

Lesson: What Does Local Government Do?

Grade: 3rd, adaptable to others

Opening Statement:

Your village, town and county governments are called local governments. Local means something that belongs to a certain space. Local governments provide a lot of help to keep your town operating smoothly, like safety forces (police and fire departments); road crews to keep the streets paved and cleared of snow; and protecting our rights by providing a court system.

Activity: Worksheet What Does Local Government Do?

Key Work Vocabulary:

benefit. That which is received as an improvement or advantage as the result of a decision.

Bill. A proposed law.

civic. Of or pertaining to a city.

civil servant. A person who works for the government.

Constitutional. In accordance with the laws of the constitution.

council. A lawmaking group.

country. A unit of political space, the entire land area of a nation or state.

culture. Learned behavior of a group of people, which includes their belief systems and languages, their social relationships, their institutions and organizations, and their material goods such as food, clothing, buildings, tools, and machines.

delegate. A person sent with power to act for another.

democracy. A system of government in which political control is exercised by all of the people, either directly or through their elected representatives.

diffusion. The spread of people, ideas, technology, and products among places.

direct democracy. A democratic system of government in which the people exercise political control and participate directly in decision making.

direct primary. The election of candidates by party members to run against candidates from other parties.

elector college. Formal voters of the U.S. who elect the president and vice president.

executive branch. The part of government that puts law into action.

impeach. To officially charge a person in public office with wrongdoing.

initiative. The right of citizens or the legislature to introduce a matter for legislation either to the legislative body or directly to the citizens.

issue. A point, matter, or problem to be decided

judicial branch. The part of government that interprets the laws.

municipality. A town or city.

nation. A group of people bound together by a strong sense of shared values and cultural characteristics, including language, religion, and common history.

ordinance. Law made by a town or city government.

perspective. A specific point of view in understanding or judging things or events.

popular government. Government responsive to and representative of the people.

recall. To remove an official from public office by popular vote.

repeal. To do away with.

representative democracy (republic). A democratic system of government in which the people exercise political control and participate through elected representatives responsible for promoting the common welfare.

resolution. A statement that is voted on.

responsibilities. The conditions or tasks for which a person is accountable or answerable.

right. Just claims that belong to a person by law, nature, or tradition.

slogan. A word or phrase used by a group or product to call attention; a motto.

sanding committee. A permanent legislative committee, ready to work.

suffrage. The right to vote.

territory. An area of land; the land and waters under the jurisdiction of a state, nation, or sovereign.

township. A unit of land.

urban. Relating to a city.

veto. To refuse to agree, as to a legislative bill, causing it to be reconsidered or canceled.

Social Studies Content Standards:

Government (Role of Government)

1st. Recognize the role of authority figures in providing for the safety and security of individuals.

1st. Explain how voting can be used to make group decisions.

2nd. Identify leaders such as mayor, governor, and president and explain that they are elected by the people.

2nd. Explain how a system of government provides order to a group such as a school or community and why government is necessary including: a. Making and enforcing laws; b. Providing leadership; c. Providing services; d. Resolving disputes.

3rd. Explain the major functions of local government including: a. Promoting order and security; b. Making laws; c. Settling disputes; d. Providing public services; e. Protecting the rights of individuals.

3rd. Explain the structure of local governments and identify local leaders (e.g., township trustees, county commissioners, city council members, or mayor).

3rd. Identify the location of local government buildings and explain the functions of government that are carried out there.

3rd. Identify goods and services provided by local government, why people need them, and the source of funding (taxation).

3rd. Define power and authority.

3rd. Explain why the use of power without legitimate authority is unjust (e.g., bullying, stealing).

5th. Explain the essential characteristics of American democracy including: a. The people are the source of the government's authority. b. All citizens have the right and responsibility to vote and influence the decisions of the government. The government is run directly by the people or through elected representatives. d. The powers of government are limited by law. e. Basic rights of individuals are guaranteed by the Constitution.

6th. Explain reasons for the creation of government such as: a. Protecting lives, liberty, and property; b. Providing services that individual cannot provide for themselves.

11th. Describe the changing relationships among the branches of the national government, and evaluate applications of the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances for serving the public good and protecting individual rights.

11th. Explain the functions of local and state governments in Ohio and how their powers are derived from the Ohio constitution.

Government (Rules and Laws)

K. Identify purposes for having rules and way that they provide order, security, and safety in the home, school, and community.

1st. Recognize the need for rules in different settings and the need for fairness in such rules.

4th. Explain the purpose of a democratic constitution: a. To provide a framework for a government; b. To limit the power of government; c. To define authority of elected officials.

Government (Systems of Government)

9th. Explain how various systems of governments acquire, use, and justify their power.

11th. Explain the role of elections and political parties (including third parties) in facilitating the democratic process.

11th. Describe the ways in which public officials are held accountable for the public good including ways they can acquire and lose their offices with emphasis on: a. Appointments; b. Primary and general elections; c. The Electoral College; d. Recall; e. Impeachment.

12th. Identify and analyze issues related to the election process in the United States (e.g., election board policies, technology used in elections, media reporting of election results).

Citizenship (Participation)

4th. Describe the ways in which citizens can promote the common good and influence their government including: a. Voting; b. Communicating with officials; c. Participating in civic and service organizations; d. Performing voluntary service.

6th. Explain how opportunities for citizens to participate in and influence the political process differ under various systems of government.

11th. Explain how an individual participates in primary and general elections including: a. Registering to vote; b. Identifying the major duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required for a particular position; c. Becoming informed about candidates, and issues; d. Declaring or changing party affiliation; e. Obtaining, marking, and depositing a ballot.

12th. Practice forms of civic discussion and participation consistent with the ideals of citizens of a democratic republic: a. Persuasive speech; b. Panel discussion; c. Debate.

Citizenship (Rights and Responsibilities)

3rd. Describe the responsibilities of citizenship with emphasis on: a. Voting; b. Obeying laws; c. Respecting the rights of others; d. Being informed about current issues; e. Paying taxes.

4th. Explain the importance of leadership and public service.

4th. Explain why characteristics such as respect for the rights of others, fairness, reliability, honest, wisdom, and courage are desirable qualities in the people citizens select as their leaders.

8th. Show connections between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship including: a. Voting and staying informed on issues; b. Being tried by jury and serving on juries; c. Having rights and respecting the rights of others.

11th. Explain the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how they are secured through: a. Legislation; b. The role of the judiciary in upholding rights; c. The role of citizens exercising their rights.

11th. Explain how citizenship includes the exercise of personal responsibility and active participation in a democracy including: a. Behaving in a civil manner; b. Being fiscally responsible; c. Accepting responsibility for the consequences of one's actions; d. Practicing civil discourse; e. Becoming informed on public issues; f. Voting; g. Taking action on public issues; h. Providing public service; i. Serving on juries.

WORKSHEET: What Does Local Government Do?

Local Government

Cut out as many of the pictures below as you need. Paste them on a separate sheet of paper to create a scene of your Ohio town. Finish the scene by drawing in examples of local government in action! Example: you may draw a fire truck racing down the street or a road being repaired. Fill the picture with as many local government activities as you can think of! You can then share your ideas with your class.

