

**LESSON PLAN**

**Natural Rights**

FOUNDATION: *UNIT II. What Are Human Rights and Where Do They Come From?*

Created by: Ken Meyers, Wilcox-Hildreth High School

**LENGTH**

2 days

**NEBRASKA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS**

Star: 12.1.13, 12.2.11

General: 12.1.14, 12.2.7

**McREL NATIONAL STANDARDS**

Historical Understanding: 2.1, 2.2

**OBJECTIVE**

Students will develop an understanding of the "nature of man" and compare and contrast the political thinking of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes as to the "nature of man" and the role of government in societies.

**TERMS**

Natural Law  
State of Nature  
Social Contract

**MATERIALS**

- Chart paper and pens.
- Copies of the following:
  - John Locke: Chapter 2. The State of Nature  
[http://www.unl.edu/HumanR/teach/00/0000/media/Locke\\_Chapter2.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/HumanR/teach/00/0000/media/Locke_Chapter2.pdf)
  - Great Voyages, The History of Western Philosophy  
<http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-contents.htm>
  - Hobbes' Moral and Political Philosophy  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hobbes-moral/>

**Day One:**

- I. Divide class into four groups. Have each group assign members one of the two readings as found on the given websites.
- II. After reading the documents, students will define the following:
  - a. state of nature,
  - b. law of nature,
  - c. natural rights, and
  - d. role of government.
- III. Using the chart paper provided, each group will write the group's definition of the terms and post.

**Day Two:**

- IV. Class discussion. Students should compare and contrast the definitions and philosophies of Locke and Hobbes. Close the discussion by asking the class, "Which political philosopher's ideas support the notion that societies need government?"