

- ◀ This engraving was based on a portrait of Newton by Sir Godfrey Kneller. The poet Alexander Pope summed up Newton's contribution to human understanding: "Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night; / God said, Let Newton be! and all was light."

1550–1800

The Enlightenment and Revolutions

THE STORY MATTERS ...

The Scientific Revolution led to the Enlightenment, a major European intellectual movement that applied reason to all human experience. The English mathematician Sir Isaac Newton was a key figure in the Scientific Revolution. His fundamental scientific insight, that the physical world operated according to natural laws discovered through scientific investigation, influenced every area of Enlightenment thought.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Why do new ideas often spark change?
- How do new ways of thinking affect the way people respond to their surroundings?

LESSON 1

The Scientific Revolution

LESSON 2

The Ideas of the Enlightenment

LESSON 3

Enlightened Absolutism and the Balance of Power

LESSON 4

The American Revolution

Place & Time: Europe and the World 1550–1800

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment. Philosophers and scientists produced new theories about the structure of the universe and humankind's relationship to it. As European powers explored the world and expanded their colonial empires, conflicts erupted. This first age of global warfare culminated in the Seven Years' War, fought in Europe, North America, and India.

Step Into the Place

Read the quotes and look at the information presented on the map.

DBQ **Analyzing Historical Documents** How would you generalize the attitude of the Enlightenment toward a conflict between colonial empires, such as the Seven Years' War? Reference specific primary sources in your answer.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Though . . . politics [cannot] be founded on any thing but the consent of the people . . . in the noise of war, which makes so great a part of the history of mankind, this consent is little taken notice of: and therefore many have mistaken the force of arms for the consent of the people, and reckon conquest as one of the originals of government. But conquest is as far from setting up any government, as demolishing an [sic] house is from building a new one in the place.... Without the consent of the people, [one] can never erect a new one.”

—John Locke, from *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690



Step Into the Time

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Choose several events from the time line and use them to write a paragraph summarizing the key interests of Enlightenment thinkers.



