

Name _____ Date _____



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT
STANDARD 10.2.2**

Documents of Democracy

Specific Objective: List the principles of the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights (1689), the American Declaration of Independence (1776), the French Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), and the U.S. Bill of Rights (1791).

Because of their traditions as English citizens, American colonists expected to have the rights granted in England by the **Magna Carta** and the **English Bill of Rights**. However, they were often denied these rights, and tensions grew in the colonies, leading toward revolution. Many principles of the earlier British documents continued in the American **Declaration of Independence** and the **Bill of Rights** in the U.S. Constitution. In Europe, some of the same principles and traditions carried into the French **Declaration of Rights of Man and the Citizen**.

Magna Carta (1215, England)

- Limited the powers of the king
- Laid the basis for **due process of law**—law should be known and orderly
- Prohibited the king from taking property or taxes without consent of a council

English Bill of Rights (1689)

- Guaranteed free elections and frequent meetings of Parliament
- Forbade excessive fines and cruel punishment
- Gave people the right to complain to the king or queen in Parliament
- Established **representative government**—laws made by a group that acts for the people

American Declaration of Independence (1776)

- Said that all men are created equal and have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; these are **unalienable rights**—rights that government cannot take away
- Said that governments get their power from the consent of the governed—the idea of **popular sovereignty**

French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789)

- Said that “men are born and remain free and equal in rights”
- Said that the purpose of government is to protect “natural” rights, including “liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression”
- Guaranteed freedom of speech and freedom of religion

U.S. Bill of Rights (1791)

- Guaranteed freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press
- Guaranteed due process of law, including protection from unfair imprisonment
- Guaranteed trial by jury; protected people from “cruel and unusual punishment”