



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT  
STANDARD 10.2.2**

## *Documents of Democracy*

**Specific Objective:** List the principles of the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights (1689), the American Declaration of Independence (1776), the French Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), and the U.S. Bill of Rights (1791).

**Read the summary to answer the questions on the next page.**

Because of their traditions as English citizens, American colonists expected to have the rights granted in England by the **Magna Carta** and the **English Bill of Rights**. However, they were often denied these rights, and tensions grew in the colonies, leading toward revolution. Many principles of the earlier British documents continued in the American **Declaration of Independence** and the **Bill of Rights** in the U.S. Constitution. In Europe, some of the same principles and traditions carried into the French **Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen**.

### **Magna Carta (1215, England)**

- Limited the powers of the king
- Laid the basis for **due process of law**—law should be known and orderly
- Prohibited the king from taking property or taxes without consent of a council

### **English Bill of Rights (1689)**

- Guaranteed free elections and frequent meetings of Parliament
- Forbade excessive fines and cruel punishment
- Gave people the right to complain to the king or queen in Parliament
- Established **representative government**—laws made by a group that acts for the people

### **American Declaration of Independence (1776)**

- Said that all men are created equal and have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; these are **unalienable rights**—rights that government cannot take away
- Said that governments get their power from the consent of the governed—the idea of **popular sovereignty**

### **French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789)**

- Said that “men are born and remain free and equal in rights”
- Said that the purpose of government is to protect “natural” rights, including “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression”
- Guaranteed freedom of speech and freedom of religion

### **U.S. Bill of Rights (1791)**

- Guaranteed freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press
- Guaranteed due process of law, including protection from unfair imprisonment
- Guaranteed trial by jury; protected people from “cruel and unusual punishment”

**CALIFORNIA CONTENT  
STANDARD 10.2.2***Documents of Democracy*

Directions: Choose the letter of the *best* answer.

- 1 Which of the following rights in the U.S. Bill of Rights comes from a provision in the Magna Carta?**
  - A freedom of speech
  - B freedom of religion
  - C the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
  - D the right to due process of law
  
- 2 Which statement *best* summarizes the idea of representative government as it was established in the English Bill of Rights?**
  - A Powers not granted to the king are kept by the people.
  - B Laws are made and carried out by a group that acts for the people.
  - C All people are born free and equal in rights.
  - D A strong central government protects individual freedoms.
  
- 3 English colonists in America expected to have representative government in the colonies because**
  - A there was a tradition of representative government in England.
  - B they fled England specifically to establish representative government.
  - C the king had promised the colonists representative government.
  - D most countries at that time had representative government.
  
- 4 The idea that governments get their power from the people they govern is called**
  - A checks and balances.
  - B popular sovereignty.
  - C natural rights.
  - D states' rights.
  
- 5 The American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen *both***
  - A limit the power of the king.
  - B emphasize the rights of the individual.
  - C guarantee frequent meetings of Parliament.
  - D guarantee freedom of religion.
  
- 6 The term “unalienable rights” in the American Declaration of Independence refers to rights that**
  - A immigrants do not possess.
  - B are guaranteed by written law.
  - C a government cannot take away.
  - D a government grants its people.