, and explain how they influence the social and political system.

Staging the Compelling Question

Generate a list of when it is better for authority figures to have a lot of power, and another list for when it is better for authority figures to have less power.

Supporting Question 1

What did Thomas Hobbes believe about the role of government?

Supporting Question 2

What did John Locke believe about the role of government?

Supporting Question 3

How do Locke's and Hobbes's philosophies on government and compare and contrast?

Formative Performance Task

Create a hashtag to represent Hobbes's view on the role of government.

Students summarize Locke's position on government by adding speech and thought bubbles to an image of John Locke.

Students create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the views of Locke and Hobbes in regards to the state of nature, the social contract, and government.

Featured Sources

Source A: Frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan, by Abraham Bosse, with creative input from Thomas Hobbes, 1651 Source B: Quotes from Leviathan, by Thomas Hobbes

Source A: Quotes from Second Treatise on Government, by John Locke

Source A: iCivics - Why Government?

ARGUMENT

Should central government be strong or limited? After researching primary and secondary sources about philosophical foundations of government, write an essay in which you compare the philosophies of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes and argue which one you agree with more. Support your position with evidence from the text.

EXTENSION

Students add speech bubbles to images of Locke and Hobbes to indicate how each philosopher might respond to the compelling question. They can then add a picture of themselves and add speech bubbles to communicate with which philosopher they agree more and why.

UNDERSTAND

Students use data from school climate surveys to understand a current problem within the school.

ASSESS

Students will evaluate current rules and policies pertaining to school safety to determine if there are opportunities for improvement.

ACTION

Building on their understanding of Hobbes's and Locke's views on the social contract, students propose recommendations for rules and policies to improve school safety. Proposals can be made to school leadership, parent advisory councils, or the PBIS committee as appropriate.
Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry is designed to follow an inquiry about the Revolutionary War and proceed study about the U.S. Constitution. Students should have an understanding about why the colonists found British rule to be unsatisfactory, and the challenges they faced with instituting a new government. By arguing a position on the essential question, students will have a philosophical foundation for evaluating whether or not the U.S. Constitution was successful in establishing a just government. This inquiry is expected to take one to two weeks.

Structure

Students will begin this inquiry by analyzing the frontispiece from Thomas Hobbes's *The Leviathan* and reading several quotes from the book. Students will complete a summary frame to ....
Staging the compelling question

Invite students to think about a situation where an authority figure is present. Students might select parental figures in their homes, teachers in their classrooms, or lunch room supervisors in the student cafeteria. Working in groups, students can discuss and list situations where it is better for the authority figure to have more or less power. For example, students may recognize that in a food fight, it is better for lunch supervisors to have more authority, but less authority in determining with whom students sit.
## Supporting Question 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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| Featured Sources     | Source A: Frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes’ Leviathan, by Abraham Bosse, with creative input from Thomas Hobbes, 1651  
                      | Source B: Quotes from Leviathan, by Thomas Hobbes |

In this question, students will analyze an image and quotes to draw conclusions about Thomas Hobbes’s view on the role of government. Teachers and students may find this primary source analysis tool from the Library of Congress useful.

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/re..

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/primary-source-analysis..

### Formative Performance Task

Students will synthesize inferences drawn from the image and key words from the quotes to create a hashtag summary to summarize Hobbes’s position on the role of government. Example: #UnlimitedPowerOfSovereign.
Supporting Question 1

Featured Source A

Frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes’ Leviathan, by Abraham Bosse, with creative input from Thomas Hobbes, 1651

https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/content/fro..
Excerpt

Thomas Hobbes
Leviathan

Only the unlimited power of the Sovereign could contain human passions that disrupt social order and threaten civilized life.

Only absolute rule could provide and environment secure enough for people to pursue their individual interests.

Nature hath made men so equal... in body and mind... From this equality of ability ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our Ends.

If one plant, sow, build, or possess a convenient Seat, others may probably be expected to come prepared with forces united to... deprive him of the fruit of his labor, life, or liberty

So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel: First is Competition, secondly is Lack of Self-Confidence, and third is Glory. The first maketh men invade for Gain, the second for safety, and the third for Reputation.

The Passions that incline men to Peace, are Fear of Death, Desire of things as are necessary for convenient living, and a Hope to obtain these things.

The only way to erect... a Common Power... to defend (men) from the invasion of foreigners and the injuries of one another... is to confer all their power and strength upon one Man. (This man) will reduce all their Wills... unto one Will. Their judgements will be his judgement.

And therefore, they that are subjects to a Monarch, cannot without the Monarch’s leave, cast off Monarchy and return to the confusion of a disunited group... Consequently, none of the Monarch’s subjects... can be freed from his subjection.

Source:
INSERT CITATION
## Supporting Question 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supporting Question</th>
<th>What did John Locke believe about the role of government?</th>
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### Formative Performance Task
Excerpt

Political power is that power, which every man having in the state of nature, has given up into the hands of the society... It shall be employed for their good, and the preservation of their property.

Political power comes only from agreement and mutual consent of those who make up the community.

First, they are to govern by legislated laws not to be varied, but to have one rule for rich and poor, for the favorite at court, and the country man at plough.

Secondly, these laws also ought to be designed for no other end ultimately, but the good of the people.

Thirdly, they must not raise taxes on the property of the people without the consent of the people.

Fourthly, the legislative neither must nor can transfer the power of making laws to any body else, or place it anywhere but where the people have...

The reason why men enter into society is the preservation of their property, to limit the power and moderate the dominion of every part and member of the society.

The true rebels are the magistrates who, acting contrary to the trust granted them, violate the people’s rights.

Great mistakes in the ruling part, many wrong and inconvenient laws, and all the slips of human frailty will be borne by the people without mutiny or murmur.

Those who set up force in opposition to the laws do rebel and bring back the state of war. The properest way to prevent the evil is to show them the danger and injustice of it.

Source:
insert citation
Supporting Question 3

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<th>How do Locke’s and Hobbes’s philosophies on government and compare and contrast?</th>
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<td>Formative Performance Task</td>
<td>Students create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the views of Locke and Hobbes in regards to the <strong>state of nature</strong>, the <strong>social contract</strong>, and <strong>government</strong>.</td>
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Students will read secondary source material explaining the philosophies of Hobbes and Locke to support or revise their analyses of the primary source quotes and images. Secondary source material can be accessed using a free registration to the website, www.icivics.org, and downloading the teacher PDF file entitled, WHY GOVERNMENT?

Formative Performance Task
Excerpt

Source:
Secondary source materials on Hobbes and Locke can be accessed using a free login at the following web address:

https://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/why-..
Summative Performance Task

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<th>Should government’s power be strong or limited?</th>
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Taking Informed Action

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<td>Action</td>
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In this activity, students will have the opportunity to understand the issue of strong or limited control by authority by addressing a current problem at their school, and proposing rules or policies to form a solution to the problem. In Illinois, students can use results from the Illinois 5Essentials Survey. Results can be found at [https://illinois.5-essentials.org/2016/](https://illinois.5-essentials.org/2016/). Within the category of Supportive Environment, data about students’ perception on school safety may provide students with a basis for recognizing opportunities for improvement. Student proposals should reflect an understanding of the different views on the social contract as described by Hobbes and Locke.