

## Lesson 2 - Understanding Social Contract Theory

- 1) 10 minutes - Divide the group into small groups of 3-4. Do CTE on page 15 of the *We the People* book. Answer all four questions as a group. Then have them share out a few answers. Each group shares the most interesting idea that came from their conversation.
- 2) Share that these are the questions that Social Contract Theorists (also called Natural Rights Philosophers) explored by talking about a theoretical place - the state of nature.
- 3) 10 minutes - Read aloud the short excerpts from the *Leviathan*, Chapter 13. Discuss it as we go.
- 4) 10 minutes - Then, have groups illustrate the concept of the state of nature (the state of war) - draw a picture - the picture may be literal or metaphorical. Stick figures are great!
  - a) Ask you walk around to see what kids are doing, encourage them to include Hobbes's ideas about the equality of men, the causes of quarrel, and the idea of a war of every man against every man.
  - b) They will likely to go straight to drawing a place with no arts, no letters, no building, no agriculture, etc..
- 5) 5 minutes - Read aloud from Chapter 17 - get in a big circle and form commonwealth.
  - a) Have them all recite together the words in bold about forming commonwealth in order to show the idea that everyone is giving up their right to govern together
- 6) Then, look at the picture on page 16 of WTP. How does the book's cover demonstrate Hobbes' theory?
- 7) Then ask - why was this idea a threat to the idea of divine right monarchy?

Locke -

- 8) 20 minutes Read aloud from Locke. Discuss as we go.
  - a) Emphasize the functions of government that Locke discusses.
  - b) Emphasize that he means PROPERTY as a generic term encompassing life and liberty.
- 9) Then, have them imagine themselves forming Locke's social contract. Take a piece of paper. Write on one half powers and the other have liberties. In a SMALL GROUP decide:
  - a) What portion of each do they give up to join the social contract?
  - b) Have them tear off a portion and put it in the center of the circle. Then, read aloud what each group gave up to form the social contract
  - c) Why did they give up what they gave up? What do they retain?
  - d) What do they get from government? From the creation of this social contract?
- 10) Big question - How does it GO FURTHER than Hobbes?
- 11) Why does any of this matter to us or to our students?
  - a) These ideas (along with ideas that come from classical republicanism) are a framework for the rest of the content for the year. They are big ideas that we can always come back to about the role and purpose of government.



