**Who Rules?**

**Time Needed:** One class period

**Materials Needed:**
- Student worksheets
- Projector and Transparency

**Copy Instructions:**
- Anticipation Mind Map (half page; class set)
- Reading (2 pages; class set)
- Worksheet (2 pages; class set)

**Learning Objectives.** Students will be able to:
- Identify major forms of government (autocracy, monarchy, dictatorship, representative and direct democracy, oligarchy, theocracy, anarchy)
- Compare and contrast the major features of different forms of government
- Analyze examples of real-world governments

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**STEP BY STEP**

- **ANTICIPATE** by having students complete the Types of Governments & Leaders mind map. Make sure students feel free to add any ideas they think of, even if they might be wrong. Use students’ responses to create a collective mind map on the board. (If you have an interactive white board, try using the PowerPoint slide for this.)

- **DISTRIBUTE** the *Who Rules?* reading to the class.

- **READ** the *Who Rules?* reading with the class. Ask students to be on the lookout for any types of government they came up with during the brainstorming activity. (Note: There is a PowerPoint version of the graphic organizer in the presentation.)

- **CHECK** for understanding using the “A or B?” informal assessment. Either project the master and uncover one question at a time or use the PowerPoint version of the activity. Make sure the class answers as a chorus so you can check for understanding all at once.

- **DISTRIBUTE** the worksheet activities.

- **COMPLETE** Activity A (Identify That Government!) as a class by projecting a blank master or using the PowerPoint version of the activity. (Optional: You may also have students complete the activity on their own or in groups.)

- **REVIEW** answers to Activity A.

- **ASSIGN** students to complete Activities B and C on the second worksheet page. (Note: There are also PowerPoint versions of these activities in the presentation.)

- **REVIEW** answers if you wish.

- **CLOSE** by returning to the mind map you created as a class on the board at the beginning of class. Ask students to look at the map and think of at least one change that should be made. Call on students to come up and make changes until the mind map reflects what they learned in the lesson.

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This lesson plan is part of the *Foundations of Government* series by iCivics, Inc. a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing civic education. Please visit www.icivics.org/teachers for more resources and to access the state standards aligned to this lesson plan. Provide feedback to feedback@icivics.org. ©2011 iCivics, Inc. You may copy, distribute, or transmit this work for noncommercial purposes if you credit iCivics. All other rights reserved.
**Who Rules?**

**Types of Governments.** What kinds of governments exist? What kinds of leaders can be in charge of a country? Think about everything you’ve ever heard of or learned and add it to this mind map. Circle each idea you add and draw a line to connect it to the main phrase (or to another idea you added). Keep brainstorming until you run out of room or time.
Who Rules?

Someone’s Got to Be In Charge

If you compared all the governments in the world, you would find one thing in common: Someone is in charge. The question is, who? There are many different forms of government. Some have one leader who has all the control. Others give power to the people. Here are some forms of government that exist (or have existed) in the world:

Me, Myself, and I

An autocracy is a government in which one person has all the power. There are two main types of autocracy: a monarchy and a dictatorship.

In a monarchy, a king or queen rules the country. The king or queen is known as a monarch. Monarchs usually come to power through their family line: The current king or queen’s oldest child becomes the next king or queen. In some monarchies, especially those in historical times, the monarch held all the power and had the final say over the government. In modern times, monarchs usually share power with other parts of government. Often they are also subject to the country’s constitution.

A dictatorship is a form of government where one leader has absolute control over citizens’ lives. If there is a constitution, the dictator has control over that, too—so it doesn’t mean much. Although other parts of the government may exist, such as courts or a lawmaking body, these branches always do what the dictator wants them to do. They do not represent citizens.

Power to the People!

In a democracy, citizens hold the political power. There are two fundamental types of democracies:

In a representative democracy, citizens elect leaders to represent their rights and interests in government. The elected leaders, or representatives, do the day-to-day work of governing the country: They consider the issues, work to find solutions, pass laws, and do all of the other things necessary to keep a country going. Citizens hold the ultimate power, though, because if they don’t like what their representatives are doing, they can vote in new ones!

In a direct democracy, there are no representatives. Citizens are directly involved in the day-to-day work of governing the country. Citizens might be required to participate in lawmaking or act as judges, for example. The best example of this was in the ancient Greek city-state called Athens. Most modern countries are too large for a direct democracy to work.
We, Ourselves, and... um... Us

In an oligarchy (OH-ih-gar-kee), a small group of people has all the power. *Oligarchy* is a Greek word that means “rule by a few.” Sometimes this means that only a certain group has political rights, such as members of one political party, one social class, or one race. For example, in some societies, only noble families who owned land could participate in politics. An oligarchy can also mean that a few people control the country. For example, a *junta* is a small group of people—usually military officers—who rule a country after taking it over by force. A junta often operates much like a dictatorship, except that several people share power.

Religious Rule

A *theocracy* is a government that recognizes God or a divine being as the ultimate authority. (“Theo” is a Greek word that means *god.*) In a theocracy, religious law is used to settle disputes and rule the people. A theocracy can also be a democracy, dictatorship, monarchy, or just about any other kind of government. For example, the Republic of Iran recognizes Islamic law, but Iran’s citizens vote to elect their leaders. Modern theocracies are usually found in countries where the population is strongly religious.

Rule by None

In an *anarchy*, nobody is in control—or everyone is, depending on how you look at it. Sometimes the word anarchy is used to refer to an out-of-control mob. When it comes to government, anarchy would be one way to describe the human state of existence before any governments developed. It would be similar to the way animals live in the wild, with everyone looking out for themselves. Today, people who call themselves anarchists usually believe that people should be allowed to freely associate together without being subject to any nation or government. There are no countries that have anarchy as their form of government.

→ Where would you put theocracy on this chart?
A. Identify That Government! Identify the form(s) of government that each country has or had.

**Switzerland**
Citizens elect representatives to sit in two different lawmaking assemblies. But citizens also vote several times a year to decide on laws. Citizens can vote to propose their own laws or undo laws passed by their representatives. All citizens may vote directly on these laws.

**South Africa**
From 1948-1994, official policy in South Africa gave white people all the political power. Even though the majority of South Africans were black, non-whites could not influence government. White South Africans elected representatives to sit in a lawmaking body.

**North Korea**
One man leads North Korea and controls its government. He also controls its ruling political party. The ruling party chooses candidates for an Assembly, and citizens vote. The candidates do not have opponents, so citizens have no choices.

**Saudi Arabia**
Saudi Arabia is led by a king. The king appoints a Council of Ministers to help govern, but there are no elections. Saudi Arabia’s Basic Law states that the country’s constitution is the Islamic holy book the Qur’an and other religious traditions.

**Denmark**
The people of Denmark elect representatives to sit in Parliament, a lawmaking body. The Queen of Denmark heads the country, but she only has a small role in government. The government is led by a Prime Minister, who is appointed from among the elected representatives.

**Brazil**
Brazil is led by a president who is elected by the citizens. Citizens in Brazil elect a new president every four years. Citizens also elect representatives to serve in two different legislative bodies.

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Forms of government:

- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________

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Worksheet p.1
B. True or False? Use what you learned in the reading and in Exercise A to fill in the chart below.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1. A monarchy can be like a dictatorship or it can be part of a democracy. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 2. A dictatorship can also be a democracy. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 3. A democracy can have both representative and direct characteristics at the same time. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 4. An oligarchy can include representative democracy. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 5. A government can be both a monarchy and an anarchy at the same time. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 6. Theocracy can co-exist with monarchy. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 7. Theocracy can co-exist with democracy. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |
| 8. An oligarchy can be like a dictatorship. | ○ True ○ False | Example or Reason: |

C. Vocabulary. Solve the crossword puzzle using vocabulary from the reading.

**Across**
3. Type of democracy where citizens elect leaders to represent them in government
7. A small group that rules a country after taking it over by force
9. One person has all the power
10. Type of democracy where citizens are involved in day-to-day government

**Down**
1. Recognizes God as the ultimate authority in government and law
2. One leader has absolute control over citizens’ lives
4. Citizens hold the political power
5. A small group of people has all the power
6. People are not subject to any nation or government
8. A king or queen rules the country

Worksheet p.2
Informal Assessment: A or B?

**Directions:** Read each statement aloud, or project and uncover each statement individually. Have the class answer “A” or “B” as a chorus. Listen for a mix of answers, indicating confusion. Use each question as a chance to quickly review concepts before moving on.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<th>B</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. One person is in charge.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2. Citizens often have no rights.</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
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<td>7. Leader often shares power with other parts of government</td>
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<td>8. Democracy where citizens elect others to serve in government</td>
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<td>9. Citizens vote to elect their leaders.</td>
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<td>11. People do not answer to any leader or government</td>
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Citizens elect representatives to sit in two different lawmaking assemblies. But citizens also vote several times a year to decide on laws. Citizens can vote to propose their own laws or undo laws passed by their representatives. All citizens may vote directly on these laws.

Forms of government:
- **Representative democracy**
- **Direct Democracy**

**South Africa**
From 1948-1994, official policy in South Africa gave white people all the political power. Even though the majority of South Africans were black, non-whites could not influence government. White South Africans elected representatives to sit in a lawmaking body.

Forms of government:
- **Oligarchy**
- **Representative Democracy**

**North Korea**
One man leads North Korea and controls its government. He also controls its ruling political party. The ruling party chooses candidates for an Assembly, and citizens vote. The candidates do not have opponents, so citizens have no choices.

Form of government:
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Forms of government:
- **Monarchy**
- **Theocracy**

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The people of Denmark elect representatives to sit in Parliament, a lawmaking body. The Queen of Denmark heads the country, but she only has a small role in government. The government is led by a Prime Minister, who is appointed from among the elected representatives.

Forms of government:
- **Monarchy**
- **Representative democracy**

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Brazil is led by a president who is elected by the citizens. Citizens in Brazil elect a new president every four years. Citizens also elect representatives to serve in two different legislative bodies.

Form of government:
- **Representative democracy**
**Who Rules?**

**Name: **

**Worksheet p.2**

### B. True or False?
Use what you learned in the reading and Exercise A to fill in the chart below.

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### Example or Reason:
1. **Denmark:** Monarch is part of a democracy; Saudia Arabia: Monarch has complete control.
2. You can’t have a democracy if citizens have no control, which they do not in a dictatorship.
3. Switzerland had representative and direct characteristics.
4. South Africa was an oligarchy but had some representative democracy.
5. A monarchy has someone in control. Nobody is in control with anarchy.
6. Saudia Arabia is a monarchy and a theocracy.
7. Iran is a theocracy where citizens vote for government leaders.
8. A military junta like the one in Myanmar can function like a dictatorship.

### C. Vocabulary.
Solve the crossword puzzle using vocabulary from the reading.

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#### Across
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