

Name \_\_\_\_\_

As nature has set bounds to the stature of a well-made man, and, outside those limits, makes nothing but giants or dwarfs, similarly, for the constitution of a State to be at its best, it is possible to fix limits that will make it neither too large for good government, nor too small for self-maintenance. In every body politic there is a maximum strength which it cannot exceed and which it only loses by increasing in size. Every extension of the social tie means its relaxation; and, generally speaking, a small State is stronger in proportion than a great one.

From *The Social Contract* by Jean Jacques Rousseau

1. With what figure of speech does Rousseau open this paragraph? Why?

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2. Explain how Rousseau builds upon his opening idea in the second sentence.

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3. Explain how Rousseau refines his central idea as he concludes this paragraph.

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## **ANSWERS**

1. Rousseau opens the paragraph with an analogy, in order to make his point more understandable to the reader.
2. In the first sentence, in his analogy, Rousseau talks about limits in nature, and in the second sentence he extends the idea of limits to politics.
3. In the third sentence he refines the idea by saying that a state that is too big is “stretched beyond its limits” and then he explicitly states his point, which is that the best state is a smaller one.