

Common Sense

Thomas Paine

Why does Paine begin by separating society from government instead of treating them as the same thing?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	Society is a blessing; government a necessary evil
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Of the Origin and Design of Government
START	Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them;
END	out of two evils to choose the least.
PASSAGE ID	sec-cs-02

THE MOVE

Build a political distinction from a model of human need

WHY THIS PASSAGE

Paine separates society from government so that cooperation can remain a positive human need while political authority is treated as a response to human failure. The distinction prevents criticism of government from sounding like criticism of community itself.

MARK

Create two labels: SOCIETY and GOVERNMENT. Underline what Paine says each one provides or responds to. Circle the phrase 'necessary evil' and identify what necessity he thinks creates it.

NOTICE

- What human need does society satisfy?
- What human problem makes government necessary?
- How does separating the two concepts make Paine's criticism of government sharper?

THINK

Answer provisionally: Why does Paine begin by separating society from government instead of treating them as the same thing? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: Why does Paine begin by separating society from government instead of treating them as the same thing? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	Separating society from government lets Paine preserve cooperation as a positive human need while criticizing political authority as a response to human failure. The distinction sharpens rather than broadens his attack.
EVIDENCE	Use what society provides, what government responds to, and the phrase 'necessary evil.'
WATCH FOR	Do not treat society and government as synonyms after the passage explicitly distinguishes them.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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END ANCHOR	out of two evils to choose the least.

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. **MARK** - Create two labels: SOCIETY and GOVERNMENT. Underline what Paine says each one provides or responds to. Circle the phrase 'necessary evil' and identify what necessity he thinks creates it.
2. **NOTICE** - What human need does society satisfy? What human problem makes government necessary? How does separating the two concepts make Paine's criticism of government sharper?
3. **THINK** - Answer provisionally: Why does Paine begin by separating society from government instead of treating them as the same thing?
4. **WRITE** - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.