Key Terms #10 Absolutism and Enlightenment

Copy these terms on index cards to use as flash cards.

1. **absolutism**- a system where the king or queen of a country has total power; they do not have to consult citizens or a parliament/congress about their decisions.
2. **“divine right”-**the belief that an absolute monarch’s right to rule comes from God, and therefore must be obeyed.
3. **Scientific Revolution**-a time (around 1600) when there is an explosion in scientific research and discovery; emphasizes evidence, reason, and logic.
4. **Heliocentric theory**-the belief that the planets revolve around the sun (the sun is the center of the solar system)
5. **Enlightenment**-a time (in the 1700s) when thinkers try to use reason to find the “natural laws” of society and government.
6. ***Philosophes***-Enlightenment philosophers (thinkers)
7. **Natural rights**-rights that Enlightenment thinkers believe all people should have. John Locke says they are “life, liberty, and property”
8. **Social contract theory**- the belief that people choose to obey a government because it benefits them. If the government does not benefit them any more (because it doesn’t protect their rights), they have a right to overthrow the government and break the social contract.
9. **Liberalism**- (what it means in the 1700s and early 1800s) the belief in constitutional governments and individual rights for citizens.
10. ***Laissez-faire* economics-** a system where the government keeps its “hands off” the economy and individuals pursue their own economic self-interest.
11. **Mercantilism**- a system where a mother country uses a colony to profit economically (disadvantages the colonists)
12. **Patriots**- American colonists who support the American Revolution
13. **Loyalists**- American colonists who are loyal to the British king during the American Revolution.