

# Types of Government

**Curriculum areas: Citizenship, Government & Politics**

**Supporting resources: Pairs game**

## Starter

Write the word 'government' on the board and ask pairs or small groups to come up with a definition of what it means. Everyone should feedback their ideas. Explain that government can happen at different levels, e.g. you can have government of a project, right up to government of a country or group of countries. Make sure they understand that this lesson is about the different ways a country can be ruled by people with power to make decisions about things like:

- Making and changing laws
- How much tax people pay and how taxes are spent
- What access to education and health care people should have
- Whether people have the right to elect those in power

## Small group activity

Pairs game to explore different types of government.

In small groups, give out the 'pairs' card sort game (on last page). The groups should try to match the type of government with the correct numbered statement. If you have access to a computer room the students could research the answers on the internet. Go through the answers with everyone. Ask them what type of government they think the UK has (Constitutional Monarchy) and explain this.

## Evaluating different types of government

In their groups, the students should now sort their cards into five columns: very unfair, quite unfair, quite fair, very fair and an additional 'not sure' column if they really can't decide. Facilitate a class discussion on this and ask for groups to justify their decisions.



Structured task to consolidate understanding of types of government  
(this activity is like the popular 'Guess Who?' children's game)

Individually or in pairs, the students should come up with five questions that they could ask anybody in the world in order to try to determine the type of government in their country, e.g. do you have a King or Queen? Can you elect people to represent you? In their original groups they should then play a 'guess which government' game:

- Place all of the types of government cards face down.
- One person in the group picks a card but doesn't show anyone else.
- The group can ask five questions in order to guess which type of government they are.

Group role-plays

Divide the class into groups. Each group should be (secretly) given a type of government to role-play. Working as a team they must devise a one-minute play or piece of drama in which the central structure or idea of their type of government is conveyed to the audience.

Each role-play should involve a short dialogue between two characters living under that type of rule – one who agrees with it and one who disagrees with it to help the class evaluate the different types of government. Everyone should watch the role-plays and make a note of which type of government they think each is portraying as they go along. Higher attainers could summarise the main 'for' and 'against' arguments presented by the characters in the role-plays as they watch them. Finish the session by checking everyone guessed correctly.

Plenary

Run a short quiz on the different types of government covered in the lesson: read out some of the definitions from the pairs game and ask the students to guess the correct type of government.

Suggested homework activity

Individuals or groups could be given one type of government to research in more depth and create a poster or presentation about it including an example of a country currently under that type of rule. Higher attainers could carry out self-directed research with lower attainers being given set questions to answer, e.g. provide the name of the country, the leader or leading party at the moment, how the elections work (if they have them), etc.

<b>Federal</b>	1. A central government shares power with a number of small local governments.
<b>Democracy</b>	2. Where the government is elected by the people.
<b>Plutocracy</b>	3. A government composed of the wealthy class.
<b>Oligarchy</b>	4. Rule by a small group of people who share similar interests or family relations.
<b>Capitalist</b>	5. People can own their own businesses and property but usually pay taxes from some of the money they make. Most capitalist governments provide their own education, health and welfare services.
<b>Monarchy</b>	6. Rule by an individual (King or Queen) who has inherited the role and expects to pass it onto their heir.
<b>Regional or Local</b>	7. A government or council that controls a smaller area within a country. Most local governments are controlled by the central government.
<b>Communist</b>	8. The government owns businesses and farms. It provides healthcare, education and welfare.
<b>Constitutional Monarchy</b>	9. Has a democratic government that limits the control of the Monarch (King or Queen).
<b>Transitional</b>	10. A country that is changing from one type of government to another.
<b>Despotism</b>	11. Rule by a single leader, all his or her subjects are considered his or her slaves.
<b>Totalitarian State</b>	12. A country with one political party. In England there are three main parties: Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrats.
<b>Revolutionary</b>	13. If a government is overthrown by force, the overthrowing government is sometimes called the Revolutionary Government.
<b>Anarchy</b>	14. A situation where there is no government.
<b>Republic</b>	15. A country that has no monarch. The head of the country is usually an elected president.
<b>Dictatorship</b>	16. A country ruled by a single leader who has full power over the country. This leader is <i>not</i> elected.