

The Magna Carta



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Learning Objective: Students will be able to describe the importance of the Magna Carta and how it affects us today.

<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/magnacarta/index.html>

The Signing of the Magna Carta

King John and Magna Carta

In 1199, Henry's youngest son, John, became king of England. John soon made powerful enemies by losing most of the lands the English had controlled in France. He also taxed his barons heavily and ignored their traditional rights, arresting opponents at will. In addition, John quarreled with the Catholic Church and collected large amounts of money from its properties.



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King John's acceptance of Magna Carta has been illustrated and painted many times. He is often, as he is here, incorrectly shown signing his name with a pen. In fact, he stamped his royal seal on the document to show his agreement.

White Boards

What did King John do that so infuriated (angered) the noble barons of England?

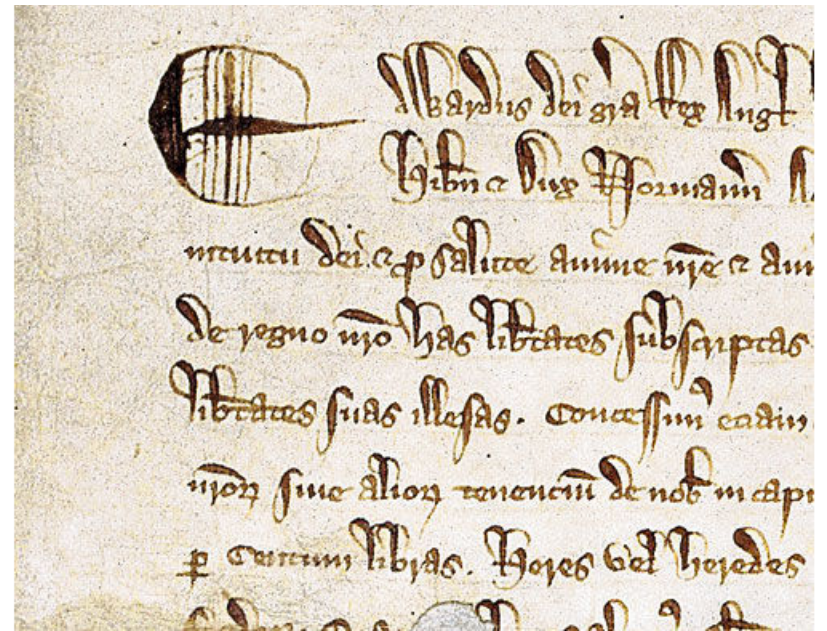
(Pair share this question before I call on you for an answer)

Clue: look at your notes from the second slide

He taxed his barons heavily and ignored their traditional rights, arresting opponents at will.

In June 1215, angry nobles forced a meeting with King John in a meadow called Runnymede, beside the River Thames, outside of London. There, they insisted that John put his seal on a document called Magna Carta, which means "Great Charter" in Latin.

Magna Carta was an agreement between the nobles and the monarch. The nobles agreed that the monarch could continue to rule. For his part, King John agreed to observe common law and the traditional rights of the nobles and the Church.



This is a picture of part of the original writing for the Magna Carta.

The Magna Carta's Importance

- In many ways, Magna Carta only protected the rights and privileges of nobles.
- Limited the power of the king and ended the idea of rule by divine right.
- But as time passed, the English came to see it as the beginning of people's rights and liberties that would lead to democracy.
Democracy: rule by the people.

Habeas Corpus

- John also agreed that “no free man” could be jailed except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.
- This idea eventually developed into a key part of English common law known as habeas corpus.
- [habeas corpus: the legal concept that an accused person cannot be jailed indefinitely without being charged with a crime] the court must consent.

White Boards

Pair-Share responses

- What does Habeas Corpus stand for?
- the legal concept that an accused person cannot be jailed without being charged.
- Whose rights really were protected by the Magna Carta?
- only the rights and privileges of the nobles were protected by the Magna Carta.

Summary

- The Magna Carta established the idea of rights and liberties that even a monarch cannot violate.
- It also affirmed that monarchs should rule with the advice of the people.
- Today, the ideas of rights and liberties and habeas corpus are continued in our own Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution.

White Boards

- Why was the Magna Carta significant?
- A. It gave the monarch unlimited power to tax the nobles.
- B. It restricted the power of Church over government.
- C. It began the idea that monarchs should rule with the consent of the people.
- D. It gave the serfs their freedom.

White Boards

- Why was the Magna Carta significant?
- C. It began the idea that monarchs should rule with the consent of the people.

White Boards

- The principle of habeas corpus means that an accused person
- A. Cannot be jailed indefinitely without the agreement of a court.
- B. Must be represented by a lawyer
- C. Must be set free
- D. None of these

White Boards

- The principle of habeas corpus means that an accused person
- A. Cannot be jailed indefinitely without the agreement of a court.