

Build Your Government

Social Studies · Grades 4-12 · 45-60 minutes

This free lesson runs the full SFC Nations cycle: Learn » Explore » Create » Make Decisions » Apply. The academic content comes first, then the student uses it to run a nation of their own.

1. LEARN

The concept, stated plainly.

- A government is the system a group of people uses to make and enforce decisions together.
- Every government answers three questions: who holds power, how power changes hands, and what limits power.
- A democracy spreads decisions across many people. A monarchy or dictatorship concentrates them. Most real nations sit somewhere between the extremes.
- Trade-off to notice: concentrated power decides fast but ignores more people. Shared power decides slowly but holds together longer.

2. EXPLORE

Poke at it before applying it.

1. List three decisions that affect your household. Who makes each one, and why that person?
2. Name two real nations with very different governments. Write one sentence on how a citizen's daily life differs between them.
3. Find one rule in your own home you think is fair and one you would change. What makes the difference?

3. CREATE

Make something that is yours.

1. Name your nation and write its one-sentence purpose.
2. Choose a government type and write down who holds power in it.
3. Write three laws every citizen must follow.
4. Write two rights the government may never take away.

4. MAKE DECISIONS

No option is free. Choose anyway.

1. Your citizens are unhappy about taxes. Do you cut taxes and lose income, or hold the rate and explain why?
2. A neighboring nation offers protection in exchange for a say in your laws. Accept or refuse?
3. A popular law turns out to be expensive. Keep it or repeal it?

5. APPLY WHAT YOU LEARNED

Use it in your nation and measure the result.

1. Write a short address to your citizens announcing your government and one of your laws. Give a reason a skeptical citizen would accept.
2. Predict which of your three laws will be hardest to enforce, and explain why.
3. After one week of running your nation, note one thing your government did well and one thing it handled badly.

Student worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What type of government did you create, and who holds power in it?

2. Which right did you protect, and what would happen without it?

3. Describe one decision you made and what it cost you.

4. If you started over, what would you change about your government?

Parent and teacher notes

- Grade the reasoning, not the outcome. A defended bad decision beats a lucky one.
- Ask “what did that cost you?” after every choice the student makes.
- Let a nation fail once. The recovery week teaches more than the lesson did.

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• Why this works: sfcnations.com/homeschool/why-sfc