

# **CIVICS SUMMER INSTRUCTIONAL PACKET**



## **DIRECTIONS:**

- 1. Please complete the eight Civics lesson enclosed in the packet.**
- 2. Create and keep a Civics journal (notebook) to define terms to understand and answer the questions at the end of each lesson. You will complete some of the activities by writing answers in this packet and others in your Civics journal.**
- 3. Turn in your completed Civics Summer Packet and Civics journal to your Civics teacher.**

**-Department of Social Sciences-  
-Miami Dade County Public Schools-**

**Students:** This instructional resource is designed to give you some background knowledge you will need for success in 7<sup>th</sup> grade Civics. Go through the resource and read about the interesting manner in which the U.S. Government is organized all centered around the ideals established in the U.S. Constitution, the highest law in the land.

If you complete the activities found here, you will be on the road to success in 7<sup>th</sup> grade Civics.

Included on this page are additional Internet-based resources to assist you as well and are optional for use/completion.

**Happy Learning!**

**Civic-related Internet Resources:**

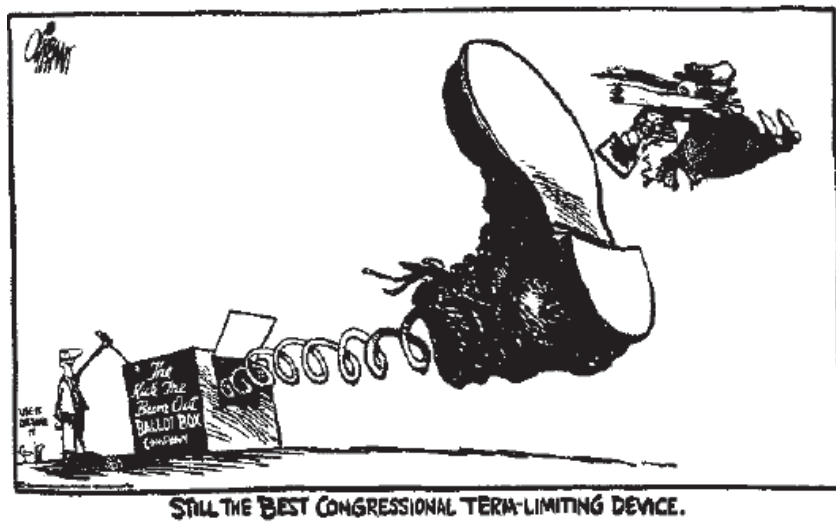
1. [M-DCPS Department of Social Sciences](#)
2. [iCivics](#) (game-based learning tool for Civics)
3. [PBS Kids](#)
4. [Branches of Government Game](#)



## Political Cartoon Analysis

Political cartoons have influenced, shaped, and reported on political issues throughout much of modern history. They are an entertaining and creative way to consider opinions of current and past events. However, determining the meaning of the cartoon can be tricky. Below are several political cartoons related to Civic education. Look at them and use the sheet that follows to analyze at least one (1) cartoon.





# Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

## Level 1

Visuals	Words (not all cartoons include words)
1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.	1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.  2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.  3. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

## Level 2

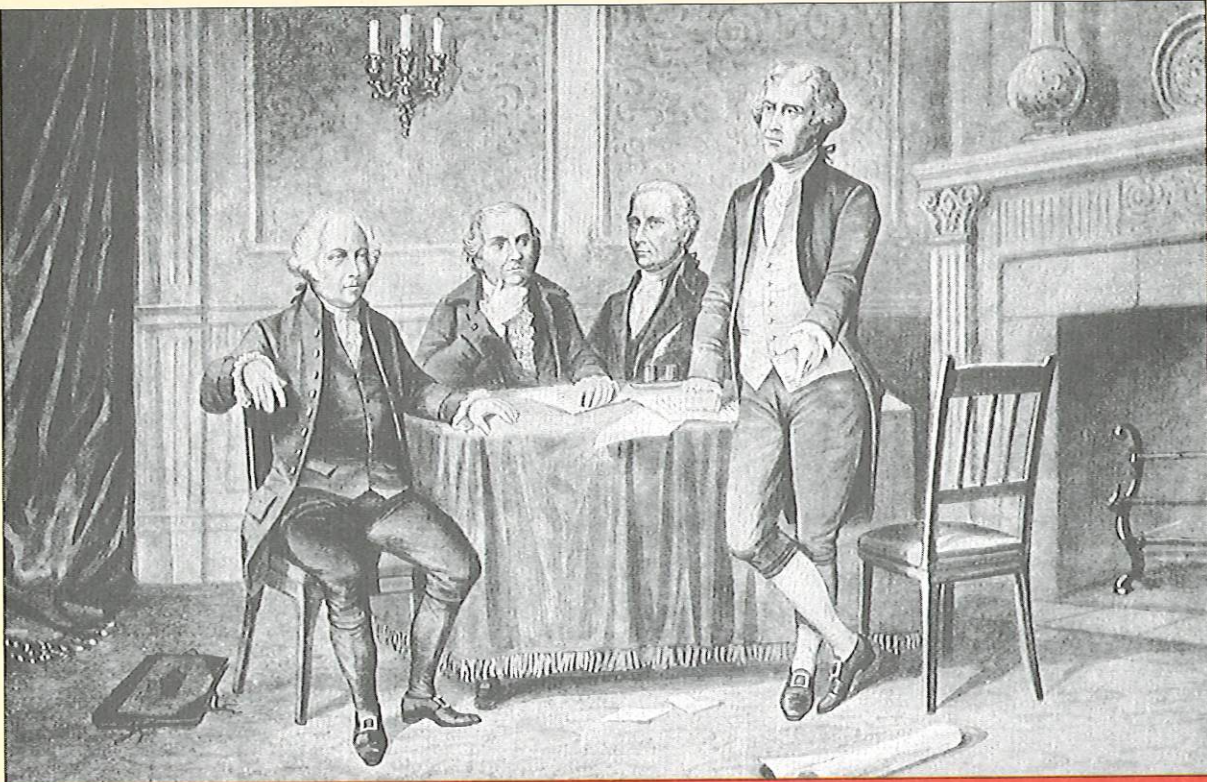
Visuals	Words
<p>2. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?</p> <p>3. What do you think each symbol means?</p>	<p>4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?</p> <p>5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.</p>

### Level 3

- A. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.
- B. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.
- C. Explain the message of the cartoon.
- D. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?



## Why did the Founders believe that people needed a government?



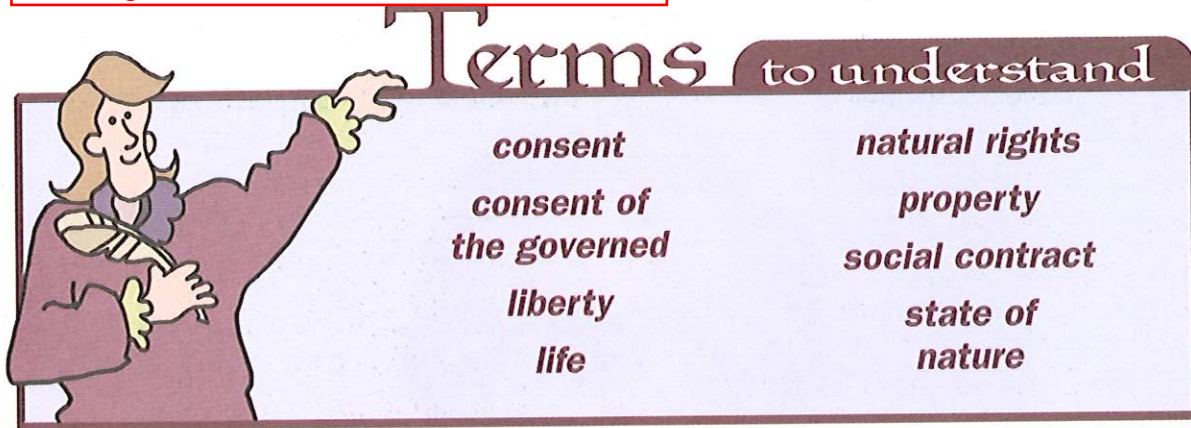
### Purpose of the lesson

In this lesson, you will learn some of the Founders' most important ideas about our basic rights. You will learn the Founders' beliefs about where these rights come from. Finally, you will learn why the Founders believed that people must have government.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to explain the Founders' ideas about our rights and the purposes of our government.



Directions: Identify/Define the following terms in your journal by writing them under the following title: Lesson 1 Terms

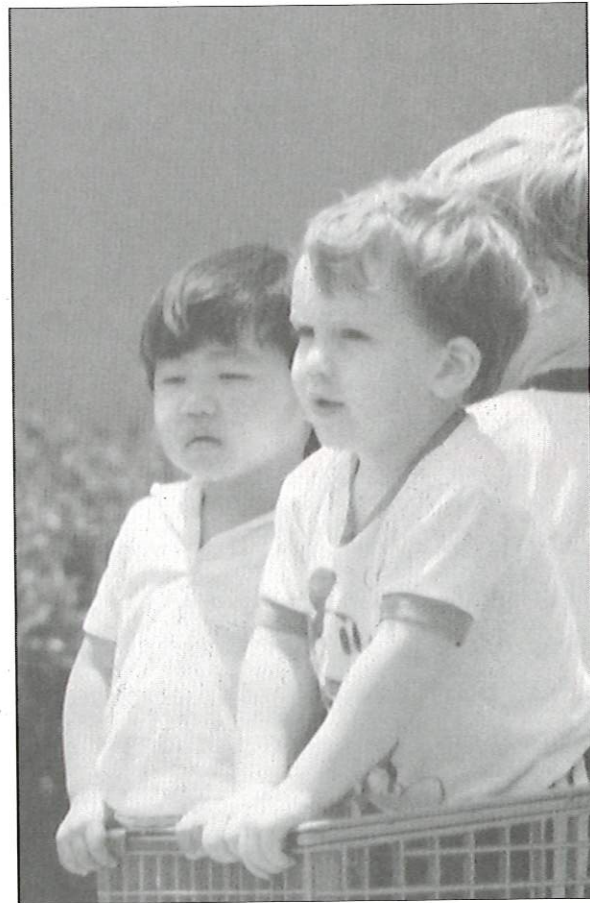


### **What were the Founders' beliefs about rights?**

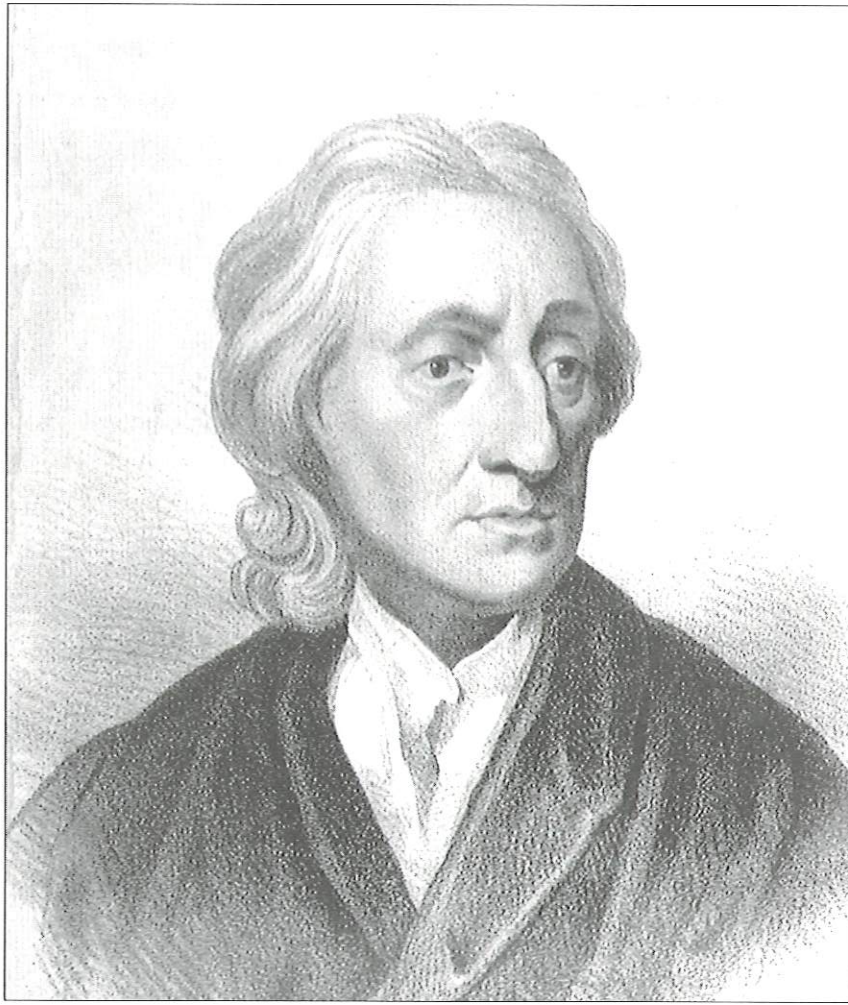
Most of the Founders believed that people have certain natural rights. Natural rights include the rights to life, liberty, and property. All persons have **natural rights** just because they are human beings. Everyone is born with these rights. No one can take these rights away. Here is what these natural rights mean.

- **Life** is the right to live without fear of being injured or killed by others.
- **Liberty** is the right to be free. Some examples of liberties are the rights to believe what you wish, to read what you want, to speak freely, and to travel wherever you want to go.

- **Property** is the right to own things such as books, a house, land, or a business. Your labor or work is also your property.



► What natural rights do all people have from the time they are born?



► Do you agree with John Locke's ideas? Why?

### **What problems might we have protecting our rights?**

The Founders knew that protecting the rights of the people was not an easy thing to do. Sometimes people try to take the rights of others away from them. The Founders thought they should have a plan to protect their own rights and the rights of others.

Many Founders had read a book by John Locke. John Locke

was an Englishman. He lived from 1632 to 1704. Locke wrote about natural rights. His ideas help us to understand more clearly the problem of protecting the rights of people.

John Locke suggested that you imagine living in a state of nature. A **state of nature** is a situation where there is no government, no rules, no laws. Think about what your life might be like in a state of nature.





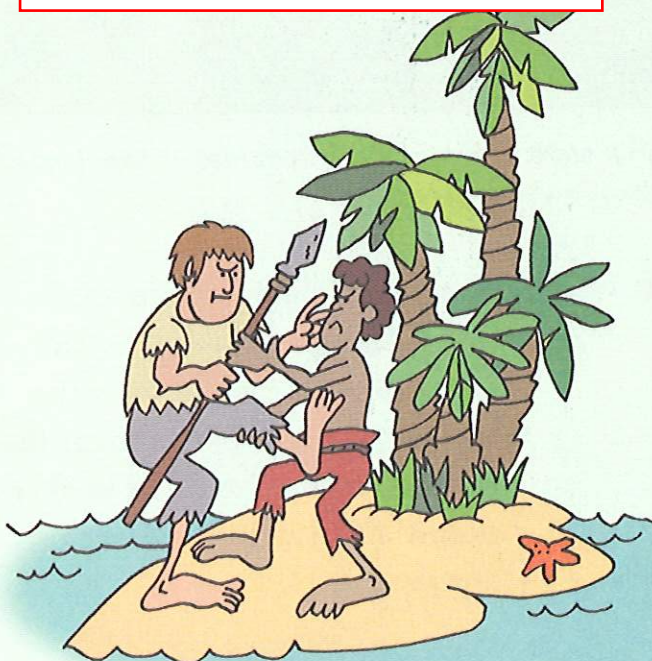
## Ideas to discuss

### **What might happen if there were no rules, laws, or government?**

Imagine that you live on an island far away. There are no rules, no laws, and no government. There is no one to tell you what to do.

**Name your imaginary far away island:**

**Where in the world is your island located?**



Answer the following questions in your journal under the following title:

#### Lesson 1 Questions

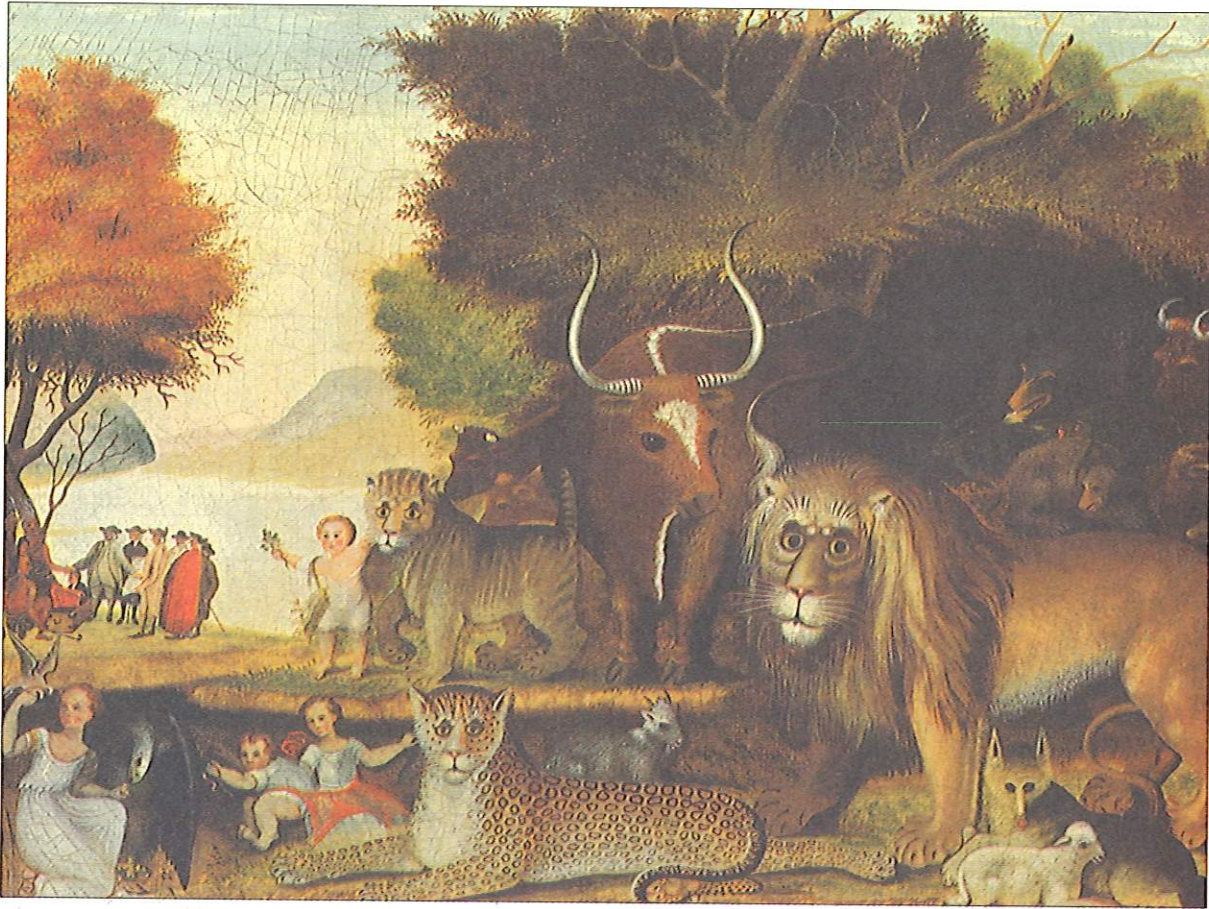
1. Would anyone have the right to govern you? Would you have the right to govern anyone else? Why?
2. Would you have any rights? What might they be?
3. What might people who were smarter or stronger than others try to do? Why?
4. What might people who were not as smart as others or who were weaker than others try to do? Why?
5. What might life be like for you, your family, and everyone else in a state of nature?

#### Activity:

Draw a map of your imaginary island and include the following: physical features, a compass rose, a key/legend, and label your map with other features you imagine to exist on your island.

► *What would life be like without any government?  
How would people protect their rights?*





How does this artist's view of life in a state of nature differ from that of John Locke?

Edward Hicks, The Peaceable Kingdom, © 1840, Holger Cahill Collection

**What did John Locke say might happen if there were no rules, laws, or government?**

You just had a chance to think about your rights in a state of nature. Now, you might want to compare your thinking with that of John Locke. Locke thought that life would be very difficult without laws or government. He worried about the problems that might happen. He said:

1. Some people might try to take away other people's rights. The stronger people might force the weaker people to do the things the stronger people want. The weaker people might unite against the stronger people.
2. People would have natural rights, but their rights would not be safe.
3. It would be very hard to live a safe, peaceful, and happy life in a state of nature.



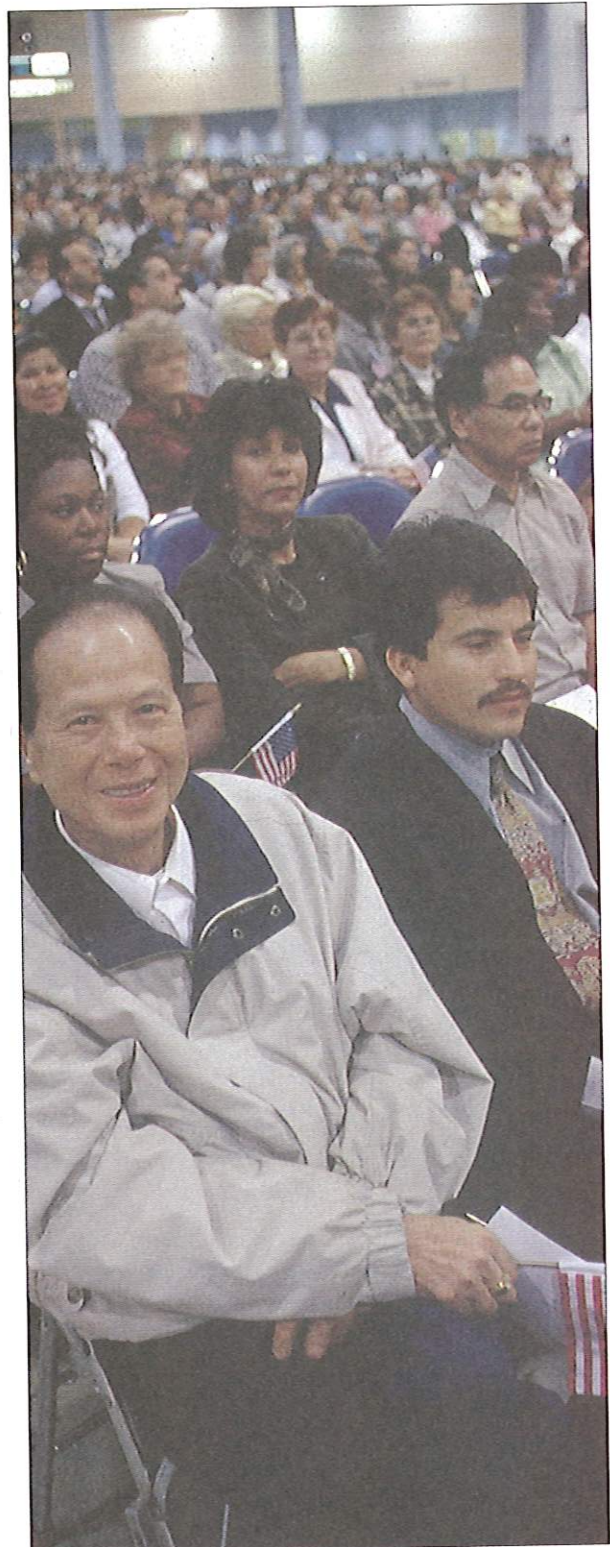
## **Why did the Founders believe we needed a government?**

John Locke wrote about how to solve the problems of life in a state of nature. He said people could make a social contract. A **social contract** is an agreement among the people to set up a government. The people agree to give up something and then they receive something in return.

The people give up some of their freedom. They **consent**, or agree, to create a government and laws. The **consent of the governed** means that the people consent to obey the laws and the government they create. The people no longer will be able to do whatever they want.

What the people gain is protection for their rights. The government protects the rights of the people. It protects their rights to life, liberty, and property. People would feel safer than they did in a state of nature. The people might live more secure and happier lives.

The Founders believed that people need government to protect their rights. Therefore, the main purpose of government, they said, is to protect a person's rights to life, liberty, and property.



► How do citizens show their consent to be governed?



Directions: Answer the following questions in your journal under the following title:

**Lesson 1 Review Questions.**

**Review the lesson**

1. What basic rights did the Founders believe people should have?
2. What are natural rights? How do you get natural rights?
3. What might life be like if there were no rules, laws, or government?
4. What is a social contract?
5. What did the Founders think should be the main purpose of government?

**Lesson Fun Activities To-Do**

1. Draw a cartoon or picture below explaining what life might be like in a state of nature and why we need government.

2. Write a short story that tells how the rights of life, liberty, and property apply to you and your family.

3. Civics Online Fun: Visit the following website to learn more about this topic and Civics information: <http://games.sunnylandsclassroom.org/Preview/Default.aspx>

## Civics Lesson 1: Extension Activity: Debate

EQ: Have Americans lived up to the ideals in the Declaration of Independence?

Directions: Click on the following link: “Have American lived up to the ideals in the Declaration of Independence?” <http://www.debate.org/opinions/have-americans-lived-up-to-the-ideals-in-the-declaration-of-independence>.

The site is divided into various sub questions with “yes” or “no” answers are responses. Read the responses in order to shape your opinion on the essential question.

Once you have read some of the opinions expressed on Debate.org (the site reference above), fill in the chart on the next page.

EQ: Have Americans lived up to the ideals in the Declaration of Independence?

Yes	No
<div></div>	
<p><b>My opinion is:</b></p> <div></div>	



## What is a constitutional government?



### Purpose of the lesson

You have learned what the Founders believed about natural rights, the common good, and civic virtue. In this lesson, there are two other important things to study and understand. The first is a constitution and the other is constitutional government. You will learn to explain the difference between the two.

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to explain what you can learn about a nation by studying its constitution. You should also be able to explain what constitutional government means. Finally, you should be able to explain the difference between a constitutional government and a dictatorial government.





## Problem to solve

### *Which rules and laws are about government?*

#### Activity:

Read the following Rules and Laws # 1-6.

Place a checkmark next to the rules and laws that explain how a government is to be run.

Place an "x" next to the rules and laws that do not explain how a government is to be run. Write locations and places in which these rules and laws would apply in society.

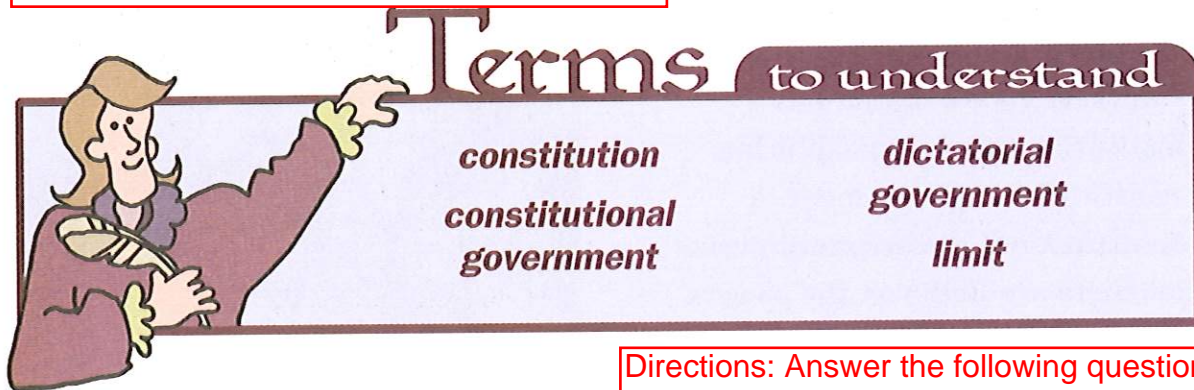
### Rules and laws

1. Congress cannot make any laws that unfairly limit your right to speak freely.
2. Don't speak with your mouth full.
3. Take turns on the swings on the playground.
4. You must finish your assignment before you go out for recess.
5. The president must be elected every four years.
6. A person must be sixteen to get a driver's license.

► *Why is it important to know how a government is organized and how it operates?*



Directions: Identify/Define the following terms in your journal by writing them under the following title: Lesson 2 Terms



Directions: Answer the following questions in your journal under the following title: Lesson 2 Questions

### **What is a constitution?**

In the previous exercise, you should have found some rules and laws that explain how a government is to be run. You also should have found some rules that do not have anything to do with how a government should be run.

When you found the rules and laws that tell how a government should be run, you found parts of a constitution. A **constitution** is a set of rules and laws that explain how a government is organized and how it should be run. Most constitutions are written. Some are partly unwritten. Some are not written at all. According to our definition, every nation has a constitution. Fair governments and unfair governments have constitutions.

Studying the constitution of a government will help you answer certain questions about that government and its citizens. Here are some of the questions a constitution usually answers.

### **Questions about the government**

- What are the purposes of the government?
- How is the government organized? What parts does it have? What does each part do?
- How is the government supposed to carry out its business? How are rules made?
- How are people chosen to serve in the government?

### **Questions about citizens**

- Who is a citizen?
- Are citizens supposed to have control over their government? If so, how do they control it?
- What rights and responsibilities, if any, are citizens supposed to have?



## What is a constitutional government?

Just because a nation has a constitution does not mean it has a constitutional government. A **constitutional government** means that there are limits on the powers of government. A **limit** is a point beyond which someone or something cannot go. The United States Constitution says there are certain kinds of laws that Congress cannot make. The Constitution does not permit the president to do whatever he or she wants to do. In a constitutional government, the constitution sets limits on what the people who run the government are allowed to do.

It is not enough for a constitution to say what the limits on the powers



How do elections help limit the power of government?

of government are. The people who run the government must obey the constitution. A constitution also must provide ways to enforce the limits it sets forth. One way is to have regular and free elections. The citizens can vote to remove people from office if they do not obey the constitution.

## What is a dictatorial government?

A **dictatorial government** means that there are no limits on the power of the people who run the government. They can do whatever they want to do.

Can you have a constitution and still have a dictatorial government? The answer is yes. A constitution might give a person unlimited power. The constitution might limit power but not have ways to enforce those limits. There might be ways to enforce the limits, but no one actually does.



Why is it important to limit the power of those who run the government?

Hitler came to power legally in 1933. He disregarded the German Constitution and opened the first concentration camp within six weeks.

Directions: Answer the following questions in your journal under the following title:  
Lesson 2 Review Questions.

## Review the lesson

1. What is a constitution?
2. What can you learn about a nation's government by studying its constitution?
3. Why did the Founders think that it is necessary to limit the power of government?
4. How did the Founders think the power of government could be limited?
5. Explain the difference between a constitution and a constitutional government.
6. Explain the differences between a dictatorial government and a constitutional government.

Activity: Design a constitution for your house. Include the laws and rules of how the government in your house should be run. Also, include the natural rights of the people living in your house and the limits to the constitution.

TITLE OF MY CONSTITUTION:

LAWS AND RULES:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Natural Rights:

Limits:

## Civics Lesson 2: Extension Activity

### How did the Constitution Guard against Tyranny?

According to <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tyranny>, tyranny is defined as follows:

- Cruel and unfair treatment by people with power over others;
- A government in which all power bellows to one person: the rule of authority of a tyrant.

Also according to the same source aforementioned, a tyrant is:

- A ruler who has complete power over a country and who is cruel and unfair;
- Someone who uses power in a cruel and unfair way.

Use the following links to access a “student friendly” version of the U.S. Constitution.

<https://articles.usa-people-search.com/content-a-kids-guide-to-the-u.s.-constitution.aspx>

Read over the information found from the above link and make note of terms, ideas, and concepts included in the U.S. Constitution that protects the government from tyrants and tyranny.

Use the next page to create an infographic answering the essential question:

### How did the Constitution Guard against Tyranny?



### Infographic: How did the Constitution Guard against Tyranny?

Directions: Use the space below to create an infographic answering the above essential question. If you prefer to create an infographic online, see the following link:

<https://infogr.am/>