



**FLORIDA JOINT CENTER  
FOR CITIZENSHIP**

**COMPARING FORMS OF GOVERNMENT**

**SS.7.C.3.1** Compare different forms of government (direct democracy, representative democracy, socialism, communism, monarchy, oligarchy, autocracy).

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## *Lesson Summary*

### ***Essential Questions***

What are forms of government? How do they compare to each other?

### ***NGSSS Benchmark***

SS.7.C.3.1 Compare different forms of government (direct democracy, representative democracy, socialism, communism, monarchy, oligarchy, autocracy)

### ***Florida Standards***

LAFS.68.RH.2.4	LAFS.68.WHST.3.8	LAFS.68.WHST.3.9	MAFS.K12.MP.6.1
LAFS.68.WHST.4.10	LAFS.7.SL.1.1	LAFS.7.SL.1.2	LAFS.7.SL.2.4

### ***Overview***

In this lesson, students will define and compare forms of government.

### ***Learning Goals/Benchmark Clarifications***

- Students will identify different forms of government based on its political philosophy or organizational structure.
- Students will analyze scenarios describing various forms of government.
- Students will apply their understanding of the definitions of the various forms of government.

### ***Benchmark Content Limits***

- Items will not ask students to identify specific countries by a form of government.
- Items will not require students to evaluate the efficacy of different forms of government.

### ***Civics EOC Reporting Category***

Reporting Category 4 – Organization and Function of Government

### ***Suggested Time Frame***

- One 45-50 minute class period

### ***Civics Content Vocabulary***

- absolute monarchy, anarchy, autocracy, communism, democracy, dictatorship, direct democracy, form of government, monarchy, oligarchy, representative democracy, republic, socialism

### ***Instructional Strategies***

Collaborative learning	Defining terms in context	Presentation skills
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### ***Materials***

A project to display the Forms of Government Scenarios

Student activity sheets:

- Presentation Notes
- Forms of Government Definitions

Student reading materials:

- Forms of Government

### ***Suggested Student Activity Sequence***

1. To begin this lesson, place students into groups of 3-4.
2. Post the definition of anarchy on the board: the absence of any form of government.
3. Pose the following questions for discussion: “What would a country look like with anarchy? Why do you think countries choose to have a form of government?”
4. List the following civics content vocabulary terms on the board: absolute monarchy, autocracy, communism, direct democracy, monarchy, oligarchy, representative democracy, republic and socialism.
5. Ask students to brainstorm what they think they know about these terms in their groups.
6. Provide students with time to brainstorm and then share out. Teacher note: This brainstorm may produce misconceptions about forms of government, however this will serve as an informal assessment of the students’ background knowledge.
7. Pass out a different “Form of Government” reading to each group. Teacher note: There are seven forms of government readings included in this lesson, based on your class size forms may have to be repeated. Be sure that each form is represented in the class. Pass out enough copies of reading so that each group member has a copy of their assigned form of government.
8. Pass out the “Presentation Notes” student activity sheet to each student.
9. Explain to students that their task is to read through their form of government, summarize the big idea of the form of government and key evidence from the reading and then present their findings to the class.
10. Provide time for students to complete the reading, summarize their findings and practice their presentation for the class.
11. Pass out the “Forms of Government” student activity sheet and explain to students that while each group presents, they need to listen and take notes on the main ideas that are shared for each form.
12. Ask each group to present their findings to the class.
13. After each group presents their form of government, review the key points with students. Teacher note: Utilize the Sample Answers section to ensure that students share accurate key points with the class.
14. Ask the students to explain where absolute monarchy and republic fit into these forms of government. Make sure students understand that an absolute monarchy is a form of autocracy and that a republic and representative democracy are the same. Teacher note: Students from the Autocracy and Representative Democracy groups should be able to cite evidence from their readings to support these points.
15. Project the “Forms of Government Scenarios” activity sheet on the board and go through the scenarios one at a time so that students have to apply their knowledge of the forms of government and explain which form is being described.
16. Return students to their small groups from the beginning of the lesson and instruct them to identify some comparisons between the forms of government. Instruct students to write their list on the back of the “Forms of Government” student activity sheet.
17. Engage students in a whole class discussion comparing the forms of government. Have students share the ideas they came up with. Some key comparisons to include:
  - An absolute monarchy, autocracy, and monarchy are all led by a single ruler.
  - A representative democracy and republic are the same form of government.
  - Socialism and communism are focused on the economics of a country.
18. Check for Understanding (Formative Assessment):

Instruct students to write a well-crafted response using one of the following prompts:

Prompt 1  
Choose two of the forms of government you have learned about during this lesson. Write an informational paragraph, using specific evidence to explain what the two forms have in common and what makes them different from each other.

Prompt 2  
*“It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.”* (Winston Churchill, former British prime minister). Using information you have learned about different forms of government, explain why Churchill would make this statement.

## Presentation Notes

My group has been assigned the \_\_\_\_\_ form of government.

**What is the big idea about this form of government?**

--

**List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.**

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

**Summarize your findings in your own words below:**

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## **AUTOCRACY**

An autocracy is a form of government where one person has unlimited power. One type of an autocracy is a dictatorship where a military leader takes power often through violent means. Another type of autocracy is an absolute monarchy where a person becomes the sole leader of a country by being born into a family of rulers.

The term dictatorship means a government in which absolute power is centered in the hands of a dictator and sometimes his closest partners.

Dictators can come to power in a variety of ways. They can be elected, be appointed by the ruling party, or inherit their position. Some dictators have taken power using violence and are supported by the military.

The dictator generally controls the three government powers: legislative, executive and judicial.

In a dictatorship, there are no elections. Sometimes dictators can first obtain power from democratic elections, but shortly after being elected the dictator will ban all opposing parties and cancel all future elections. Though free elections will never occur under a dictatorship, sometimes dictators arrange for fake elections in an attempt to give themselves the appearance of democracy and public support.

Source: Adapted from "Dictatorship" available at:  
<http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/di/Dictatorship>

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## COMMUNISM

Communism is a society with no social classes, all property is owned by the community and all people have access to equal social and economic status. The goal of communism is to get rid of capitalism (privately owned businesses and free markets) through a workers' revolution and spread the wealth to the workers.

Communist ideas have existed since ancient times. Early humans, living in tribes, worked for the benefit of their entire clan and shared the goods produced by their labor as a group.

The ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, found in their *Communist Manifesto*, changed communism into a groundbreaking movement. Marx and Engels claimed communism did not have to occur in isolated communities, but could happen globally.

From the communist point of view, the capitalists who controlled business production took advantage of the workers by paying low salaries and keeping the profits to themselves. In other words, workers had to work to meet their own needs and those of the ruling class taking advantage of them. Marx thought it was only a matter of time before the working classes of the world, realizing their common goals, would unite to take control from the capitalists and spread the wealth.

Sometimes, the term communism is used to describe an autocratic (one person) government, run by the Communist Party, where central planning is used for production and distribution of goods and services. Because these types of governments have often committed human rights abuses, some regard this idea of Communism as dangerous.

Source: Adapted from "Communism" available at:  
<http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/co/Communism>

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## DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Democracy means the rule by the people. That is where each individual person has a vote about what to do. Whatever the most people vote for becomes the law. There is no king and anybody can propose a new law.

Direct democracy is a phrase that represents decisions where citizens pass laws directly, without using representatives. Each person casts their own vote for proposed laws, instead of having a representative cast a vote on their behalf. A current example of the way direct democracy is practiced is the “initiative”. This allows citizens to place proposals on the ballot that become law if a majority of the voters vote for the proposal.

The earliest direct democracy in the world began in Athens, Greece in 510 BC, which allowed only men to vote. As democracy became successful in Athens, many other city-states (cities that functioned like nations) chose it for their government too. But most of them allowed even fewer people to vote than Athens did: most of the other city-states only allowed free adult male citizens to vote if they owned land or owned their own houses.

One problem that comes up in a direct democracy is deciding who is going to be able to vote. It is much easier to allow fewer people to vote because fewer have to be taken from their regular work to vote. However, the less people that were allowed to vote, the less the principle of “rule by the people” was practiced.

Another problem for direct democracies was that it was not easy for men to always be going to the meeting-place to vote. Most men had work to do such as planting their grain, making shoes, fighting wars or doing other types of work. They couldn't be always voting. So most democracies sooner or later ended up choosing a few men who would do most of the voting, and the rest only came when there was a really important vote. It was hard to decide how to choose these few men, and different cultures did it different ways.

Source: Adapted from “Democracy” available at:

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/government/democracy.htm> and

“Direct Democracy” in The Encyclopedia of Public Choice available at:

[http://www.credoreference.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/entry/sprpubchoice/direct\\_democracy](http://www.credoreference.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/entry/sprpubchoice/direct_democracy), Accessed January 2013.

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## MONARCHY

Monarchy is a form of government where power is held by a single person whose right to rule is based on birth (that person is born into a family of kings and queens) and who has the power to remain in office for life. The power of this ruler can vary. There are absolute monarchies, a type of autocracy where the king or queen has unlimited power. There are also constitutional monarchies, where the monarch's power is strongly limited by a constitution that outlines the laws.

In most countries with monarchies, the monarch serves as a symbol of the country. Many countries have strong rules against the monarch becoming involved in politics.

Since 1800, many of the world's monarchies have become republics. A republic is a form of government where the citizens elect representatives to make and pass laws. Most countries that have a monarchy have limited the monarch's power, making them constitutional monarchies.

The rules for choosing monarchs vary from country to country. In constitutional monarchies deciding how power passes from one king or queen to another is generally found in a law passed by parliament (legislature). Most European monarchies of the 21st century pass power from the oldest male and then the oldest female if no males are qualified. Other constitutional monarchies allow only males to serve as monarchs.

Monarchies can come to an end in several ways. There may be a revolution in which the monarchy is taken over; or there may be a vote in which the citizens decide to form a republic.

Source: Adapted from "Monarchy" available at:

<http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/mo/Monarchy> and

"Monarchy and Kingship" available at:

<http://www.questia.com/library/politics-and-government/systems-of-government/monarchy-and-kingship>

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## OLIGARCHY

Oligarchy means the rule of the few and generally means the people who are richer and more powerful than the others. Because those with power in oligarchies are generally the rich in a society, oligarchies are generally bad for the poor.

People who rule in oligarchies may be elected, born into their positions, or may have a certain amount of money or land which allows them to be a part of the ruling group.

Oligarchies are often controlled by a few powerful families whose children are raised and taught to take over the power of the oligarchy, often at some sort of expense to those who are governed.

Oligarchies can occur in countries with other forms of government and can create change. For example, a group of wealthy people in a country may insist that their ruler, a monarch or dictator, share power. This occurred in England in 1215 when a group of wealthy citizens came together and forced King John I of England to sign the Magna Carta. This showed that King John's power was decreasing and an oligarchy was coming into place. As English society continued to grow and develop, the Magna Carta was revised a few times, each time guaranteeing more rights to greater numbers of people.

Source: Adapted from

“Oligarchy” available at:

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/government/oligarchy.htm>

“Oligarchy” available at:

<http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/ol/Oligarchy>

“Oligarchy” available at:

<http://www.credoreference.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/entry/heliconhe/oligarchy>, Accessed January 2013.

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## **REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY**

A representative democracy, also known as a republic, is an independent country ruled by representatives of the citizens of a nation. A republic is a government in which all citizens have the right to vote and in which the government's power is limited by a constitution.

A republic is different from a direct democracy in that the republic operates with a group of representatives chosen by the citizens, while in a direct democracy the citizens vote and participate directly in governmental affairs. Most modern representative governments are closer to a republic than a democracy.

In a republic, instead of voting directly about what they want to do, people instead vote for people to represent them, and those people decide what to do.

Source: Adapted from "Republic" available at:

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/government/republic.htm>

"Democracy" in Encyclopedia of Nationalism: Leaders, Movements, Concepts available at:

<http://www.credoreference.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/entry/estnational/democracy>, Accessed January 2013

"Republic" in The Columbia Encyclopedia available at:

<http://www.credoreference.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/entry/columency/republic>, Accessed January 2013.

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## **SOCIALISM**

As Karl Marx (1818-1883) originally defined it, socialism refers to an economic system where the government takes an active role in the economy and is responsible for long term economic planning and protecting those who can be taken advantage of by private businesses.

According to Marx, in a socialist society, the production and distribution of resources are controlled by the people in the society or by the government that represents those people. Goods are produced and distributed based on need instead of the desire to make money.

In a socialist economy, workers contribute to society based on their ability and receive goods according to their needs, instead of just simply receiving money to purchase what they want. Private possessions are limited to personal-use items such as food and clothes. There is no need or ability for individuals to accumulate wealth so there is equality among the people.

Today, the word "socialism" has a much different meaning. In many countries around the world, especially in Canada and parts of Europe and South America, the term refers to an economic system based on a mix of several things. The national government can be responsible for a lot of the long-term economic planning or owns some of the major industries. At the same time, people are free to own private businesses and there are democratic elections where people are free to choose their leaders and vote on other issues. For example, in Canada the health care system is paid for and run by the federal government. Most Canadians receive care regardless of their health or income. At the same time, Canadians can own their own businesses and citizens elect members of Parliament (the legislature).

Source: Adapted from "Socialism" available at:

<http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/so/Socialism>, <http://www.wisegeek.org/what-is-socialism.htm> and <http://www.canadian-healthcare.org>

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## Forms of Government Definitions

Directions: After each presentation, write down a definition of the form of government based on what you hear from the presentation.

<b>Form of Government</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Autocracy (Absolute Monarchy)</b>	
<b>Communism</b>	
<b>Direct Democracy</b>	
<b>Monarchy</b>	
<b>Oligarchy</b>	
<b>Representative Democracy (Republic)</b>	
<b>Socialism</b>	

## FORMS OF GOVERNMENT SCENARIOS

In the 20th Century two World Wars were fought to prevent the fast expansion of this form of government. Most of those who started World War One were the few remaining absolute monarchs of Europe, while in World War Two it was the elected dictators of Germany and Italy.

In early European history government power was held by a variety of kings and queens who ruled their kingdoms with mostly unlimited powers.

In his 4th-century BC work *The Republic*, the Greek philosopher Plato proposed the communal ownership of property by an intellectual ruling class, to put the welfare of the state above personal desire and moderate the greed of the producing classes.

Some Native American tribes organized themselves by having all male adult members of the tribe vote for any proposed laws or changes.

In the 20th century, kings and queens have generally become symbols of national unity, while real power has been moved to constitutional assemblies. Today, this form of government is mainly in place in the Middle East.

An example of this form of government emerged in 1215 in England when a small group wealthy nobleman forced the king to share power. This moved the country from one person holding all of the power to a small group holding power.

An example of this form of government is the United States. Citizens elect representatives at the national, state, and local levels of government to vote on their behalf.

Some believe that this form of government is desirable and achievable. Others view this form of government as inefficient and creates people who are dependent and gain unfairly from the government managing the economics of the country.

## **Sources**

Forms of Government Readings & Scenarios -

Autocracy: Adapted from “Dictatorship” available at:

<http://encyclopedia.kids.net.au/page/di/Dictatorship>

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<http://www.wisegeek.org/what-is-socialism.htm> and <http://www.canadian-healthcare.org>

Winston Churchill Quote: <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/24926.html>

## Autocracy – Sample Answers

### What is the big idea about this form of government?

An autocracy is a form of government where one person has unlimited power and they gain power in various ways.

### List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.

1.	One type of an autocracy is a dictatorship where a military leader secures power often through violent means.
2.	Another type of autocracy is an absolute monarchy where a person becomes the sole leader of a country by being born into a family of rulers.
3.	Dictators can come to power in a variety of ways. They can be elected, be appointed by the ruling party, or inherit their position.
4.	... other dictators take power using violence and are supported by the military.
5.	The dictator generally controls the three government powers: legislative, executive and judicial.

### Summarize your findings in your own words below:

An autocracy is a form of government where one person has unlimited power. Examples of autocracies are dictatorships and absolute monarchies. Under a dictatorship, all power is held with the dictator and his or her closest associates. In an autocracy, power can be achieved in a variety of ways. Dictators control all of the government powers.

## Communism – Sample Answers

### What is the big idea about this form of government?

Communism is a classless society where all property is owned by the whole community and where all people have access to equal social and economic status. Communism is also referred to as a form of government with one ruler.

### List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.

1.	... a society with no social classes
2.	... all property is owned by the community
3.	... working classes of the world, realizing their common goals, would unite to take control from the capitalists and redistribute the wealth.
4.	... workers had to work to meet their own needs and those of the ruling class taking advantage of them.
5.	...communism is used to describe an autocratic government

### Summarize your findings in your own words below:

Communism is a society where the community owns all of the property and wealth is equal among all people. In this society, workers unite and take control of businesses. This is so that things are equal and no one is taking advantage of them. Communism is also referred to as a form of government with one ruler.

## Direct Democracy– Sample Answers

### What is the big idea about this form of government?

A direct democracy is a form of government where people vote for and make the laws. This is a difficult form of government to maintain because it takes a lot of time for everyone to be able to vote.

### List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.

1.	Direct democracy is a phrase that represents decisions where citizens pass laws directly
2.	The best known way that direct democracy is practiced is the “initiative”, which allows citizens to place proposals on the ballot that become law if a majority of the electorate votes in favor.
3.	One problem that comes up in a direct democracy is determining who is going to be able to vote.
4.	Another problem for direct democracies was that it was not easy for men to always be going to the meeting-place to vote.
5.	So most democracies sooner or later ended up choosing a few men who would do most of the voting, and the rest only came when there was a really important vote.

### Summarize your findings in your own words below:

A direct democracy is a form of government where everyone gets to vote on all laws. In a direct democracy, citizens are involved in their government but it can often create issues with determining who can vote and figuring the best way for voting to occur. This form of government led to people choosing a few men who would do most of the voting for them.

## Monarchy – Sample Answers

### What is the big idea about this form of government?

A monarchy is a form of government where power is held by one person. They are granted the power to rule based on their birth into a particular family.

### List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.

1.	... power is held by a single person whose right to rule is based on birth (that person is born into a family of kings and queens)
2.	... who has the power to remain in office for life.
3.	There are absolute monarchies... and constitutional monarchies
4.	... rules for choosing monarchs varies from country to country
5.	Most countries that have a monarchy have limited the monarch's power, making them constitutional monarchies

### Summarize your findings in your own words below:

A monarchy is a form of government where power is held by one person. This person is in power because they have been born into a certain family and they are able to rule for life. There are absolute monarchies and constitutional monarchies. Many monarchies have become republics where citizens elect representatives to make and pass laws for the whole country.

## Oligarchy – Sample Answers

### What is the big idea about this form of government?

An oligarchy is a form of government where a country is ruled by a small number of wealthy people.

### List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.

1.	... those with power in oligarchies are generally the rich in a society, oligarchies are generally bad for the poor.
2.	... controlled by a few powerful families whose children are raised and taught to inherit the power
3.	Oligarchies can occur in countries with other forms of government and can create change.
4.	... a group of wealthy people in a country may insist that their ruler, a monarch or dictator, share power.
5.	This occurred in England in 1215 when a group of wealthy citizens came together and forced King John I of England to sign the Magna Carta.

### Summarize your findings in your own words below:

An oligarchy is a form of government where a country is ruled by a small group of wealthy people. In this form of government, the power is held with the rich and is not a good form of government for the poor. In this form of government, the power is then passed on to the children of the wealthy. An oligarchy can be created when wealthy people in a country work together and demand power is shared with them and the ruler.

## Representative Democracy – Sample Answers

### What is the big idea about this form of government?

A representative democracy, or republic, is an independent state ruled by representatives of the citizens of a nation.

### List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.

1.	... all citizens have the right to vote
2.	... the government's power is limited by a constitution
3.	... the republic operates with a group of representatives chosen by the citizens
4.	... modern representative governments are closer to a republic than a democracy
5.	... people instead vote for people to represent them, and those people decide what to do.

### Summarize your findings in your own words below:

A representative democracy is also known as a republic. In this form of government, a country is ruled by representatives that have been elected by the citizens. This form of government is not based on a single ruler but instead by popular control. In a republic, all citizens have the right to vote and the power of the government is limited by a constitution. The people vote for representatives and those people decide what to do.

## **Socialism – Sample Answers**

### **What is the big idea about this form of government?**

Socialism is an economic system where the government controls the economy.

### **List five pieces of evidence from the reading that supports your big idea.**

<b>1.</b>	... an economic system where the government takes an active role in the economy
<b>2.</b>	... is responsible for long term economic planning and protecting those who can be taken advantage of by private businesses
<b>3.</b>	... production and distribution of resources are controlled by the people in the society or by the government that represents those people
<b>4.</b>	... workers contribute to society based on their ability and receive goods according to their needs
<b>5.</b>	There is no need or ability for individuals to accumulate wealth so there is equality among the people.

### **Summarize your findings in your own words below:**

Socialism is an economic focused government where the central government is responsible for economic planning and makes sure that people do not get taken advantage of. Citizens contribute to society and receive goods according to their needs.

## FORMS OF GOVERNMENT – **Sample Answers**

Directions: After each presentation, write down a definition of the form of government based on what you hear from the presentation.

<b>Form of Government</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Autocracy (Absolute Monarchy)</b>	An autocracy is a form of government where one person has unlimited power. Examples of autocracies are dictatorships and absolute monarchies. Under a dictatorship, all power is held with the dictator and his or her closest associates. In an autocracy, power can be achieved in a variety of ways. Dictators control all of the government powers.
<b>Communism</b>	Communism is a society where the community owns all of the property and wealth is equal among all people. In this society, workers unite and take control of businesses. This is so that things are equal and no one is taking advantage of them. Communism is also referred to as a form of government with one ruler.
<b>Direct Democracy</b>	A direct democracy is a form of government where everyone gets to vote on all laws. In a direct democracy, citizens are involved in their government but it can often create issues with determining who can vote and figuring the best way for voting to occur. This form of government led to people choosing a few men who would do most of the voting for them.
<b>Monarchy</b>	A monarchy is a form of government where power is held by one person. This person is in power because they have been born into a certain family and they are able to rule for life. There are absolute monarchies and constitutional monarchies. Many monarchies have become republics where citizens elect representatives to make and pass laws for the whole country.
<b>Oligarchy</b>	An oligarchy is a form of government where a country is ruled by a small group of wealthy people. In this form of government, the power is held with the rich and is not a good form of government for the poor. In this form of government, the power is then passed on to the children of the wealthy. An oligarchy can be created when wealthy people in a country work together and demand power is shared with them and the ruler.
<b>Representative Democracy (Republic)</b>	A representative democracy is also known as a republic. In this form of government, a country is ruled by representatives that have been elected by the citizens. This form of government is not based on a single ruler but instead by popular control. In a republic, all citizens have the right to vote and the power of the government is limited by a constitution. The people vote for representatives and those people decided what to do.
<b>Socialism</b>	A socialist form of government is the process of the government taking an active role in controlling the economy and protecting people so that they cannot be taken advantage of by businesses. Socialism is the period in between overthrowing the rich and become a classless, communist form of government. In a socialist form, decisions are made by a small group of people for the rest of the country.

## FORMS OF GOVERNMENT SCENARIOS – **Sample Answers**

In the 20th Century two World Wars were fought to prevent the fast expansion of this form of government. Most of those who started World War One were the few remaining absolute monarchs of Europe, while in World War Two it was the elected dictators of Germany and Italy.

**(AUTOCRACY)**

In early European history government power was held by a variety of kings and queens who ruled their kingdoms with mostly unlimited powers.

**(ABSOLUTE MONARCHY)**

In his 4th-century BC work *The Republic*, the Greek philosopher Plato proposed the communal ownership of property by an intellectual ruling class, to put the welfare of the state above personal desire and moderate the greed of the producing classes.

**(COMMUNISM)**

Some Native American tribes organized themselves by having all male adult members of the tribe vote for any proposed laws or changes.

**(DIRECT DEMOCRACY)**

In the 20th century, kings and queens have generally become symbols of national unity, while real power has been moved to constitutional assemblies. Today, this form of government is mainly in place in the Middle East.

**(MONARCHY)**

An example of this form of government emerged in 1215 in England when a small group wealthy nobleman forced the king to share power. This moved the country from one person holding all of the power to a small group holding power.

**(OLIGARCHY)**

An example of this form of government is the United States. Citizens elect representatives at the national, state, and local levels of government to vote on their behalf.

**(REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY/REPUBLIC)**

Some believe that this form of government is desirable and achievable. Others view this form of government as inefficient and creates people who are dependent and gain unfairly from the government managing the economics of the country.

**(SOCIALISM)**

*Civics Content Vocabulary*

<b>Word/Term</b>	<b>Part of Speech</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>absolute monarchy</b>	noun	a form of autocracy where a person becomes the sole leader of a country by being born into a family of rulers; there are no limits on the monarch's power
<b>anarchy</b>	noun	the absence of any form of government
<b>autocracy</b>	noun	a form of government where one person has unlimited power
<b>communism</b>	noun	a form of government in which a single ruling party owns and controls the entire economy, and in which no private ownership is allowed
<b>democracy</b>	noun	a system of government in which political power is held by the people
<b>dictatorship</b>	noun	a form of autocracy where a military leader becomes the leader of a country often through violent means
<b>direct democracy</b>	noun	a form of government in which the power to govern is directly in the hands of the people rather than elected representatives
<b>form of government</b>	noun	the way a government is structured
<b>monarchy</b>	noun	a form of government headed by a king or queen who inherits the position, rules for life, and holds power that can range anywhere between limited to absolute
<b>oligarchy</b>	noun	a form of government in which a small group (often of wealthy people) has total control and power
<b>representative democracy</b>	noun	a system of government in which the people elect representatives to make policies and laws for them, also known as a republic
<b>republic</b>	noun	a system of government in which the people elect representatives to make policies and laws for them, also known as a representative democracy
<b>socialism</b>	noun	a form of government in which the government plays a major role in running the economy, but private ownership is also allowed and leaders may be elected by the people

## *Essential Teacher Content Background Information*

**This section addresses the following issues:**

1. Forms of government explained
2. Forms of government with country examples

### **1. Forms of government explained**

There are multiple factors that contribute to how we understand governments. One approach is to consider the form of government which is also understood as the structure of government. All governments, no matter their structure (or form) enjoy three powers: the power to create laws (legislative), the power to enforce laws (executive) and the power to adjudicate laws (judicial). The way that those powers are organized determines the form of government. In the United States, for example, the U.S. Constitution begins with “we the people” which speaks to the notion that the U.S. is a democracy. However, as the U.S. Constitution outlines a system of representation through which the people rule, it is known as a republic, or a representative democracy.

Several factors impact the form of government that a nation will adopt; these include, but are not limited to the nation’s history, culture, values, beliefs, political participation, geography, location, international relations, domestic concerns and past practices.

## 2. Forms of government with country examples

<b>BOLIVIA</b>	Form of Government	Republic
	Head of Government (2012)	President Evo Morales (assumed office in 2006) Vice President Álvaro García Linera (assumed office in 2006)
	Role of the Citizen	The people govern through elections
<b>BRUNEI</b>	Form of Government	Absolute Monarchy
	Head of Government (2012)	Sultan of Brunei Hassanal Bolkiah (assumed office in 1967) also services as Brunei's Prime Minister, Finance Minister and Defense Minister
	Role of the Citizen	The people govern through elections
<b>CUBA</b>	Form of Government	Communism
	Head of Government (2012)	President Raul Castro (assumed office in 2011) also serves as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and First Secretary of the Central committee of the Communist Party of Cuba
	Role of the Citizen	Citizens elect the National Assembly of People's Power (Parliament) although there is just one candidate per seat in the Parliament.
<b>GHANA</b>	Form of Government	Representative Democracy
	Head of Government (2012)	Interim President: John Dramani Mahama (assumed office in 2012 after the death of President John Atta Mills in July 2012)
	Role of the Citizen	Citizens elect members of the Parliament, and the president.
<b>IRAN</b>	Form of Government	Oligarchy
	Head of Government (2012)	Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei (assumed office in 1989) President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (assumed office in 2005)
	Role of the Citizen	The people elect the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Parliament)
<b>NORTH KOREA</b>	Form of Government	Autocracy
	Head of Government (2012)	Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un (assumed office in 2011)
	Role of the Citizen	The people elect the Supreme People's Assembly; however, only one candidate for each seat who has been selected by the Democratic Front for the Reunification of the Fatherland appears on the ballot.
<b>SPAIN</b>	Form of Government	Monarchy
	Head of Government (2012)	King Juan Carlos I (assumed office in 1975) Prime Minister The Most Excellent Don Mariano Rajoy (assumed office in 2011)
	Role of the Citizen	The people elect the Congress of Deputies and the Senate through a multi-party system. The Congress of Deputies and the Senate are together known as the Cortes Generales, the Spanish Parliament.
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	Form of Government	Direct Democracy
	Head of Government (2012)	President of the Swiss Confederation Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf (assumed office in 2012)
	Role of the Citizen	The people govern by electing the legislature although citizens play a lawmaking role through national referenda including amendments to the Constitution.
<b>VENEZUELA</b>	Form of Government	Socialism
	Head of Government (2012)	President Nicolas Maduro (elected in April, 2013)
	Role of the Citizen	The people govern through elections.