CHAPTER 1
Foundations of Government

Essential Question What are the ideals and key principles that characterize American democracy?

Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

SS.912.C.1.1 Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the founding ideals and principles in American Constitutional government. SS.912.C.1.2 Explain how the Declaration of Independence reflected the political principles of popular sovereignty, social contract, natural rights, and individual rights. SS.912.C.2.4 Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues that cause the government to balance the interests of individuals with the public good. SS.912.C.2.11 Analyze public policy solutions or courses of action to resolve a local, state, or federal issue. SS.912.C.3.1 Examine the constitutional principles of representative government, limited government, consent of the governed, rule of law, and individual rights. LA.910.1.6.1 The student will use new vocabulary that is introduced and taught directly.
Our nation’s system of government is based on constitutional law established by the United States Constitution. See the “We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution” pages in this chapter for an in-depth exploration of why our nation’s Founders chose constitutional government.
Main Idea
Understanding major political ideas and classic forms of government will help you understand the purposes of government.

Reading Focus
1. What is government?
2. Which major characteristics do all states share?
3. What are the major functions of government?
4. What theories of rule have been put forth to explain government?

Key Terms
government, power, policy, state, sovereignty, politics, legitimacy, divine right of kings, social contract theory

Life without Government
In 1992 the world caught a glimpse of what life without government would be like when war broke out in what is today Bosnia-Herzegovina. The war was a result of the collapse of Yugoslavia. It pitted two once friendly ethnic groups—the Bosnians and the Serbs—against one another.

The Bosnian capital of Sarajevo was particularly hard hit. For 44 months, Serbian forces laid siege to the city, blocking all roads leading in and out of Sarajevo. Approximately 400,000 residents were trapped in the city, subjected to daily sniping and shelling and cut off from food, medicine, water, and electricity. Even United Nations peacekeepers were unable to stem the violence. By the end of the siege, nearly 12,000 civilians had died.

The daily terror in Sarajevo calls to mind a bleak vision put forth by the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes nearly 400 years ago. According to Hobbes, without government, people would find themselves in a “war of all against all” that made life “nasty, brutish, and short.” Peace and security could only be achieved by establishing government. In fact, Hobbes argued, that achievement was government’s primary purpose.

These photos show Sarajevo in 1992. At left, rubble and burned-out buildings line a city street. Above, UN peacekeepers take cover as residents run under sniper fire in Sarajevo’s “Sniper Alley.”
What Is Government?

Americans sometimes complain that the problem with government is that there is just too much of it. The collapse of Yugoslavia, however, makes clear just how much people count on government in their daily lives. Strong national defense, law and order, and clean water are just a few of the services that most people, Americans included, expect of “good” government.

Before examining the workings of the U.S. government, it is important to first understand a number of major political ideas. Top among these ideas is the concept of government itself. Government is made up of the formal institutions and processes through which decisions are made for a group of people. Most governments consist of three main components: people, powers, and policies.

In terms of people, government includes both elected officials who have authority and control over others as well as all of the public servants who carry out the day-to-day business of government. So the postal carrier on your block, the president, a paratrooper in the armed forces, a judge in traffic court, your state and national legislators—all these people and more—make up government.

Another component of government, power, refers to the government’s authority and ability to get things done. The people in government exercise three basic types of power. First, a government must have legislative power, or the power to make laws. Second, government exercises executive power to carry out, enforce, and administer the law. Third, a government must have judicial power, which is the power to interpret the laws and to settle disputes between members of society.

Governments also carry out policies. A policy is any decision made by government in pursuit of a particular goal. A policy can take the form of a law, a government program, or even a set of government actions. Taxation, defense, environmental protection, health care, and transportation are just some of the policy areas that concern government.

Characteristics of a State

Today most governments exercise power within the context of a state. A state is a political unit with the power to make and enforce laws over a group of people living within a clearly defined territory. Used in this sense, the term state does not refer to one of the 50 states in the United States. Instead, it stands closer in meaning to the terms country and nation-state. All such states are characterized as having a population, a territory, and sovereignty.

Population A state must have people, but the size of a population does not determine whether or not a place is a state. For example, Tuvalu, a group of nine tiny islands in the South Pacific with fewer than 12,000 people, is one of the world’s smallest states. By contrast, more than 1 billion people live in Henan Province in China. Because its people, land, and government are subject to the laws of China, Henan is not an independent state.

Territory States must have clearly defined and recognized borders. Throughout history, border disputes, and the wars they often trigger, have shaped relations between states.

Origins of the State

Many theories have been put forth to explain how and why the state came into being. Among them are

Divine Right Theory States are founded by God or the gods, and the ruler possesses a “divine right” to rule.

Evolution Theory States form gradually over time, growing from family and extended kinship groups.

Social Contract Theory States form when people reach a “contract” to surrender some power to a common authority in return for security.

Force Theory States form when an individual or group uses force to make enough people submit to a central authority.

How do social contract theory and force theory differ in their explanations of the origins of the state?
Today members of the United Nations, the world’s chief body for international cooperation, pledge to respect the territorial boundaries of every other member state.

**Government** All states are politically organized. In other words, they have governments that issue and enforce rules for the people living within their territories. These governments are recognized from within by their own people as well as by other nation states in the international community. The United States, France, Japan, China, Nigeria, Brazil, and Mexico are just a handful of the nearly 200 recognized states in the world today.

**Sovereignty** Every state is said to have sovereignty, or the supreme power to act within its territory and to control its external affairs. Sovereignty includes independence from other states as well as the freedom to establish a form of government. The individual states of the United States do not have this authority; therefore, they are not states in the sense of international law.

A state’s sovereignty does not mean that its government is above the law. Most states limit the sovereign power of their governments with a set of rules that restricts the lawful use of power. Usually, these rules are outlined in a constitution, or a written plan of government.

**Reading Check** Identifying the Main Idea Why is sovereignty important to a state?

**Functions of Government**

How does government function in people’s everyday lives? What roles does it play? Most governments, including the U.S. government, perform a number of key functions.

**Ensure National Security** One of the most basic purposes of government is to guard its territory and its people against external threats, such as those posed by enemy states and terrorists. Toward this end, most states devote a great deal of their resources to national defense forces, including armies, navies, and air forces. For example, in 2007 the United States spent about $600 billion on defense. That paid for more than 2.5 million military personnel and their weaponry, active military operations, and numerous peacekeeping missions as well as the nation’s intelligence-gathering activities.

Because national security also depends on maintaining good relations with other nations, the United States spent an additional $35 billion on diplomacy. This money helped support U.S. embassies, treaty negotiations, and other efforts to build strong relationships with foreign countries. In all, roughly one-fifth of our nation’s 2007 federal budget was spent on national defense measures and international relations.

**Maintain Order** As you read in Why It Matters that opened this section, the philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) asserted that life without government was like a war pitting each individual against the other. Universal war—who would want to live in such an environment?

Only when government was established, Hobbes argued, could order be brought to society. Indeed, one of the chief tasks of government is to establish and maintain order within its territory, thereby securing the safety of people and property. To do this, governments establish laws and a means to enforce those laws. Laws must set clear rules about unacceptable behavior. Stealing and killing, for example, are behaviors societies typically categorize as unlawful. Laws must also clearly set forth the consequences for violating the rules.

Ideas about lawful behavior differ from society to society and are often quite complicated. In the United States, for example, blatant bribery of a government official—such as giving a politician money with the intention of influencing his or her decision making—is illegal. Elected officials can, however, receive gifts, campaign contributions, and offers of employment so long as nothing is promised or expected in return. In some nations, all such gifts are unlawful.

Likewise, societies hold different ideas about what constitutes appropriate punishment. In the United States, the death penalty is a legally accepted punishment for murder in 36 states. By contrast, most European and Latin American countries no longer practice capital punishment.
Laws without enforcement serve little purpose, so governments have means to identify and punish wrongdoers. Usually, these functions are divided among three institutions. First, the police identify alleged wrongdoers. Then courts determine their guilt or innocence and assign a punishment. Lastly, in the penal system, or prisons, the punishment is carried out.

**Resolve Conflict** The ability of government to maintain order is closely tied to its ability to resolve conflict. Some governments maintain order through intimidation and force. Most governments, however, rely on other means—such as politics and the judicial system—for the peaceful resolution of conflict.

**Politics** is the process by which government makes and carries out decisions. The political process provides people with an arena for pursuing different and often competing interests. By participating in the political process, groups try to influence the decisions that government makes. Politics is also about debating issues and policies. In democratic societies, groups with different interests frequently must compromise with their opponents in order for government to make decisions. In this way, the political process helps resolve conflicts about what government should do—what laws it should create, what programs it should enact, and what policies it should pursue.

Government also establishes a system of justice in which conflicts can be resolved. Parties who feel they have been wronged can seek relief in courts. Courts determine whether a law has been broken or whether a party has been wronged and decide what should happen as a result.

**Provide Services** Today residents in most developed nations expect government to provide an array of services. The U.S. government, for example, spends billions of dollars every year on dozens of public policies and projects, ranging from building roads and providing parks and recreational facilities to delivering the mail and educating young people. The people of the United States pay local, state, and national taxes to fund these services.

Some U.S. government services, such as clean water, roads, and public parks, are available for everyone’s use and cannot be denied to any particular person or group. Such services are called public goods. Other services, such as medical care, high schools, and public housing may be restricted to people who meet specific qualifications.

**Provide for the Public Good** The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution lays out as one of its goals the promotion of “the general welfare.” Another name for the general welfare is the public good—the needs and interests of the people as a whole. In the United States, as in many countries, people believe that government must balance the public good with the needs of select groups within the population.

The notion of the public good is an abstract one. What does it mean? Who defines it? There may be agreement about some things considered in the public good. Building roads, for example, potentially benefits everyone, or at least everyone who uses the road. But what about the person whose house must be removed or whose land is taken by the government to make way for the road? Defining the public good involves making tough choices that often do not benefit everyone equally.
The definition of the public good changes over time. Before 1900, for example, the United States had few national laws to ensure a safe supply of food. Surely there could be no clearer example of serving the public good than putting in place regulations designed to safeguard food. Still, at the time, many people disagreed, including members of the Supreme Court. In their view, the public good was better served by minimizing government regulations on business.

Even the definition of “public” can change. For much of our nation’s history, most African Americans and Native Americans were not considered part of the “public,” nor did the government consider their needs or desires when making decisions designed to meet the public good. Moreover, because of restrictions on voting rights, all women and many men had no voice in defining the public good.

Over time, however, the definition of “public” has expanded to become a more inclusive concept. In 1868 African Americans became citizens. In 1920 women gained voting rights. Still, the debate over who to include in the “public” continues. For example, are people convicted of crimes part of the public whose interests must be served? What about undocumented immigrants and their children, who may be U.S. citizens?

Because our government is a government of, by, and for the people, it is our job to address these difficult questions. We do this through the process of politics. Being effective citizens and civic participants requires a solid understanding of the government we have.

**Making Inferences** How might ideas about the public shape policy?

## Theories of Rule

Political philosophers have long wondered why the majority of people allow others to rule them. Certainly, some governments rule through force and fear. But even in states ruled through force, rebellions can occur. What makes some forms of rule more acceptable than others?

To explain why people accept some forms of rule and not others, political philosophers have developed the idea that rulers often have legitimacy. That is, rulers are seen as right and proper by important segments of a nation’s population. As a result, people voluntarily accept governance from those they see as their rightful leaders.

### Divine Right

Throughout history, the belief that a ruler is chosen by God or the gods has been a powerful source of legitimacy. In ancient China, emperors were said to rule with the “Mandate of Heaven.” In ancient Egypt, in the Inca Empire, and in Japan until the mid-twentieth century, rulers were seen as divine, as gods on earth. Roman emperors, often merely successful generals, routinely declared themselves to be gods.

In seventeenth century Europe, to reinforce the absolute power they held over their kingdoms, kings often claimed that their power stemmed from the will of God. In the mid-1600s a French religious leader named Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet put forth a political and religious theory based on this idea. Bossuet argued that the French king Louis XIV possessed the **divine right of kings**. This made the king answerable only to God, not to the people he ruled. To disagree with the king was to disagree with God.
Combining the power of earthly rule with divine sanction, or approval, can be a remarkably effective means of asserting legitimacy—at least for a while. About 100 years after Bossuet defended the French crown, King Louis XVI was beheaded during the French Revolution.

**Natural Law and Natural Rights** An alternate theory of rule rests on the idea of natural law, a system of rules derived from the natural world. As a system, natural law is said to provide a just and rational order to all things in the world, including human behavior. Following the logic of natural law, all people, by virtue of their being human, possess natural rights. Today these rights are commonly understood as human rights.

Notions of natural law have a long history. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote of natural law, as did the ancient Roman leader Cicero. Medieval Christian thinkers, such as Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, linked the idea of natural law to their faith. Aquinas argued that since human nature comes from God, natural law, too, must come from the same divine source.

Natural law binds citizens and rulers alike. As a result, according to many philosophers, a legitimate government does not violate natural law. In this line of thinking, citizens are not obligated to follow a ruler who acts against natural law. “If the subjects have a government which commands unjust things,” wrote Thomas Aquinas, “they have no obligation to obedience.”

**The Social Contract** Beginning in the 1600s, a number of influential European thinkers contributed to a new theory of rule. Social contract theory holds that the first governments formed as a result of people agreeing among themselves to submit to the authority of a state. In return, the state would provide people protection and support. Under this theory, a government is legitimate only so long as the parties to the agreement hand over their power to the state.

The theory dates back to the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes. In his classic work *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes argues that people originally lived in a “state of nature” without government or laws. In the state of nature, people enjoyed complete personal freedom but were also driven by self-interest and were constantly at war with one another over scarce resources.

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

“In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain . . . no arts, no letters, no society, and, which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death, and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”

—Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 1651

Because the state of nature is so violent, Hobbes reasons, humans decide to cooperate. That is, they enter into a social contract and form a government.

Hobbes argues that government must have great power to defend itself and compel people to obey its laws. To describe the enormous power wielded by such a state, Hobbes uses the metaphor of a leviathan, a monstrous and powerful biblical sea creature.
The state’s power is enormous because it contains all the power given up by the people. In exchange, the people gain peace and security. This, Hobbes asserts, works to everyone’s advantage.

English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) also saw government as the product of a social contract built on the consent of the governed. Locke, however, emphasized that people had natural rights. In his view of the state of nature, people are governed by natural law. They consent to government solely to protect their natural rights, including life, liberty, and property.

Locke believed that in order to protect natural rights from government interference government power had to be limited, or subject to certain restrictions. Any violation of the people’s natural rights by government provided grounds for rebellion. In other words, people could withdraw their consent from government and start anew.

French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) introduced a third vision of the state of nature and the social contract. According to Rousseau, humans lived independent lives in the state of nature, but they were happy, good, and free. It was the formation of societies and government that corrupted the human condition and introduced inequality.

In *The Social Contract* (1762), Rousseau argues that the only way people could regain their freedom was by establishing a government that was both based on a social contract and responsive to the “general will” of the people. As you will read, Rousseau’s ideas, as well as Locke’s, would profoundly influence early American political leaders.

**Reading Check** Summarizing What assumptions about human nature did Locke and Rousseau make?

**Critical Thinking**

5. **Compare and Contrast** Copy the diagram below to contrast theories of rule based on divine right and the social contract.

![Divine Right vs. Social Contract Diagram]

**Focus on Writing**

6. **Persuasive** Imagine what life would be like if you lived in the “state of nature” described by Thomas Hobbes. Write a speech to convince others to join with you and form a government.
Eminent Domain: Public Good over Private Property

What rights should the government have over private property?

THE ISSUE
The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees “life, liberty, and property,” and states that no person’s property can be taken by the government for public use without just compensation. Still the national and state governments can exercise eminent domain, or the power to take private property for public use, presumably to serve the public good. In exchange, eminent domain compels the government to pay property owners a fair price for their land. In cases where the rights of property owners and the power of government are at odds, conflicts arise. Who decides what amounts to “the greater public good”? Whose rights are more important? Who determines a fair price?

VIEWPOINTS

Enabling Eminent Domain  Do the economic benefits of private development constitute public use under the Fifth Amendment? In Kelo v. City of New London (2005), the Supreme Court ruled that private, for-profit development—in this case, tearing down private residences in order to build restaurants, shops, offices, apartments, a hotel—indeed qualifies as public use. The Fifth Amendment did not require a literal definition of public use, the Court held, but instead the “broader and more natural interpretation of public use as ‘public purpose.’” The Court reasoned that because it benefited the economic development of the community, the plan did indeed fit the definition of public use.

Restricting Eminent Domain  Many Americans worry that the Kelo ruling gave local government too much power to seize private property. Some states have already passed legislation to restrict the use of eminent domain. In November 2005, about four months after the Kelo decision, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted to pass the Private Property Rights Protection Act. The act specified that federal funds would be withheld from state and local governments that exercise eminent domain over property intended for private economic development. The bill makes allowances for public projects such as building hospitals and roads and in cases of abandoned private property.

What Is Your Opinion?

1. Should government exercise the power of eminent domain to boost a city’s or a state’s economy? What constitutes abuse of eminent domain?

2. Is the public good always best served through eminent domain? Under what circumstances, if any, might your opinion change?
**Main Idea**
Different forms of governments are categorized based on who exercises authority and how power is organized.

**Reading Focus**
1. What are the classic forms of government?
2. How is national power organized differently in unitary, federal, and confederal systems?
3. In what ways do presidential and parliamentary systems differ?

**Key Terms**
- monarchy
- dictatorship
- oligarchy
- direct democracy
- republic
- unitary system
- federal system
- confederal system
- presidential system
- parliamentary system

**WHY IT MATTERS**
**The Power of Government**
More than 50 years ago, during the Korean War (1950–1953), the border between North Korea and South Korea was shut down. In the years since, the two countries have followed dramatically different paths.

In the 1980s South Korea developed into a vibrant multi-party democracy and an economic powerhouse. Today South Korea is the world’s fourteenth-largest economy and a leading exporter of cars and personal electronics. It is also one of the most digitally connected countries in the world. Wireless Internet, cell phones, and online gaming dominate the nation’s popular culture.

Meanwhile, North Korea turned to totalitarianism and communism and sank into poverty. Backed by nuclear capabilities and the world’s fifth-largest army, the nation’s dictator Kim Jong Il tightly controls all aspects of life in North Korea. Although information about life in North Korea is closely guarded, reports of mass famine, torture, slave labor, prison camps, and public executions have reached the outside world.

The divide between the two Koreas shows just how deeply forms of government affect people’s lives. Put simply, it matters a great deal who rules a nation and what form of government is in place.

Despite their differences, South Korean president Roh Moo-hyun (above, with his wife) and North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il (right) signed a wide-ranging peace and prosperity pact on October 4, 2007.
### The Classic Forms

“Democracy is the worst form of government,” British politician Winston Churchill once commented, “except all others that have been tried.” One might expect a democratic leader like Churchill to vigorously defend democracy. Instead, he suggests that all forms of government have their problems, and all have the power to do great harm or good to those under their rule. One way to understand how different forms of government affect people’s lives is to ask: Who has the authority to rule?

**Monarchy** In a monarchy the government is headed by one person, such as a king or a queen, who exercises supreme authority. Monarchs inherit their position and their power by virtue of being born into a royal family. In an absolute monarchy, their powers are unlimited and unchecked.

Monarchies have been the most common form of rule in world history. Today though, monarchies are rare. In some nations, such as Saudi Arabia, the royal family still exercises ultimate authority. Most present-day kings and queens, however, are ceremonial heads of state for constitutional monarchies. The real power lies in another part of the government, such as a legislative body. Spain, Great Britain, and Japan are just a few of the world’s 30 constitutional monarchies.

Monarchy is an example of autocracy, any form of government in which a single individual—an autocrat—controls most governing decisions. Placing the bulk of government power in the hands of one person is risky business. As the British historian Lord Acton once commented, “Power tends to corrupt and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely.” In the modern world, Acton’s maxim is most clear in nations under the rule of autocrats called dictators.

**Dictatorship** A dictatorship is a system of rule in which one person, a dictator, or a small group of people can hold unlimited power over government. Dictators often achieve power by violently overthrowing a government. They maintain power by force, stifling even peaceful opposition with varying degrees of repression and brutality.

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#### Classic Forms of Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monarchy</strong></td>
<td>- Ruled by a monarch, usually a king or a queen, who belongs to a royal family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: Jordan</td>
<td>- Power is inherited</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Absolute monarchs have unlimited power</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Constitutional Monarchy</strong></td>
<td>- Based on the idea that there are limits to the rightful power of a government over its citizens</td>
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<td>Example: United Kingdom</td>
<td>- Power of the monarch is limited by law; the real power lies in another branch of government</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- May coexist with other forms of government, such as representative democracy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dictatorship</strong></td>
<td>- Single dictator or a small group holds absolute authority and makes all decisions</td>
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<td>Example: Cuba</td>
<td>- Violence and force used to maintain rule</td>
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<td><strong>Totalitarian Regimes</strong></td>
<td>- Dictator holds ultimate authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: North Korea</td>
<td>- Government tightly controls all aspects of life—political, social, and economic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- No formal or informal limits on government</td>
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<td><strong>Oligarchy/Aristocracy</strong></td>
<td>- Small group of powerful people make most government decisions for their own benefit</td>
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<td>Example: ancient Greece (Sparta)</td>
<td>- Membership in the ruling group may be based on wealth, family, or military power</td>
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<td><strong>Theocracy</strong></td>
<td>- Rulers claim to represent and be directed by a set of religious ideas</td>
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<td>Example: Iran</td>
<td>- Laws are rooted in a particular religion or religious doctrine</td>
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<td>- Government power is unlimited</td>
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<td><strong>Direct Democracy</strong></td>
<td>- Government by the people; citizens are the ultimate source of government authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: ancient Greece (Athens)</td>
<td>- Citizens come together to discuss and pass laws and select leaders</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Works best in small communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Republic/Representative Democracy</strong></td>
<td>- Government by the people; citizens are the ultimate source of government authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: ancient Rome, United States</td>
<td>- Indirect form of democracy; citizens elect representatives to make government decisions on their behalf</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Representatives elected for set terms</td>
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Such was the state of affairs in Athens and other ancient Greek city-states. Athenian democracy was a direct democracy. Citizens met regularly in a popular assembly to discuss issues and vote for leaders. Athenians liked to boast that in their government everyone had equal say. In truth, Athenian democracy was an elite-based system. Only a small fraction of the male population was eligible to participate in political life. Neither women nor slaves, who formed the majority of the population, could participate.

Direct democracy works best in small communities, where people are able to meet face to face. For large, industrialized nations, however, direct democracy is an impractical option. For this reason, most of the world’s democracies—the United States included—are republics. A republic is an indirect form of democracy that places political decision making at least one step away from the people. In a republic, the people elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

Some dictatorships may be led by small groups of people, usually members of the military or the economic elite. This state of affairs is sometimes called an oligarchy, meaning rule by a few, or an aristocracy. Many dictatorships are secular governments, meaning that their laws and political institutions are independent of religion. Others, however, are theocracies, or governments under the rule of a small group of religious leaders.

Democracy The term democracy means “rule by the people.” Strictly speaking, in a pure democracy, the people make major government decisions through a process of majority rule. Whatever the majority of voters wants becomes law.

Dictators may claim that they respond to the will of the people or even that they head democratic states. In reality, most dictators head authoritarian regimes, under which people are subject to various forms of state control. At its most extreme, authoritarianism becomes totalitarianism. Totalitarian governments seek to dominate all aspects of society—the government, the economy, and even people’s personal beliefs and actions. Nazi Germany under Hitler, the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin, China under Mao Zedong, and North Korea under Kim Jong Il are examples of totalitarian regimes.

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Still, forms of direct democracy persist within republics. In the United States, for example, a handful of New England towns govern by holding town meetings, in which all townspeople have a say in setting policy.

People often use the terms republic and representative democracy interchangeably to describe the U.S. political system. The main point about a representative democracy is
that people are the ultimate source of government authority. In such a system, elected representatives closely follow the wishes of the people, elections are free and fair, and everyone has equal opportunity to participate in the political process.

**READING CHECK** Identifying the Main Idea Who holds political power in a representative democracy?

**Organizing National Power**

Most national governments consist of a number of smaller administrative units—states, cities, or provinces. The power to govern these units can be spread across different geographic regions or it can be centralized. In addition to understanding who governs, it is important to ask: How is national power organized across regions?

**Unitary Systems** The vast majority of the world’s nations have unitary systems of government. In a unitary system, sovereignty, or ultimate authority, rests in a single, national government. The United Kingdom, France, and Japan are leading examples of unitary governments.

In unitary systems, local levels of government may be active and important agencies of rule, but the national government has ultimate authority. It also has the power to change or abolish local governments as it sees fit. In the United Kingdom, for example, the British Parliament still has authority to override and even dismantle the parliaments of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

**Federal Systems** A federal system of government divides power over people and territory between a national government and smaller, regional levels of government. As it exists today, the federal system is largely an American invention—the product of compromises made by the Framers of the U.S. Constitution over balancing national power and states’ rights.

The U.S. federal system consists of two levels—an overarching national government and 50 state governments. Both levels have the power to make their own laws, elect officials, and create agencies. A significant feature of American federalism is that each level has the power to act independently of the other level, and neither level can abolish or reorganize the other level at will.
Presidents and Parliaments

People often believe that their government is the only or even the best way of doing things. But, as the discussion of unitary, federal, and confederal systems shows, there is no one way for a nation to organize power. All governments are born out of unique historical circumstances, developing their own special features and institutions. This is true, too, for democracy. Today most countries have adopted some form of democratic government. Even as they follow their own particular paths, the world’s democracies fall into two types of political systems—presidential and parliamentary.

Presidential Systems

Many of the world’s presidential systems have been modeled after the presidential system of the United States. In general, a presidential system is distinguished by having a president that is elected by the people for a limited term of office. In addition to performing the symbolic duties of a head of state, the president is in charge of the executive branch of government. For example, Congress cannot redraw the boundaries of California to give more land to Oregon and Nevada.

While it is no longer uniquely American, the federal system is still a comparatively uncommon form of government. Only 25 of the world’s 190 or so nations have federal systems. Among these are Canada, India, Germany, Mexico, Nigeria, and Brazil.

Confederal Systems

In a confederal system independent states join forces by forming a central government, called a confederation. The states keep full control over their own territories and people. However, the states delegate limited powers to a central government to pursue areas of common interests, such as providing for national defense and regulating trade.

In its earliest days under the Articles of Confederation, the United States operated as a confederal system. With the exception of the United Arab Emirates and the European Union, present-day confederations are rare.

**Reading Check** Comparing How is power divided in federal, unitary, and confederal systems?

### Presidential and Parliamentary Systems

Many of the world’s presidential systems have been modeled on the U.S. system, while the world’s parliamentary systems have taken the British system as a model. In July 2007, President George Bush welcomed a newly elected British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, on his first official visit to the United States.

#### Presidential

**ADVANTAGES**
- President is elected by the people for a fixed term and cannot be dismissed
- Separation of powers prevents abuses of authority
- Independent of other branches of government
- President is able to make decisions quickly and independently

**DISADVANTAGES**
- Difficult to remove an unsuitable president from office
- Separation of powers may lead to gridlock
- Branches of government may have different agendas
- Presidents may become too strong
- Many presidential systems have become authoritarian

#### Parliamentary

**ADVANTAGES**
- The legislative and executive branches are often united in purpose
- Prime minister directly accountable to parliament
- Easier to pass legislation

**DISADVANTAGES**
- Few checks and balances
- Prime minister selected by the legislative branch, not by the people
- Prime minister lacks independence

Which of the advantages and disadvantages listed in the chart might explain why more of the world’s democracies follow a parliamentary system of government?
He or she appoints cabinet members to oversee major state bureaucracies, executes policy, serves as the head of the armed forces, and is responsible for setting foreign policy and initiating domestic legislation.

A key feature—and an important strength—of presidential systems is that the president’s powers are balanced by a legislature, which is both popularly elected and independent of the president. This has important implications for how a president exercises power. Because the president and the legislature are independent of one another, they must work together to get things done. For example, in the United States, the president may be commander in chief of the armed forces, but only Congress can declare war. Similarly, Congress relies on the president to approve and carry out the laws that it passes.

Divided government can also be a drawback to presidential systems. In the United States, if the president and members of Congress hold opposing political views, they may refuse to cooperate. The result is political stalemate. In the worst of such situations, little gets accomplished—Congress is unable to pass laws without the president’s support. Without Congress’s support, an otherwise powerful president becomes immobilized.

Parliamentary Systems Most of the world’s democracies, by contrast, are modeled after Great Britain’s parliamentary system. In a parliamentary system, the executive and legislative branches of government are combined. In place of a popularly elected president, parliamentary systems have a prime minister. An elected legislature called parliament chooses the prime minister.

The prime minister is not only a member of parliament; he or she is also the leader of parliament’s majority party. Once selected, the prime minister appoints cabinet members from the ranks of the majority party. Should the prime minister ever lose support of the majority party, he or she must resign immediately, as do the cabinet members. Members of parliament then choose another prime minister, or else a new election is called in which voters choose a new parliament.

Combining the executive and legislative branches is both an advantage and a disadvantage for parliamentary systems. Some observers argue that it is easier to pass laws in a parliamentary system. Others take issue with the fact that prime ministers are neither directly elected by the people nor able to effectively take a stand against parliament.

Reading Check Contrasting How does electing a president differ from electing a prime minister?
Main Idea
American democracy is characterized by core democratic ideals and principles, as well as by the free enterprise system.

Reading Focus
1. Why are the ideals of liberty, equality, and self-government important to American democracy?
2. What are the principles of American democracy?
3. Why is the free enterprise system important to American democracy?

Key Terms
- ideal
- liberty
- equality
- self-government
- majority rule
- minority rights
- liberal democracy
- free enterprise

Approaching an Ideal
In 1954 the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling that struck down state-sponsored racial segregation in public schools. The ruling was hailed by many people as a bold step toward the realization of one of the most cherished ideals of American democracy—equality.

The next steps, however, would require much more courage. These steps were often taken by young African American children. In order to make the ruling a reality, these children would have to walk past crowds of angry white protestors and into the school.

In 1960 six-year-old Ruby Bridges, flanked by federal marshals, made this walk to reach her first-grade classroom. She was the only African American student assigned to the all-white school in her New Orleans, Louisiana, neighborhood.

Ruby and her family faced many challenges. People threatened them. Ruby’s father lost his job and her grandparents, who lived in Mississippi, were forced to move when the white people who owned the land they farmed found out about the events in New Orleans. Still, the Bridges family supported Ruby through what they knew was a key battle in the struggle for social equality—school integration. Ruby, with the federal government and her family’s support, bravely met the challenges.
Ideals of American Democracy

An ideal is a conception of something in its most perfect form. Liberty, equality, and self-government are the core ideals of American democracy. These ideals have been with us since the earliest days of our republic. They were put into words in our nation’s founding documents, and they have guided the expansion of American democracy for more than two centuries.

At our nation’s beginning, these ideals applied to only a small set of people. When the Framers of the Constitution set pen to paper on behalf of “We, the People,” they did not speak for all Americans. If they had, women, free African Americans, men without property, and slaves would have had a voice in the political process.

American democracy has evolved over time, and it is still changing. As they have in the past, Americans today look to the ideals of liberty, equality, and self-government while shaping the democratic experiment.

Liberty More than anything, the Founders of our nation aspired to liberty, or the ability of people to act and think as they choose, so long as their choices do no harm to the liberty or well-being of others. Another word for liberty is freedom. It was for liberty that the American patriot Patrick Henry declared himself ready to die; it was in the name of “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” that the 13 American colonies banded together to declare independence. And, once the Revolutionary War was over, the Framers of the Constitution crafted a new plan for government to “secure the Blessings of Liberty to Ourselves and our Posterity.”

In the early days of the republic, liberty was thought of mainly as freedom from government control. The Framers carefully identified the basic rights of the people and then declared them off-limits from government interference. “Congress shall make no law,” the First Amendment says, that restricts an individual’s right to speak, assemble, publish, or worship freely.

Liberty also refers to a person’s freedom to exercise the rights guaranteed to all U.S. citizens under the Constitution. In this sense, citizens are free to vote, free to exercise their right to counsel, free to experience equal rights and equal protection under the law, and free to fulfill their potential. In this last sense, liberty is clearly not defined by the absence of government restraints. Government intervention may in fact be required to protect the rights of citizens. For example, extensive government action was necessary to protect the right of Ruby Bridges to an education and to ensure her equal protection under the law.

Equality Like liberty, Americans have embraced equality as a worthy democratic pursuit. Equality is the principle that all people possess a fundamental, moral worth that entitles them to fair treatment under the law and equal opportunity in all aspects of life—political, social, and economic. It was in this sense that Thomas Jefferson eloquently argued that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.”

In Democracy in America (1835), the French noble Alexis de Tocqueville was among the first to seriously explore the meaning of equality in American culture. Tocqueville saw the United States leading “a great democratic revolution” that would sweep the world. In the 1830s, he travelled to the United States, where he set off on a journey that led him across the nation, from New York, down the Mississippi River, and into the lower South. Tocqueville deeply admired the widespread political and economic equality he observed. He saw this as American democracy’s great promise but also worried that equality was incomplete and that it could even be a peril to liberty.

Tocqueville was among the first to note that the American quest for equality was unfinished business. On his travels, he witnessed firsthand glaring examples of inequality, including the poor treatment of Native Americans and what he called “the abomination of slavery.”
Although Tocqueville applauded the goals of American democracy, he feared that people might give too much power to a central government to achieve equality. He called this democratic despotism, a subtle form of tyranny that could reduce a nation’s people to a “herd of timid and industrious animals.” This was democracy’s peril. For democracy to truly work, equality had to be kept in balance with liberty.

Self-Government From the beginning of our republic, Americans have held fast to the ideal of self-government, or the belief that ordinary people could aspire to rule themselves and do so as political equals. The key to self-government is that people are the ultimate source of government authority.

The belief that the only just government was a government that derived its powers directly from the consent of the people set the American Revolution in motion. The Declaration of Independence plainly states this ideal: “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” Moreover, the Declaration contends that, should a government lose consent, it is “the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government.” In short, the people have a right to revolution. This is, of course, exactly what happened.

Reading Check Summarizing What steps did the Founders take to protect liberty?

Principles of American Democracy

Today our sense of who we are as Americans is deeply bound—indeed, inseparable from—our belief in the democratic ideals of liberty, equality, and self-government. But ideals are goals, and democracy is not something that already exists or something that just happens. A commitment to uphold and act upon each of the following principles is necessary to maintain American democracy.

Worth of the Individual American democracy places a high value on individual freedom, personal responsibility, self-reliance, and individual achievement. The deep respect that Americans hold for the individual is strongly tied to the belief that, if left free to pursue their own path, people can reach their highest potential.

These beliefs are rooted in the values our nation’s Founders held for the individual’s natural capacity for reason, intellect, and self-determination. The words in the Declaration of Independence that express the Founders’ sentiments bear repeating: “all men are created equal” and are born with rights to “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” For the Founders, this positive estimation of human nature and natural rights was the foundation of self-rule.

Rule of Law The Framers of the U.S. Constitution aimed to create a government under the rule of law. John Adams described the United States as “a government of laws, not of men.” In other words, the U.S. government and its officials are subject to
recognized and enforced limits on their powers. These limits are spelled out in the U.S. Constitution. Ideally, the rule of law forces leaders to act according to the law and holds them accountable when they do not.

**Majority Rule, Minority Rights** A basic principle of democracy is that decisions are made by *majority rule*. Ideally, a candidate wins an election by a majority, by getting more than half of the votes cast. In fact, candidates typically win by a plurality, or by getting more votes than any other candidate.

The Framers fretted over granting any group—even a majority—too much political power. Any such imbalance, they believed, could pose a direct threat to the rights of individuals and to the common good. For this reason, they took measures to protect individual rights, such as freedom of speech, as well as government institutions, such as the Supreme Court, against what they called the “tyranny of the majority.”

Americans believe strongly that a balance must be struck between majority rule and protecting minority rights. *Minority rights* are the political rights held by groups who make up less than half of the population. In a *liberal democracy*, such as the United States, the individual rights and liberties of all people, including those in the minority, are protected. In addition, all citizens have the right to express their opinions, even if their views are not popular. In turn, those in the majority have a responsibility to respect the views of the minority. Successful liberal democracies achieve balance between majority and minority groups through debate, political persuasion, and elections.

**Compromise** Another key principle of American democracy is compromise, the ability of two opposing groups to give up some of their demands and come to an agreement. In part, the necessity for compromise is a by-product of the diversity of the American people. In the American political system, there is rarely a shortage of political interests and issues. For example, some people may think that government should raise taxes to fund math and science training for young people entering today’s competitive technological job market. Others might argue that they are taxed unfairly and that they should have their taxes cut. When such conflicts occur, compromise is necessary to keep the political process moving.

**Citizen Participation** To be successful, self-government requires participation from citizens. At the very least, citizens must be informed about public issues so that they can participate effectively, whether by voting or by running for office. In a strong democracy people participate in the political process at all levels. They become informed of the issues, speak their minds, serve on juries, debate public issues, hold their leaders accountable, attend community meetings, volunteer for military and social service, pay taxes, and join political parties. They must even be willing, on occasion, to stand in protest for what they believe. Yet participation must also be peaceful, respectful of the law, and tolerant of the rights and liberties of others.

### Key Principles of American Democracy

- **Worth of the Individual** All people are created equal and deserve an opportunity to pursue their potential.
- **Rule of Law** Government is subject to recognized and enforced limits.
- **Majority Rule/Minority Rights** The majority rules but the rights of the political minority are protected.
- **Compromise** Despite their differences, opposing groups can reach agreements.
- **Citizen Participation** A healthy democracy requires active citizen participation at all levels.

### Reading Check: Drawing Conclusions

Why is it important to protect minority rights in a democracy?
The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled on a number of cases concerning democratic ideals and principles. In Gideon v. Wainwright, the Court considered whether the right to counsel was necessary to guarantee a defendant’s liberty and ensure equality under the law.

Background
On June 3, 1961, someone broke into the Bay Harbor Pool Room in Panama City, Florida, and smashed a cigarette machine and a jukebox, stealing money from both machines. Later that day, Clarence Earl Gideon was arrested and charged with the crime of breaking and entering. Gideon, a known drifter, was found with change in his pockets and a bottle of wine. A witness later told police that he had seen Gideon in the poolroom on the day of the burglary.

Gideon could not afford a defense attorney, and a Florida judge refused to appoint him one. Forced to defend himself, Gideon was found guilty and sentenced to five years in a state penitentiary. In prison, Gideon studied the law. He determined that his lack of legal counsel was a denial of due process, meaning that without a lawyer, Gideon had been unfairly deprived of “life, liberty, and property.” Armed with this argument, Gideon appealed his case to the Florida Supreme Court, but the lower court’s decision was upheld. The U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review his case in 1963.

Arguments for Gideon
Gideon argued that the court’s failure to appoint him counsel violated his right to a fair trial and due process of law as protected by the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution. In prison, Gideon filed a petition with the Florida Supreme Court for release because of unjust imprisonment. The court denied his request. Gideon appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, filing suit against the Secretary of the Florida Division of Corrections, Louie L. Wainwright.

Arguments for Wainwright
In Betts v. Brady (1942) the U.S. Supreme Court had previously ruled that, in criminal trials, states only had to provide defendants with counsel under special circumstances, including the complexity of the criminal charges as well as the defendant’s mental state and ability to read and write. Since Gideon had not claimed any special circumstances, the Florida Supreme Court had upheld the lower court’s decision. At the time, Florida state law only provided defendants with lawyers in capital cases, or cases in which the death penalty could be inflicted.

On March 18, 1963, in a unanimous decision, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Betts and ruled in favor of Gideon. The Court held that the right to counsel was essential to a fair trial. Thus, a person who could not afford legal counsel had to be provided with counsel by the state or the national government. Subsequent Court decisions extended the Gideon ruling to all felonies and misdemeanors that can result in prison time. Because the quality of state-provided defense counsel varies from state to state, the Court established in Strickland v. Washington (1984) a two-part test for determining the adequacy of any counsel, including a court-appointed one. Such rulings have changed the nation’s perspective on the rights of criminal defendants.

What Do You Think?
Today all states are required to provide lawyers for criminal defendants who can not afford to pay for legal representation on their own. What measures do you think states should take to ensure quality legal representation for all criminal defendants?
Free Enterprise

Of all the freedoms held dear to American democracy—freedom of speech, religion, and the press—economic freedom holds a special place. This freedom is best expressed in the economic system of the United States, the free enterprise system. **Free enterprise** allows for people and businesses to make their own economic choices about how best to produce, distribute, and exchange goods and services with limited interference from government. It also protects rights of ownership to the results of one’s labor and to one’s property.

Our nation’s Founders believed deeply that safeguarding economic freedom was key to preserving other freedoms. In this regard, they were influenced by John Locke, who asserted that people have a natural right to “life, liberty, and property.” Equally important, the Founders believed that economic freedom allowed people to build wealth that would empower them to limit the power of government.

Like all freedoms, free enterprise is a matter of degrees. Over time, the U.S. government has often intervened in the economy, for example, by creating consumer protection laws and agencies. Still, the U.S. economy holds true to the basic principles of the free-enterprise system.

As you will read in Chapter 15, every country handles its economy differently. In some countries, like the United States, the government’s role in the economy is minimal. In other countries the government completely controls the economy. A government’s role in the economy affects the economic freedoms of individuals. In countries where the government does not interfere in the economy, economic freedoms thrive. Where governments play a major role in the economy, people may have fewer economic freedoms or none at all. The proper balance between government intervention in and noninvolvement with the economy will continue to change over time.

**Economic Freedoms**

In the United States, each person has the right to
- Earn money
- Purchase property
- Spend income on goods and services
- Choose an occupation or change jobs
- Determine where to save money and how much
- Open new businesses

In other countries the government completely controls the economy. A government’s role in the economy affects the economic freedoms of individuals. In countries where the government does not interfere in the economy, economic freedoms thrive. Where governments play a major role in the economy, people may have fewer economic freedoms or none at all. The proper balance between government intervention in and noninvolvement with the economy will continue to change over time.

**READING CHECK** Summarizing Why did the Founders think protecting economic freedom was important?

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**SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT**

**Reviewing Ideas and Terms**

1. a. **Describe** What are the ideals of American democracy?
   b. **Evaluate** Which ideal of American democracy do you think is most important? Explain.

2. a. **Define** What is the rule of law?
   b. **Predict** What would happen to American democracy if citizens stopped participating in political and social life?

3. a. **Explain** Why was protecting economic freedom important to the Founders?
   b. **Elaborate** Under what circumstances do you think government involvement in the economy might be justified?

**Critical Thinking**

4. **Analyze** Copy the graphic organizer below, and identify and describe three core ideals of American democracy.

   ![Graphic Organizer]

   **Ideals**

5. **Expository** Write a letter to the editor urging either more or less government involvement in the U.S. economy. Draw on democratic ideals and principles to support your argument.

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**FOCUS ON WRITING**

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**ONLINE QUIZ**

**FOUNDATIONS OF GOVERNMENT 25**
Constitutional Government

Our nation’s Founders struggled with how best to prevent government abuse of power. Their answer was to establish a constitutional government that protected individual rights by placing limits on what government can do and how it can exercise power.

**What is a constitution?** As it is understood today, a constitution is a plan that sets forth the structure and powers of government. Constitutions specify the main institutions of government. In so doing constitutions state the powers of each of these institutions and the procedures that the institutions must use to make, enforce, and interpret law. Usually constitutions also specify how they can be changed, or amended. In the American conception of constitutional government the constitution is a form of higher, or fundamental, law that everyone, including those in power, must obey.

Many controversies surround written constitutions, including what the words mean, whether the understanding of the document should evolve or remain unchanged, and who should have the final say about what the document means. Nearly all constitutions are written. Only three of the world’s major democracies have unwritten constitutions—that is, constitutions that are not single written documents. These are Britain, Israel, and New Zealand. In each of these nations, the constitution consists of a combination of written laws and precedents.

Constitutional government means limited government—government limited by the provisions of the constitution. Limited government is characterized by restraints on power as specified by the constitution. In democracies, for example, one restraint is the inclusion of free, fair, and regular elections. The opposite is unlimited government, in which those who govern are free to use their power as they choose, unrestrained by laws or elections. Aristotle described the unlimited government of a single ruler as tyranny. Today the terms autocracy, dictatorship, or totalitarianism often are used to describe such governments. Believing that they had been subjected to tyranny by the British king, the Founders also believed that government in the newly independent United States of America should be limited by the higher law of a written constitution.

**How did the Founders characterize higher law?** According to the founding generation, a constitution should function as a type of higher law. A higher law differs from a statute enacted by a legislature in these four ways:

- It sets forth the basic rights of citizens.
- It establishes the responsibility of the government to protect those rights.
- It establishes limitations on how those in government may use their power with regard to citizens’ rights and responsibilities, the distribution of resources, and control or management of conflict.
- It can be changed only with the consent of the citizens and according to established and well-known procedures.
Why did the Founders fear government abuse of power? Given their knowledge of history and their experiences under British rule, it is not surprising that the Founders feared possible abuses of governmental powers.

“Give all power to the many, they will oppress the few. Give all power to the few, they will oppress the many.”

—Alexander Hamilton, 1787

“There are two passions which have a powerful influence on the affairs of men. These are ambition and avarice; the love of power and the love of money.”

—Benjamin Franklin, 1787

“From the nature of man, we may be sure that those who have power in their hands . . . will always, when they can . . . increase it.”

—George Mason, 1787

What kinds of governments may be constitutional governments? The Founders knew that constitutional government might take many forms. It is possible to have a constitutional government with one ruler, a group of rulers, or rule by the people as a whole so long as those in power must obey the limitations placed on them by the “higher law” of the constitution. Historically, constitutional governments have included monarchies, republics, democracies, and various combinations of these forms of government.

The problem for any constitutional government is to make sure that those in power obey constitutional limits. History provides many examples of rulers who ignored constitutions or tried illegally to increase their personal power. The Founders believed that direct democracy was more likely to ignore constitutional limits than representative government. Direct democracy makes it easy for momentary passions to inflame people and leads to passionate rather than reasoned judgments. The interests of the community as well as the rights of individuals in the minority may suffer as a result.

Reviewing Ideas
1. Recall Why is a constitution considered a higher law, and what are the major characteristics of higher law?
2. Explain What is the difference between limited and unlimited government? Do you think the difference is important?

Critical Thinking
3. Evaluate Is it important that a constitution be written? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a written constitution? Of an unwritten constitution?
Connecting Online

Go online for review and enrichment activities related to this chapter.

Quiz and Review

GOV 101
Examine key concepts in this chapter.

ONLINE QUIZZES
Take a practice quiz for each section in this chapter.

Activities

eActivities
Complete Webquests and Internet research activities.

INTERACTIVE FEATURES
Explore interactive versions of maps and charts.

KEEP IT CURRENT
Link to current events in U.S. government.

Partners

American Bar Association
Division for Public Education
Learn more about the law, your rights and responsibilities.

Center for Civic Education
Promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy.

Online Textbook

ONLINE SIMULATIONS
Learn about U.S. government through simulations you can complete online.

Chapter Review

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

SECTION 1 (pp. 6–12)

1. a. Review Key Terms For each term, write a sentence that explains its significance or meaning: government, state, sovereignty, politics, legitimacy, divine right of kings, social contract theory.

b. Summarize According to philosophers such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, why are people willing to enter into a social contract?

c. Rate What type of government do you think is best suited to accomplish the purposes of government outlined in this section?

SECTION 2 (pp. 14–19)

2. a. Review Key Terms For each term, write a sentence that explains its significance or meaning: monarchy, dictatorship, oligarchy, direct democracy, republic.

b. Contrast What are the main differences between federal, unitary, and confederal systems?

c. Evaluate Which advantages and disadvantages might explain why there are more parliamentary than presidential systems?

SECTION 3 (pp. 20–25)

3. a. Review Key Terms For each term, write a sentence that explains its significance or meaning: ideal, liberty, equality, self-government, free enterprise.

b. Analyze Why do you think that the ideal of liberty is important to the free enterprise system?

c. Elaborate Under what circumstances do you think the government should regulate business in a free enterprise system?

Critical Reading

Read the passage in Section 2 that begins with the heading “The Classic Forms.” Then answer the questions that follow.

4. Which of the following is an example of limited government?

A dictatorship
B authoritarian regime
C constitutional monarchy
D oligarchy

5. Which of the following forms of governments has elected representatives that make decisions on behalf of the people?

A monarchy
B authoritarian regime
C direct democracy
D representative democracy
Read the passage in Section 3 that begins with the heading “Principles of American Democracy.” Then answer the questions that follow.

6. Which principle of American democracy holds government officials accountable to the law?
   A. worth of the individual
   B. rule of law
   C. majority rule
   D. minority rights

7. Why did the Framers of the U.S. Constitution fear majority rule?
   A. Majority rule would ensure minority rights.
   B. Majority rule could pose a threat to the rights of individuals.
   C. Majority rule could lead to a theocracy.
   D. Majority rule could not coexist with minority rights and democracy.

8. Create a four-column chart or spreadsheet contrasting classic forms of government. In the first column list forms of government: monarchy, dictatorship, totalitarian regime, theocracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, constitutional monarchy, republic/representative democracy, and direct democracy. In the second column include a definition and one historical or present-day example for each form. In the third column record details about how leaders are selected and identify the government as limited or unlimited. Use the fourth column to tell how each form affects people’s private lives and describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens living under that government. Conduct library or Internet research as necessary to complete the chart or spreadsheet.

9. Read the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution in the Reference Section at the end of your textbook. According to the Preamble, what is the main purpose of the Constitution? Explain the meaning of each of its stated purposes.

**ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES**

Excerpt In Leviathan (1651), Thomas Hobbes argued that to create an effective government capable of imposing order, people had to agree to surrender power to a central authority.

“The only way to erect such a common power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort as that by their own industry and by the fruits of the earth they may nourish themselves and live contentedly, is to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will.”

10. Analyze According to Hobbes, how do people benefit from giving their power to the state?

11. Draw Conclusions What is the source of the state’s power?

**FOCUS ON WRITING**

Persuasive Writing Persuasive writing takes a position for or against an issue, using facts and examples as supporting evidence. To practice persuasive writing, complete the assignment below.

Writing Topic: Voting and Constitutional Democracy

12. Assignment The United States is the world’s oldest constitutional democracy. However, research shows that American citizens vote less often than citizens of other nations. Based on what you have read in this chapter, write a paragraph persuading people to vote. Explain why voting is necessary to maintain constitutional democracy and American democratic ideals. Support your position with reasoning and examples from the chapter.