

Unit 4: Structures of Government

7th Grade Social Studies

21 Class Meetings

Revised May 2026

Essential Questions

- Is it better for government to protect our lives and our land or to protect our personal freedom?
- How much control should citizens have over their government?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: Different theories of human nature result in different government structures.

- Analyze the primary roles of government and their manifestation in the lives of citizens
- Critique fundamental disagreements in the theory of government
- Compare and contrast the six major different types of government

EU 2: Unlimited governments usually fail to protect human rights in order to protect their citizens from each other and from hostile neighboring countries.

- Describe unlimited governments as being characterized by strong leaders usually chosen through violence or heritage
- Compare the justifications for and impact of ancient Chinese dynasties, Japanese shogunate, and the Korean War

EU 3: Limited governments are usually able to protect human rights when the citizens are well- educated and take steps to preserve their rights, such as voting.

- Describe limited governments as being characterized by citizens with the freedom to dissent and the power to control leadership and laws
- Evaluate the success of modern-day democracies in protecting human rights in South Korea and Japan

Standards

CT Social Studies Frameworks Standards:

- **7.Inq.2.a.** Apply disciplinary knowledge and practices to demonstrate an understanding of world regional studies content.
- **7.Inq.3.a.** Gather relevant evidence from multiple sources using both print and digital resources and databases (e.g., origin, authority, structure, context, credibility).⁴⁴
- **7.Inq.3.b.** Organize and prioritize relevant evidence from multiple sources to support claims.
- **7.Inq.3.c.** Develop claims and counterclaims in response to a compelling question.
- **7.Inq.4.a.** Construct arguments using evidence from multiple sources.
- **7.Inq.4.b.** Construct explanations using summary, sequence, examples, and data.
- **7.Inq.4.d.** Present arguments and explanations about local, regional, and global issues to reach a target audience using print, oral, and digital technologies.

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- **7.Inq.4.f.** Assess individual and collective capacities to take action to address local, regional, and global problems, taking into account a range of possible levers of power, strategies, and potential outcomes.
- **7.Geo.3.a.** Analyze cultural diffusion among regions using paper-based and digital mapping techniques (e.g., expansion, relocation).
- **7.Geo.9.a.** Evaluate the influences of long-term human-induced environmental change on spatial patterns of conflict and cooperation within a region (e.g., State Barrier Fence of Western Australia, uncontacted Indigenous tribes, Third Agricultural Revolution).
- **7.Geo.10.b.** Analyze how environmental characteristics vary among regions (e.g., climate, natural disasters, waterways, mountain ranges, deserts).
- **7.Geo.12.a.** Explain how global changes in population distribution patterns have affected land use in a region (e.g., the Pampas, Deforestation in the Amazon, Southwest United States population boom).
- **7.Civ.1.a.** Identify the powers and responsibilities of individuals, groups, and media in addressing human rights issues in both governmental and nongovernmental contexts (e.g., Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Refugee Assistance, United States Border Security, United Nations).
- **7.Civ.2.a.** Explain how political participation varies within different types of government in different eras and contexts (e.g., compulsory voting, protest, volunteerism, women's suffrage).
- **7.Civ.12.a.** Evaluate the effectiveness of rules, laws, and agreements as a means of addressing regional and global problems (e.g., International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court, Paris Agreement, International Atomic Energy Agency).

Common Core State Standards:

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1A:** Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.5:** With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writings as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9:** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7:** Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts).
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8:** Analyze the relationship between a primary and

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secondary source on the same topic.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

Competency 1: Write effectively for a variety of purposes.

Competency 2: Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.

Competency 3: Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.

Competency 4: Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

Competency 5: Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

Unit Content Overview

1. Purpose and Varieties of Government

- Explore the geography and culture of East Asia
- Evaluate the six major types of government through a role play
- Connect the theories between human nature and the purposes of government
- Analyze the power structure of limited and unlimited governments

2. Unlimited Governments

- Analyze the similarities of different unlimited governments
- Evaluate the impact and justification of the unlimited government of the Qin dynasty
- Evaluate the impact and justification of the unlimited government of the Tokugawa shogunate during the Edo period
- Compare, contrast, and evaluate the ideologies of the Russian and USA governments during the Korean war

3. Limited Governments

- Critique the rise and fall of democracy in ancient Greece
- Evaluate the impact and justification of the limited governments in modern-day Japan and South Korea
- Evaluate the success of each government structure by analyzing wealth, income equality, quality of life, human rights, and the ability of the government to defend and protect its people

Vocabulary:

- Government, Power, Taxes, Military, Asia, Democracy, Dictatorship, Voting, Theocracy, Anarchy, Representative Democracy, Direct Democracy, Monarchy, Unlimited, Dynasty, Communism, Capitalism, Human Rights, Protest, Citizenship

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Interdisciplinary Connection:

Language Arts – reading informational texts and writing persuasive, argumentative responses

Daily Learning Objectives with TWPS

Students will be able to...

- Design a presentation on the culture and geography of one of five Asian countries
 - *If you met someone from Asia today, what questions would you ask them to learn more about their culture and geography?*
- Evaluate the effectiveness of different government structures through a role-playing game
 - *Is government better when leaders can do whatever they want or when citizens tell leaders what they can and cannot do? Why?*
- Use close reading strategies to evaluate the functions of government
 - *Make a list of some of the things our government does for us and to us.*
- Critique different philosophies of government and the state of nature
 - *Humans have had governments for as long as they have had civilizations. Why? What does government do for us?*
- Compare and contrast the six different major types of government*
 - *Do you agree more with Hobbes or Rousseau? Why?*
 - *What are some of the pros and cons of voting?*
- Evaluate the pros and cons of the Chinese monarchy during the Qin Dynastic period
 - *Do you think monarchy is a good type of government? Why?*
- Evaluate the impact of the Tokugawa dictatorship on the people of Japan during the Edo period
 - *Are countries better off when the military has a lot of power? Why?*
- Analyze the conflict between limited and unlimited governments during the Korean War
 - *Why might some people prefer a dictatorship over a democracy?*
- Investigate the rise and fall of democracy during ancient Greece
 - *[Picture showing results of a vote] What does this picture say about one of the problems with democracy?*
- Analyze the impact of unlimited government on human rights in modern North Korea and China
 - *Who do you think a dictator cares about more: herself or her people? Why do you say that?*
- Analyze the impact of limited government on human rights in modern South Korea and Japan
 - *Who do you think a democratically elected president cares about more: herself or her people? Why do you say that?*
- Evaluate different government types in different situations through a simulation
 - *In what type of situation is a limited government ideal? What about an unlimited government?*
- Demonstrate an understanding of Unit 4 concepts on a summative test and essay
- Create a unique country and defend your decisions to your classmates using evidence and reasoning***

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- *How is a country's geography and culture connected to their government structure? Use evidence from the unit to justify your response.*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Guided notes
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Student choice
- Written feedback
- Cornell notes
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Anchor charts
- Small group instruction
- Conferencing
- Text and video chunking with guiding questions
- Close reading with text-dependent questions

EL Differentiation Strategies

- Word walls with visuals
- TWPS (think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Explicit teacher modeling
- Key vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal assessments

Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Do Now
- Student discussions and responses
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Completed notes

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- Completed graphic organizers
- Map work
- Homework

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Quiz #1: Theories of Government (EU 1)
- Quiz #2: Types of Government (EU 2 and EU 3)
- Summative Unit 4 Test (EU 1, EU 2, and EU 3)
- Unit Task: “Ideal Government Structure” (EU 1, EU 2, and EU 3)
 - Teacher scoring guide

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: “Ideal Government Structure”

Description: For this task, students will work in small groups to create their own fictional nations. Students will choose the ideal government, justifying their decisions with evidence. Students will also determine the major exports and national economic structure of their nation, using evidence to justify both decisions. (EU 1, 2, and 3) Finally, students will create a travel advertisement for their new nation highlighting all the reasons everyone around the world should come visit. Students will be graded on their use of appropriate evidence to justify their choices and participation in crafting their nation with their group.

Evaluation: Teacher scoring guide

Unit Resources

- China, Power and Prosperity: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/series/china-power-and-prosperity>
- BJP & Islamophobia: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2020/04/09/shoot-traitors/discrimination-against-muslims-under-indias-new-citizenship-policy>
- Violence of partition: https://newsela.com/read/lib-india-partition/id/34627/?collection_id=2000000192
- Population map (circle): <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/05/07/map-more-than-half-of-humanity-lives-within-this-circle/>
- CIA World Factbook
- GA Department of Education
- National Geographic Asia
- World’s Air Pollution Index: <https://waqi.info/>
- Water Pollution in Asia: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/indias-long-term-effort-to-clean->

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- [up- pollution-in-sacred-ganga-river](#)
- BBC World Religions
- Demographics of Asia: <https://www.worldometers.info/demographics/demographics-of-asia/>
- Chinese ethnic minorities: <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20131215-how-china-portrays-its-minorities>; <https://asiasociety.org/ethnic-minorities-china>
- Foundations of government: <https://www.icivics.org/curriculum/foundations-government>
- Human rights index: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/pages/universalhumanrightsindexdatabase.aspx>
- Where-to-be-born index: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-where-to-be-born-index-the-highest-and-lowest-scoring-countries.html>
- Comparing governments and economies: <https://www.ushistory.org/gov/13a.asp>
- How America is different from other democracies: <https://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/world-report/2013/10/21/how-america-is-different-from-other-democracies>
- Laptops or notebooks to capture notes
- Graphic organizers
- Worksheets
- Readings