

## Big Idea Card

### Big Ideas of Lesson 5, Unit 1

- English colonists used ideas from the Enlightenment period (focusing on science and reason) to determine how they should live together and the role of government in their lives.
- Building on the ideas of Natural Rights philosophers, the colonists believed that all people are born with “natural rights” and that among these are life, liberty, and property. People enter into a social contract with each other and agree to give up their right to do whatever they want in order to protect their natural rights.
- The colonists relied on how people entered into a social contract in the past. Three examples of this are Magna Carta, Mayflower Compact, and the English Bill of Rights.
  - Magna Carta established limits on the power of government and is considered to be the first step in the emergence of limited government in England. It has influenced people’s ideas about government since 1215.
  - The Pilgrims entered into a social compact called the Mayflower Compact, which was the first governing document of the English colonists in North America.
  - Parliament greatly expanded the idea of limited government with the English Bill of Rights in 1689.
- These documents, along with John Locke’s philosophy, focus on how people should live together. Collectively, they formed a road map for the English colonists in America to create a system of government that would protect natural rights (life, liberty and property) through a social compact.