

Find the Main Idea

The Magna Carta

In 1215, England was in turmoil. The nobles, called feudal barons, were in rebellion against King John because of his policies and losses in costly wars. The barons entered London in June of 1215 and demanded changes to the government. On June 15, 1215, King John signed with his seal the Magna Carta, or Great Charter.

The Magna Carta is one of the most important documents in the development of democracy and constitutional law. It protected the rights of an individual against the arbitrary judgements of an absolute monarch. It began the process of limiting the powers of a monarch and established the concept of due process under the law.

Over history the Magna Carta was used as a basis for other important documents in other countries. The U.S. Constitution uses many of the same concepts that appear in the Magna Carta. Canada, New Zealand and Australia, as well as other countries that evolved from the British Empire, used principles in the Magna Carta as a basis for their laws.



One of the four surviving original copies of the Magna Carta

Find the Main Idea

Write the main idea of the paragraph in your own words.

Write two supporting ideas for the main idea.

1. _____

2. _____
