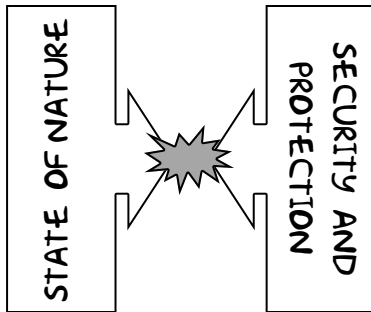
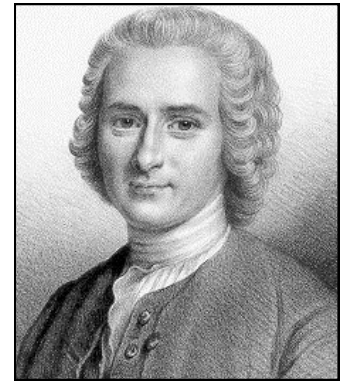


## A Man of Many Talents

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was born in Geneva, Switzerland in 1712. At age 30 he moved to Paris to become a musician and composer. However he is better known for his writings on human behavior and government. Rousseau believed that a government's purpose is to protect liberty, or freedom, and to help people get along. Rousseau believed that the best form of government was a democracy. His writings influenced how people think about government and how a democracy should work.



## Freedom for All

What does freedom mean to you? Rousseau talked about two different types of freedom. **Natural freedom** happens when people live in a state of nature. In a *state of nature* there are no rules or governments. People are free to follow their instincts and selfish desires without considering the needs of others. But in a state of nature, people are not secure. **Social freedom** happens when people sacrifice some natural freedoms so they can have the freedom that comes with security and protection. To accomplish this, they establish rules and set up governments.

## A Social Contract

In his book *The Social Contract*, written in 1762, Rousseau talks about what makes an effective government. In order to have real authority, government must be based on an agreement, or contract, people make with society. People agree to give up some natural freedoms in exchange for protection. The government then follows the **general will**—those things that are in the best interest of society as a whole. If people disagree about what's best, the government follows **majority rule**, or what more than half the people want. What kind of government does this sound like?



*What is the relationship between natural rights and the general will?*

DIRECT DEMOCRACY	REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY
Everyone meets to discuss and create laws	A few people meet and create laws for everyone
All citizens get a direct say in every decision	Citizens hope representatives will make good decisions
Difficult to do in a very large society	More practical for very large societies

## Two Types of Democracy

There are two main types of democracies. In a **representative democracy**, citizens vote for a small number of people to represent the public in government. Only the representatives are directly involved in the government. In a **direct democracy**, all citizens are directly involved in making laws and running the government. This was the kind of participation Rousseau believed citizens should have, so he was in favor of direct democracy.

## Of the People, By the People, For the People

Rousseau's work inspired many to think about the kind of government they wanted. This included the Founding Fathers of the United States, who wrote the United States Constitution. The Constitution created a democracy and guaranteed citizens a voice in government. Rousseau's ideas can also be seen in one of Abraham Lincoln's famous quotes, "a government of the people, by the people, for the people."



# Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

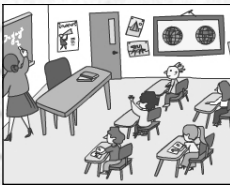
## A. Vocabulary:

Match the terms from the reading with their definitions.

- A. Social freedom \_\_\_\_\_ Those things that are in the best interest of society as a whole
- B. Majority rule \_\_\_\_\_ All citizens are directly involved in making laws and running the government
- C. Representative democracy \_\_\_\_\_ Citizens vote for a small number of people to represent the public in government
- D. Natural freedom \_\_\_\_\_ People sacrifice some natural freedoms so they can have the freedom that comes with security and protection
- E. Direct democracy \_\_\_\_\_ What more than half the people in a community want
- F. General will \_\_\_\_\_ People live in a state of nature, with no rules, and with freedom to follow their instincts and desires

## B. Representative or Direct Democracy?

Think about the difference between direct and representative democracy. For each situation below, decide which type of democracy would work best:




*Your teacher wants you and your classmates to create new class rules about talking during a lesson.*

Direct  Representative democracy would work best because . . .

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*You are part of a national student group that has chapters in every state. The group wants to make some changes to its bylaws.*

Direct  Representative democracy would work best because . . .


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## C. What About the Minority?

In a democracy, the will of the majority is considered first. Even so, governments still respect the rights of the minority. Think of three ways to solve the following problem:



*Your school's student government has money left over from last year. The students hold a vote to decide what to do with the money. Results show 58% of the student body wants to add an ice cream cart to the cafeteria. But the Lactose Intolerant and Proud of It Student Association opposes the decision. They say it would be unfair to spend the money on something not all the students could enjoy.*

*The student body is looking for a compromise that follows the will of the majority but respects the needs of the minority.*

IDEA #1

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IDEA #2

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

IDEA #3

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_