

Forms of Government

Enduring Understanding

When decisions which affect citizens of a nation are made by one leader, the form of government is an autocracy (or dictatorship); by a small group of noble families or the highest social class, an aristocracy (or monarchy); by the citizens through their representatives, a democracy; by a god or priests, a theocracy; by a small group of people, an oligarchy. The extent of voting reflects the degree of freedom of the citizens or inhabitants in any nation, realm, or homeland.

Essential Questions

To be answered for each type of government studied:

How does the form of government in a nation, realm, or homeland determine who has a voice in leadership?

Who is allowed to vote or has a voice in selecting the leadership?

On what do the people get to vote? What offices or positions are filled through elections, selection, or appointment?

How often are elections, appointments, or selections held?

Students Shall Be Able To:

C.4.7.2 — Discuss different forms of executive leadership in civilizations (e.g., judge class, patrician class, priest class, warrior class, emperor, nobility)

C.4.7.3 — Compare and contrast forms of government: democracy, dictatorship, monarchy, oligarchy, and theocracy

C.5.7.3 — Examine rights, privileges, and responsibilities citizens and non-citizens had in civilizations based upon gender, socio-economic class, ethnicity, religion, or caste

C.5.7.4 — Discuss ways citizens participated in government: Athens, Sparta, Rome

Additional Social Studies Connections

H.6.7.3 — Investigate characteristics of civilizations

H.6.7.8 — Describe the development of the dynastic system in China (e.g., Mandate of Heaven)

H.6.7.10 — Describe life in Medieval Europe: feudalism, guild system, manorial system

H.6.7.12 — Investigate the motives for the writing of the Magna Carta and the resulting influence on political power in England (e.g., establishment of Parliament)

H.6.7.13 — Explore medieval Japan (e.g., Shogunates, Samurai, feudalism)

Materials Needed/Attachments

- *Teacher-created reflection handout for student notes to be taken as students view class presentations. Following the presentations, students may ask presenters questions.*

Vocabulary

Introduce the vocabulary before the lesson (e.g., word wall, crossword puzzle, matching game)

<i>autocracy</i>	<i>aristocracy</i>	<i>democracy</i>	<i>oligarchy</i>
<i>monarchy</i>	<i>dictatorship</i>	<i>republic</i>	<i>theocracy</i>
<i>feudal</i>	<i>dynasty</i>	<i>military rule</i>	<i>caste</i>
<i>hereditary rule</i>	<i>city-state</i>	<i>socio-economic class</i>	

Teaching Strategies

1. Direct students in a discussion and written definition exercise of historical forms of government in given cultures and societies exploring the autocratic, aristocratic and democratic forms of government. This lesson could be expanded to include oligarchic and theocratic governments.
2. Explore the operation/function of each form of government using brainstorming techniques and the classroom as a model. Begin by having the students generate a list of problems which exist in the classroom. Examples may include, but are not limited to: habitual tardiness, not bringing proper supplies to class, disruptive behavior, failure to complete work, or leaving desk/surroundings untidy.
3. Illustrate autocracy by appointing one student “ruler” or autocrat. Inform the class that the “ruler”/autocrat will make a decision regarding one of the problems on the brainstormed list. The “ruler’s”/autocrat’s solution is final and the students must comply with the decision. The autocrat then announces the decision. Student reactions should stimulate a discussion as to the fairness or unfairness of this form of rule.
4. Select 3 or 4 class members to compose the aristocracy. Follow the same procedure in allowing them to reach a decision for the group. Discuss student reactions.
5. Follow the same procedure with the other forms of government studied (oligarchy, theocracy).
6. Ask the students if there is another way in which a decision affecting all members of the class may be reached. Students may come to the conclusion that the preferred method is for each member of the class to vote secretly or by ballot as to which decision is preferred.

Divide the class into small groups. Each group selects one type of government (autocratic, aristocratic, democratic, oligarchic, and theocratic). Have the students prepare a presentation (e.g., skit, role play, electronic display) illustrating knowledge of the type of government selected. Presentation must include:

- ♦ *Who rules or governs?*
- ♦ *Who votes?*
- ♦ *How often do citizens/ subjects vote?*
- ♦ *What is the procedure for voting?*
- ♦ *What do they get to vote on?*
- ♦ *Do citizens/ subjects have any rights?*
- ♦ *What responsibilities do citizens/ subjects have?*
- ♦ *List advantages/ disadvantages of selected form of government.*

Assessments/Rubrics

Student participation and notes on reflections handout.

Teacher-created rubric for assessing student presentations/reflections handout.