

## Who Rules?

**Time Needed:** One Class Period

**Materials Needed:**

Student worksheets  
PowerPoint OR Transparency

**Learning Objectives.** Students will be able to:

- differentiate between the features of several forms of government using a semantic feature analysis map.
- compare and contrast forms of government in a sentence completion activity.

**Copy Instructions:**

Student materials (double-sided, class set).

### STEP BY STEP

PowerPoint Option

- ANTICIPATE** the lesson by asking your students if they think that rules are more effective when developed by the class as a whole than simply decided by the teacher. Have them briefly share their responses, probing for reasoning.
- DISTRIBUTE** the *Who Rules?* worksheets while you explain that you will be studying different forms of government and different ways that countries are run.
- RUN** the *Who Rules?* PowerPoint, pausing after each form of government for the students to fill in a row on "The Rules of Ruling" chart (worksheet, pg 1).
- REVIEW** the completed chart when you reach the last slide of the PowerPoint, probing for reasoning by asking students to support their answers.
- PREVIEW** worksheets pgs 2-3, reviewing instructions and expectations.
- INSTRUCT** students to complete the *Who Rules?* worksheets and circulate to assist.

Non-PowerPoint Option

- DISTRIBUTE** the *Who Rules?* reading.
- PREVIEW** the bold words with the class and ask after any prior knowledge of experiences with these worlds.
- READ** the *Who Rules?* Reading, stopping to check for understanding and provide further explanation as needed.
- TELL** students that you will be comparing and contrasting these different forms of government while you distribute the *Who Rules?* Worksheets.
- REVIEW** the instructions with the students, guiding them as they fill in their government forms in the left-hand column of "The Rules of Ruling" (worksheet, pg 1).
- GUIDE** your students through the first 4 columns, gradually releasing responsibility as you move through columns 5-10. You can make a transparency of the worksheet to make this easier.
- REVIEW** the completed chart and probe for reasoning by asking students to support their answers.
- PREVIEW** worksheets pgs 2-3, reviewing instructions and expectations.
- INSTRUCT** students to complete the *Who Rules?* worksheets and circulate to assist.

This lesson plan is part of the *Foundations of Government* series by iCivics, Inc. a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing civic education. For more resources, please visit [www.icivics.org/teachers](http://www.icivics.org/teachers), where you can access the state standards aligned to this lesson plan. Provide feedback to [feedback@icivics.org](mailto:feedback@icivics.org).

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# Who Rules?

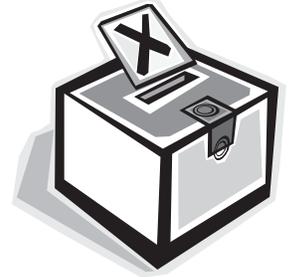
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

There are many different forms of government in our world. Each looks a little bit different. The major difference lies in who is in control, but there are subtle differences that exist as well. Let's explore different categories and forms of government...

**Democracy** Any form of government in which political power is exercised by all citizens, either directly or through their elected representatives. Have you ever been to vote with your parents?

**Direct Democracy** In a direct democracy all citizens have a chance to participate. The people directly control and are responsible for the laws that govern their society. All citizens can take initiative to create public policy. An example of a direct democracy is ancient Athens where they held assemblies to pass laws.

**Representative Democracy** Like direct democracy, representative democracy is a government by the people. Representative democracy is a form of government in which people elect leaders to write and manage laws for the country. These leaders are responsible for representing the will of the people and are elected at regular intervals. They are also often bound by a Constitution.



**Monarchy** Kings, queens, princes, and princesses. We all pretend when we're little, but in a monarchy these roles are reality. Monarchy is rule by a king, or monarch, and he usually gains his power because his parents were rulers (monarchs) also. This applies to queens, too! Some modern monarchies like Spain and Japan have constitutions, while others do not.

**Dictatorship** In a dictatorship power is not inherited, but usually is acquired by force. A dictator has absolute control over the lives of his citizens, like Kim Jong Il in North Korea. Because a dictator has absolute power, opposition is usually suppressed and people are prevented from voicing their opinions.

**Autocracy** A form of government in which political power is controlled by one individual such as a monarch, dictator, emperor, etc.

**Theocracy** The word theocracy contains the Greek root "theo" which means "god." A theocracy is a rule by god or higher power. In a theocracy, religious leaders usually lead the society and religious law is used to settle disputes and rule the people. The Islamic Republic of Iran is an example of a modern theocracy.

**Oligarchy** The philosopher Aristotle originally used the word "oligarchy" to refer to rule by the rich, but the literal definition of oligarchy is "rule by the few." This means that a few people hold all the power based on military strength (known as a military junta), family power (an aristocracy), or religious force (a theocratic oligarchy). Oligarchies can often come from or lead to other forms of government like monarchies and dictatorships.

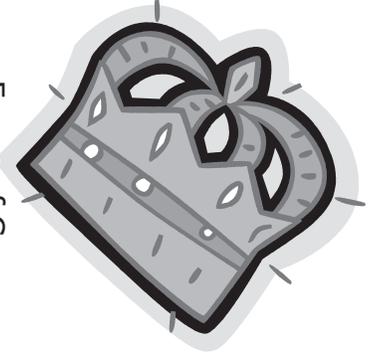
**Anarchy** In this form of government no one is in charge! Sounds too good to be true? Think about all the possible outcomes of having no government at all.

# Who Rules?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Enter the different forms of government in the left hand column. Then complete the following chart by placing a plus (+) under features that each form of government exhibits. Place a minus (-) under each feature not exhibited by each form of government. Use a question mark (?) if you're not sure.

## The Rules of Ruling



			Autocracy		Democracy		Forms of Government	Features
							Rule by few	
							Rule by one	
							Rule by representatives	
							Rule by none	
							Controlled by citizens	
							Ruled by god or higher power	
							Power usually inherited	
							Holds elections for leaders	
							Constitutional government	
							People have a say	

# Who Rules?

**Compare and contrast.** Use the information you gathered on your chart on page 1 to complete the following graphic organizer with your analysis. Write your own for #6.

1. **Direct Democracy** and **Representative Democracy**  
are alike because

Analysis

2. **Oligarchy** and **Monarchy**  
are different in that

3. **Monarchy** and **Dictatorship**  
share the characteristic

4. **Monarchy** and **Dictatorship**  
are similar, but

5. **Autocracy** and **Democracy**  
are different because

6.  and

**Characteristics.** For each form of government and its characteristics, circle the one that **doesn't** belong.

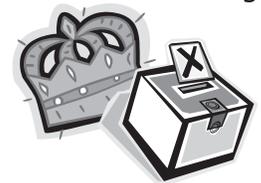
1. Direct democracy: rule by the people / lead by a monarch / regular voting

2. Anarchy: rule by the people / rule by no one / no laws

3. Monarchy: rule by one / power inherited from family / regular elections

4. Oligarchy: rule by few / military, religious, or family power / power always acquired by force

5. Autocracy: monarch or dictator / power always inherited from family / never a Constitution



# Who Rules?

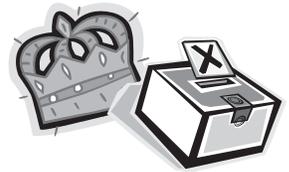
**Magic Square.** After reading "Who Rules?" match the correct definition to each term by writing the number in the corresponding box below (ex. if the definition of A is number 1, write 1" in box A).

## Terms

- A. Democracy
- B. Dictatorship
- C. Direct Democracy
- D. Anarchy
- E. Monarchy
- F. Oligarchy
- G. Autocracy
- H. Representative Democracy
- I. Theocracy

## Definitions

- 1. Rule by god or higher power
- 2. Rule by none
- 3. Rule by a single person who gained power through force
- 4. Rule by a king or queen
- 5. Rule by the citizenry or public without representatives
- 6. Rule by one
- 7. Rule by the people
- 8. Rule by the people with elected representatives
- 9. Rule by the few



A	B	C
D	E	F
G	H	I

To check your answers, add up the numbers in each row. Are they the same? Now add up the numbers in each column. They should be the same, too! What is the magic number?

\_\_\_\_\_

If they don't add up to the same number, go back and check your answers!



**Your Opinion.** Take this opportunity to voice your opinions about the forms of government covered today.

Which form of government do you think is the best? \_\_\_\_\_

List two reasons why you think that form of government is the best:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Which form of government do you think is the worst? \_\_\_\_\_

List two reasons why you think that form of government is the worst:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Enter the different forms of government in the left hand column. Then complete the following chart by placing a plus (+) under features that each form of government exhibits. Place a minus (-) under each feature not exhibited by each form of government. Use a question mark (?) if you're not sure.

## The Rules of Ruling



			Autocracy		Democracy		Forms of Government	Features
Anarchy	Theocracy	Oligarchy	Dictatorship	Monarchy	Democracy	Representative Democracy		
		+					Rule by few	
	+/-		+	+			Rule by one	
					+		Rule by representatives	
+							Rule by none	
+					+	+	Controlled by citizens	
	+	+/-					Ruled by god or higher power	
		+/-		+			Power usually inherited	
					+		Holds elections for leaders	
	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	Constitutional government	
+					+	+	People have a say	

**Compare and contrast.** Use the information you gathered on your chart on page 1 to complete the following graphic organizer with your analysis. Write your own for #6.

1. **Direct Democracy** and **Representative Democracy**  
are alike because

Sample Answer: they are both rule by the people and both hold voting.

Analysis ←

2. **Oligarchy** and **Monarchy**  
are different in that

Sample Answer: one is rule by a few people and the other is rule by only one person.

3. **Monarchy** and **Dictatorship**  
share the characteristic

Sample Answer: that they are rule by a single person.

4. **Monarchy** and **Dictatorship**  
are similar, but

Sample Answer: in a monarchy power is inherited and in a dictatorship it is taken by force.

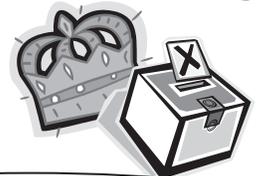
5. **Autocracy** and **Democracy**  
are different because

Sample Answer: because one is rule by a single person and the other is rule by the people.

6.  and

**Characteristics.** For each form of government and its characteristics, circle the one that **doesn't** belong.

1. Direct democracy: rule by the people / lead by a monarch / regular voting
2. Anarchy: rule by the people / rule by no one / no laws
3. Monarchy: rule by one / power inherited from family / regular elections
4. Oligarchy: rule by few / military, religious, or family power / power always acquired by force
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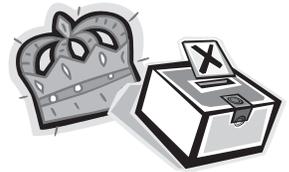
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- 5. Rule by the citizenry or public without representatives
- 6. Rule by one
- 7. Rule by the people
- 8. Rule by the people with elected representatives
- 9. Rule by the few



A 7	B 3	C 5
D 2	E 4	F 9
G 6	H 8	I 1

To check your answers, add up the numbers in each row. Are they the same? Now add up the numbers in each column. They should be the same, too! What is the magic number?

15

If they don't add up to the same number, go back and check your answers!



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Which form of government do you think is the worst? \_\_\_\_\_

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1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_