

Understanding the Influence – Sample Answers

Directions: Using your reading, explain the main purpose of each document, identify the “big idea” that emerged from the document and explain the big idea and its relationship to the document in your own words.

Document	Main purpose of the document	Big idea from the document	Explanation of big idea
Magna Carta	The Magna Carta’s main purpose was to limit the power of the king and protect certain rights for the nobles.	due process of law, limitation of government power, right to justice, right to fair trial	The Magna Carta limited the king’s power and provided the people with rights and due process.
Mayflower Compact	The Mayflower Compact was created to give the Puritans a government. A compact is an official agreement made by two or more parties.	consent of the governed, self-government	Through the Mayflower Compact, the Puritans agreed to laws that will be followed by everyone and make sure that the new government will serve the common good.
English Bill of Rights	The English Bill of Rights expanded the rights of the Parliament and the people and limited the rights of the king.	right to life, liberty and property; no taxation without representation; right to a speedy and fair jury trial; no excessive punishments; habeas corpus	The English Bill of Rights created free elections, the right to bear arms, petition the government and a fair trial. It also ended excessive bail and cruel and unusual punishment.
Common Sense	<i>Common Sense</i> communicated the ideas for independence and made it easy to understand for everyday colonists.	representative self-government	<i>Common Sense</i> supported the idea of the colonies being independent from England in order to self govern and protect their rights.