

Ideas of the enlightenment



Task 1.

A change toward a new worldThe central ideas of the Enlightenment movement were to look ahead and improve the world around us. Not only being able to find out more about the world and the nature phenomenon, looking away from what the church said, but also how to get better as a person and follow the rules and laws. We looked at some texts where the enlightenment and its ideas are reflected.

Jonathan Swift wrote one time a essay, explaining the society he lived in. How the rich people got richer and the poor, poorer. He wanted everyone to divide the goods, so everyone could be equal. As he states in his essay, ??? Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: Of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: Of using neither clothes, nor household furniture, except what is of our own growth and manufacture.

??? He describes the poverty and why the poor people are poor. This is the society, and as stated above, its horrible and unfair. Its out of range. Something has to change to make the world better. The new ideas of the Enlightenment was improving this problem. In a other essay written by Benjamin Franklin, ??? The art of virtue???, we learn how some people wanted to be better as a person. How they changed themselves and their lifestyle, in a way other people did not want to understand. Franklin used a form of sets and rules he had to follow each day for the rest of his life.

Not a form saying you had to do this, or you had to do that. It was a form of basic virtues. Where you could make a black spot on each virtue and ??? see where your moral weaknesses lied and where you had to strive to improve

yourself???, as it is written in the text book. This method affected people, and others wanted to try it too. As for the idea of being better as a person, it worked.

People became nicer and more thoughtful for the people around them. These two essays were some of the central texts in the Enlightenment period. We also looked at a picture in class. A picture painted by William Hogarth with its title, ??? Gin Lane??? and was painted in 1751. This picture ??? described??? all the horrible things people ??? had to go through??? during the Enlightenment period. The use of alcohol, death, poverty, not to mention the collapse of society.

Some people will probably say this refers a lot to the society we have today, but I can't say I agree. Today we can do whatever we like. We don't get killed because we did not pay the owner of the gin store the money we drank for. We have our own rights today, but at that time, they did not have that opportunity. They could get killed right away if they had their own opinion.

Therefore it was so much easier to just drink and forget all your problems, something that ended with the use of alcohol and its effects.??? The Declaration of Independence???, written by Thomas Jefferson in 1776, was also a topic during the Enlightenment. In the text, Jefferson says ???...a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.??? He is saying everyone were born with equal rights, so everyone should be able to have their own opinion and everyone the freedom of speech.

The Declaration was made to make peace between people in the United States of America. Something that helped a lot. As a result people weren't allowed to have slaves, etc.

Now, the slaves got to live their own life, where they were able to decide what they wanted and what they did not want, etc. This was one of the first big steps forward to equality. By writing and painting many writers/artists got their opinions and thoughts out to people. In that way people really started thinking about the problems they had in their society. How they should act, and what they could do to help and make it all go away.

It was not easy at first, or sometimes not at all. However, when they had everybody on their side, it helped a lot and the society could be changed in a positive way, where people actually liked what they saw.