



# The Enlightenment Odyssey

## A Journey Through Time

15



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**Topic:** History

**Level:** Secondary education (15 years old)

**Concepts:** Enlightenment

**Time required:** +/- 30 min

**Summary of the activity:** Join Markos and Nikos on a captivating journey through time as they navigate the Enlightenment. Through immersive exploration and encounters with Enlightenment thinkers, they unlock the power of knowledge, question established norms, and inspire students to embrace the legacy of reason and progress.

**Material needed:** Paper, pen, history knowledge and... motivation!

### 1

Markos is a 15-year-old high school student. At school in history class, he is assigned to do a project on Diderot and d'Alembert, the initiators and leaders of the creation of the "Encyclopedia". As he searches for clues, a friend of his, Nikos, tells him that his uncle loves history and might be able to help him because he has a lot of old books in his house. So they visit him and learn that there is a volume of the "Encyclopedia" in his library which he is willing to show them.




Inside the living room where they are waiting, there is an old mirror with a worn gold frame and dull glass. Curious, the two friends approach to see their reflection in this strange mirror, but as they get close, a buzzing sound goes through their heads and they feel like they are going to faint. When they recover, they find themselves in a stinking dank basement and from the skylights, they see the street full of people in strange clothes, carriages, horses and most importantly, these people speak a different language. "That sounds like a European language I know " exclaims Markos, "What happened? Where are we?"

 **Go to paragraph 6.**



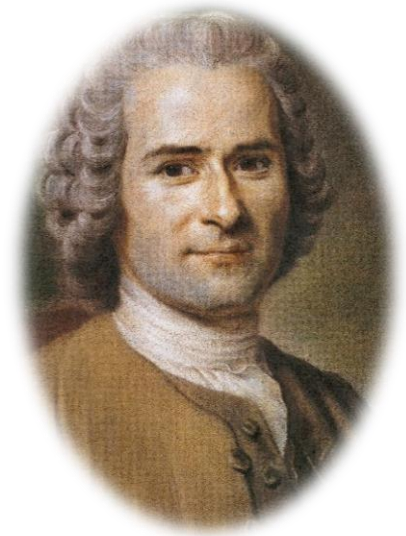
### 2

Intrigued, they enter the shop and engage in conversation with the shopkeeper about the Enlightenment. Seeing the boys' interest in the Enlightenment, the shopkeeper recommends a book about the Social contract theory. "Wait", said Nikos, "my uncle has mentioned this theory before, it was introduced by \_\_\_\_\_!"



- Denis Diderot       **Go to paragraph 4.**
- Voltaire       **Go to paragraph 15.**
- John Locke       **Go to paragraph 21.**

### 3

Are you sure? Rousseau's main ideas included the belief that man was born basically good and that society is what corrupts mankind. He also believed in a social contract that maintained the relationship between a government and its citizens balanced.



Try again!

- Montesquieu       **Go to paragraph 9.**
- René Descartes       **Go to paragraph 7.**

## 4

Are you sure? Denis Diderot was a French philosopher, art critic, and writer, best known for serving as co-founder, chief editor, and contributor to the Encyclopédie along with Jean le Rond d'Alembert.



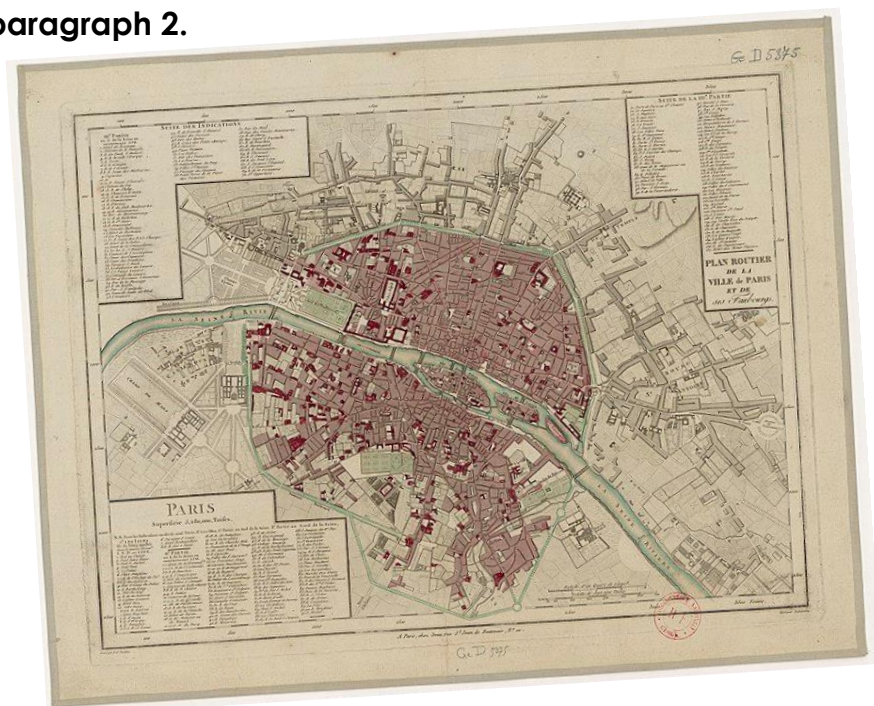
Try again!

- Voltaire                      >>> → **Go to paragraph 15.**
- John Locke                  >>> → **Go to paragraph 21.**

## 5

“You are right!” said Nikos. As they navigate the bustling streets of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Paris, they encounter a bookstore named “Librairie des Lumières”.




→ **Go to paragraph 2.**



### 6

He searches in his pockets to find his mobile phone but there is nothing, his friend doesn't have his either. Nikos, however, finds deep in his pocket a piece of paper with a message: "Encyclopedia is knowledge!" The phrase piques their curiosity and fuels their determination to uncover the truth behind their journey.



They decide to take a walk around the city to discover more about their whereabouts and the time period they were transported at. After a short walk, Markos exclaims: "I think we are in \_\_\_\_\_!"

- Renaissance Italy       **Go to paragraph 11.**
- 18<sup>th</sup> Century Paris       **Go to paragraph 5.**
- Industrial Revolution England       **Go to paragraph 8.**

### 7

Are you sure? René Descartes was a French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician, who believed that systematic doubt is the only way to true knowledge.

Try again!



- Jean-Jacques Rousseau       **Go to paragraph 3.**
- Montesquieu       **Go to paragraph 9.**



### 8

Are you sure? The Industrial Revolution, also known as the First Industrial Revolution, was a period of global transition of human economy towards more efficient and stable manufacturing processes that succeeded the Agricultural Revolution, starting from Great Britain.

Try again!

- Renaissance Italy  **Go to paragraph 11.**
- 18<sup>th</sup> Century Paris  **Go to paragraph 5.**

### 9

"That's unbelievable!" says Nikos, and they continue listening with awe. Once the debate is over, it is already getting dark. The boys are tired and starving from exploring all day. They decide to find something to eat, a task that would probably be hard considering they have no money with them.

 **Go to paragraph 14.**



10





The debate begins and they listen to various interesting opinions from different speakers. One man in particular expresses a very interesting view. He says that the institutions of power should be different: the executive power should be exercised by the body that applies the laws (government), the legislative power by the body that enacts the laws (parliament) and the judicial power by those who control the observance of the laws (judges). He calls his theory: the Separation of Powers. “Wait”, says Markos, “This can’t be real!”. “What?”, says Nikos with a confused look on his face. “Nikos!” answers Markos “We are watching history in the making! This is \_\_\_\_\_!”

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau      >>> → **Go to paragraph 3.**
- Montesquieu      >>> → **Go to paragraph 9.**
- René Descartes      >>> → **Go to paragraph 7.**





### 11

Are you sure? The Italian Renaissance was a period in Italian history covering the 15th and 16th centuries. The period is known for the initial development of the broader Renaissance culture that spread across Western Europe and marked the transition from the Middle Ages to modernity. Try again!

- 18<sup>th</sup> Century Paris  **Go to paragraph 5.**
- Industrial Revolution England  **Go to paragraph 8.**

### 12

Are you sure? The Bible is a collection of 66 books, some, all of which, or a variant of which, are held to be sacred in Christianity, Judaism, Samaritanism, Islam, Baha'iism and many other religions. Try again!

- The Social Contract  **Go to paragraph 19.**
- The Encyclopedia  **Go to paragraph 22.**

### 13

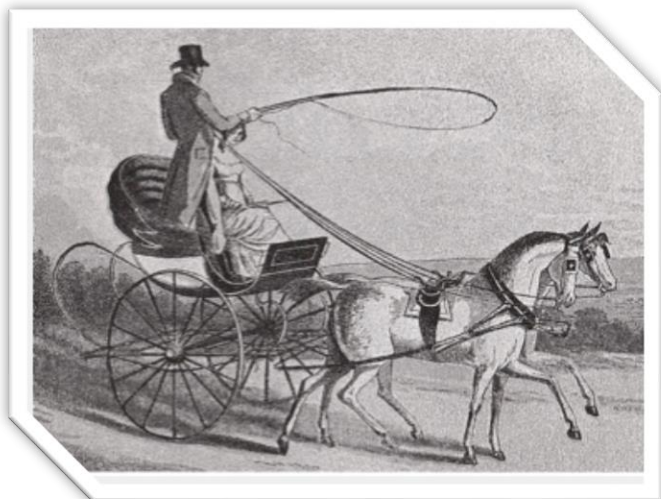
The man smiles at the boys' answer and says: "Well, what do you guys want to eat?" After the boys eat, they return to the basement to sleep, as it is the only place they have.

 **Go to paragraph 18.**

# 14

They understand that their only option is to walk into taverns and beg the owners for food.

However, their plan isn't working very well though since no one seems eager to feed two strange-looking teenagers for free. They are already at the fifth tavern in a row, where they are rejected once again. Exhausted, the boys decide to sit on the stairs outside the tavern to rest. Suddenly, a carriage stops in front of the tavern and a well-dressed man gets off it.



“What are two kids doing here this late?” asks the man. “We are starving”, answers Nikos, “but we have no money to buy food”. “How about this?” says the man, “I will ask you a question, and if you know the answer, I'll pay for your food”. “Yes!” says Markos, re-energised by this new quest.

(Go to the next page)

“What is the main idea around economic liberalism?” asks the man. The boys take a minute to discuss between them. A smile lights their faces as they exclaim: “We have the answer! It advocates \_\_\_\_\_”.

- Minimal interference by the government in the economy.

➡➡➡➡ ➔ **Go to paragraph 13.**

- No interference by the government in the economy.

➡➡➡➡ ➔ **Go to paragraph 16.**

- Maximal interference by the government in the economy.

➡➡➡➡ ➔ **Go to paragraph 20.**

15

Are you sure? Voltaire was a French Enlightenment writer, philosopher and historian. Known by his nom de plume M. de Voltaire, he was famous for his wit, in addition to his criticism of Christianity – especially of the Roman Catholic Church – and of slavery.



Try again!

- Denis Diderot

➡➡➡➡ ➔ **Go to paragraph 4.**

- John Locke

➡➡➡➡ ➔ **Go to paragraph 21.**

16

"I'm afraid that's the wrong answer...", the man says. "Please" said Nikos, "we are starving!" The man looks at the tired boys' faces and decides to give them another chance.

Try again!

- Minimal interference by the government in the economy.

 **Go to paragraph 13.**

- Maximal interference by the government in the economy.

 **Go to paragraph 20.**

17

Markos and Nikos return to their own time, forever transformed by their extraordinary journey through 18th-century Paris and the Enlightenment. The echoes of Enlightenment ideas reverberate in their minds, reminding them of the power of knowledge, reason, and critical thinking in shaping societies. As they share their adventure with fellow students, they extend an invitation to all to explore the luminous tapestry of history and ideas that continue to influence the world today.

In their hands, the torch of curiosity and intellectual exploration burns even brighter. The legacy of the Enlightenment lives on, inspiring future generations to question, to seek understanding, and to forge paths of progress. Just as Markos and Nikos uncovered the past, students now stand at the crossroads of history and possibility, poised to embrace the transformative force of knowledge and illuminate the path forward.

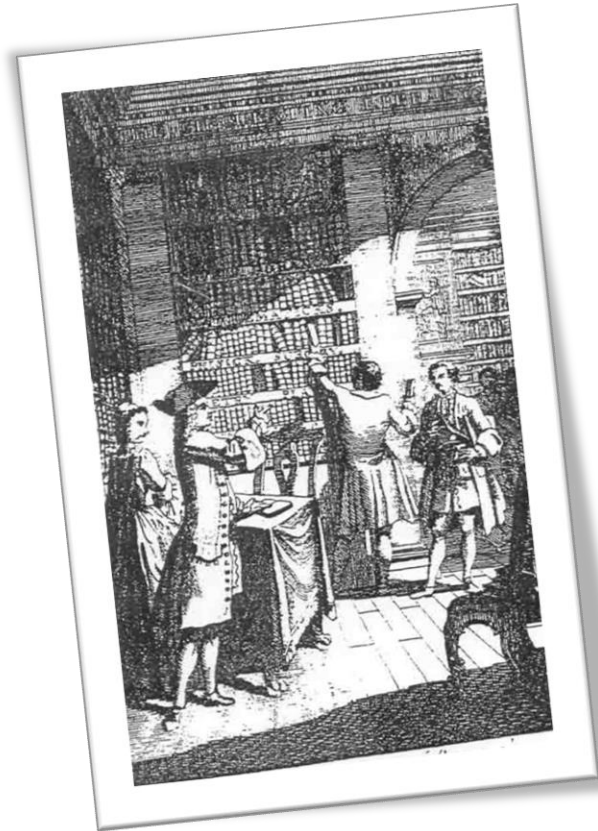
**The End**

18

The next day, they decide to go back to the bookstore to tell the shopkeeper about the crazy day they had and how excited they are with this new knowledge. The shopkeeper seems satisfied with the boys' excitement and all the things they learned.

"Well", he says "it seems like you are ready to see this room then".

He goes to the back of the shop and opens a small door, hidden from unsuspecting eyes. He enters the room revealed by the door and invites them to join him. The room is dark and small, the boys can only see some bookshelves around. The shopkeeper lights a candle, which reveals the content of the shelves. Some very big books! The shopkeeper says: "These books are very important, boys. They contain all the new knowledge, as well as new ideas and perceptions on various economic, social, political, and other issues of the Enlightenment." Markos counts the books, there are 33. "I think I know what these are", he says. "Well?" asks the shopkeeper. Markos answers: "They are \_\_\_\_\_!"





- The Bible                      ➡➡➡                      ➡                      **Go to paragraph 12.**
- The Social Contract                      ➡➡➡                      ➡                      **Go to paragraph 19.**
- The Encyclopedia                      ➡➡➡                      ➡                      **Go to paragraph 22.**

### 19

Are you sure? The Social Contract, originally published as “On the Social Contract; or, Principles of Political Right”, is a 1762 French-language book by the Genevan philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The book theorises about how to establish legitimate authority in a political community, that is, one compatible with individual freedom, in the face of the problems of commercial society. The Social Contract helped inspire political reforms or revolutions in Europe, especially in France.



Try again!

- The Bible  **Go to paragraph 12.**
- The Encyclopedia  **Go to paragraph 22.**

### 20

“I’m afraid that’s the wrong answer...”, the man says. “Please” said Nikos, “we are starving!”. The man looks at the tired boys’ faces and decides to give them another chance.

Try again!

- Minimal interference by the government in the economy.  
 **Go to paragraph 13.**
- No interference by the government in the economy.  
 **Go to paragraph 16.**

21

“That’s right! John Locke was an English philosopher and physician, who played a major role in the development of the social contract theory” says the shopkeeper, “You kids seem like you know a lot about politics! Would you be interested in attending a political debate that will take place this evening in the local library?”



Markos and Nikos think about it for a minute but they have no other plans or any place waiting for them except for the dirty basement. As long as their curiosity and interest in history are increasing, they gladly accept the invitation. They walk around the city for a while, admiring the way of life, the architecture and the culture of the era. When the time comes, they go to the local library, which is easy to find, since it is prominent among the rest of the buildings.

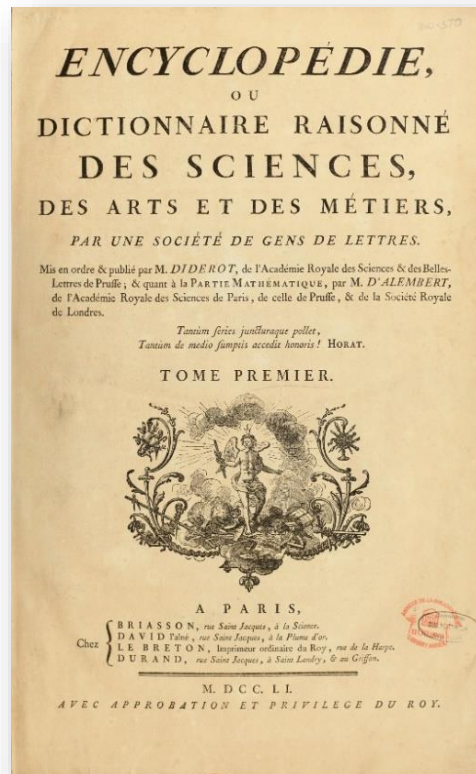
 **Go to paragraph 10.**

22

“That’s right!” says the shopkeeper. “An idea of Diderot and d’Alembert! It seems that you now have all the information you need for your project! It’s time to go home”. He then pulls an object covered by a curtain that the boys hadn’t noticed before. He draws the curtain and reveals a mirror, identical to the one Nikos’s uncle had. The boys look at each other amazed and confused.

“Come on”, said Nikos, “what are you waiting for?” He walks close to the mirror and disappears into it. Markos thanks the shopkeeper for everything and follows his friend. In an instant, they are back in Nikos’s uncle’s living room.

 **Go to paragraph 17.**







Designed by 6 European organisations, the project intends to create efficient, engaging pedagogical materials and tools for teachers in order to implement an innovative gamified Homework methodology with pupils. In doing so, we wish to contribute to boosting their efficiency and engagement rate in remote work and, more specifically, in Homework.

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