



The Founding: SS.7.CG.1.3
Influential Documents
VIDEO #2 SCRIPT



The Mayflower Compact & *Common Sense* Video #2

1. In the first video in this module, you learned how the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights influenced the US Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, colonial and American ideas about government. In this video, we'll take a look at the Mayflower Compact and *Common Sense*. Just be sure to watch video one for the other two documents to make sure you really understand some important pieces that influenced early American history and government.
2. After watching the video, you will be able to
 - identify the important ideas contained in the Mayflower Compact and *Common Sense*
3. The Mayflower Compact set up a government with the first written set of laws for the English settlers who arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620. This document introduced the very important idea of self-government in the colonies. Self-government is the idea of people creating and running their own government.
4. The Plymouth colonists wanted a government based on the consent of the governed and fair laws that applied equally to everyone in the community. They also believed in the importance of a social contract, which means that people give their permission to being governed as long as the government protects the people's rights and liberties.
5. Let's check in. Try to answer the following in your own words.
6. Summarize the important ideas that are in the Mayflower Compact.
7. ANSWER TO QUESTION
8. Let's recap what we've learned so far. The Mayflower Compact was written by Plymouth settlers in 1620. It established the principle of self-government, and also contained the ideas of consent of the governed and the social contract.
9. So, a question you don't have to write down an answer to right now, but one we got to think about. How did the Mayflower Compact influence American views on government?

10. The Mayflower Compact influenced American views on government in a very big way. For example, ‘We the People’ in the US Constitution emphasizes self-government just like the Mayflower Compact emphasizes self-government. The Founding Fathers very strongly believed in the importance of Americans governing themselves.

11. Another important document is *Common Sense*, written by Thomas Paine back in 1776. This encouraged colonists to seek independence from England, encouraging representative self-government. It also accused King George III of England of tyranny, which is the abuse of power.

12. In *Common Sense*, Paine also challenged the king’s right to rule over the colonists and blamed him for treating the colonists poorly. He also stated that the colonies needed a written constitution for representative self-government with a set of rules that everyone would have to follow so that the government that could not abuse its power.

13. Let’s check in. Try to answer the following in your own words.

14. Summarize the important ideas in *Common Sense*.

15. ANSWER TO QUESTION

16. Let’s recap what we’ve learned so far. Remember that the Mayflower Compact established the principle of self-government, and Mayflower Compact ideas are seen in ‘We the People’ of the Constitution. Thomas Paine authored *Common Sense*, and in it, he argued that the colonies should be independent and be governed by a written Constitution. So, we’ve learned quite a bit, but we have one more thing to talk about, and that’s a little bit more on *Common Sense*.

17. So we have another important question on the screen we have to think about. You don’t have to write down an answer, but this is what we are going to talk about for the next few minutes. How did *Common Sense* influence American ideas about government? Let’s think about that for a second and then dive in.

18. *Common Sense* influenced many colonists to pursue independence from England because of the abuse of the king. Remember that Paine argued they had the right to replace the government because it didn’t meet the needs of the people. We see this in the United States’ Declaration of Independence.

19. *Common Sense* also influenced us in another way. Thomas Paine’s ideas about a written constitution influence the Articles of Confederation, our first constitution, and the United States Constitution, the one we have today.

20. Let’s check in. Summarize how American ideas about government were influenced by *Common Sense*.

21. ANSWER TO QUESTION

22. Let's recap what we've learned so far. The Mayflower Compact and *Common Sense* both influenced American ideas about government. And the ideas of the Mayflower Compact are seen in 'We the People' of the Constitution. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* influenced the push for independence we see in the Declaration, and it also influenced the Articles of Confederation and the US Constitution with ideas about good government and a written constitution for government.

23. Without a doubt, the Mayflower Compact and *Common Sense* greatly influenced American ideas about government. But remember, these aren't the only documents you should know. So be sure to view video one in this module about two other documents that influenced colonial ideas about government, the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights.

24. You can learn more about the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the social contract, and the Articles of Confederation in these topic areas on Civics360. But sure to view video one in this module to learn about two other documents that influenced colonial ideas about government first!