**Excerpts from John Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government***

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| *If man in the* ***state of nature*** *is free, if he is absolute lord of his own person and possessions [things that he owns], why will he give up his freedom? Why will he put himself under the control of any person or* ***institution*** *[an organization created for a religious, educational, social, or political purpose]? The obvious answer is that rights in the state of nature are constantly exposed to the attack of others. Since every man is equal and since most men do not concern themselves with* ***equity*** *and* ***justice****, the enjoyment of rights in the state of nature is unsafe and insecure. Hence each man joins in society with others to preserve his* ***life****,* ***liberty****, and* ***property****.*

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| 1. What do you think Locke means by “state of nature”? |
| 2. According to John Locke, why would a person “put himself under the control of any person or institution,” like a government? |
| 3. What does Locke mean when he says, “the enjoyment of rights in the state of nature is unsafe and insecure?” Can you think of an example of this? |
| 4. What are the three natural rights that Locke lists at the end of this excerpt? Do you think that these three rights are equally important? |

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| *...as far as we have any light from history, we have reason to conclude, that all peaceful beginnings of government have been laid in the* ***consent*** *[permission] of the people.*5. According to Locke, what have “all peaceful beginnings of government” had in common? Why do you think that might lead to a more peaceful government? |
| *[When] the* ***legislature*** *shall . . . grasp [for] themselves, or put into the hands of any other, an absolute power over their lives, liberties, and estates of the people, . . . they forfeit [give up] the power the people had put into their hands for quite contrary [opposite] ends, and it [passes] to the people, who have a right to resume their original liberty. . . .*6. According to Locke, when does a legislature, or government, lose its right to rule?  |