

A Seat at the Table

Unitary, Federal, and Confederal Systems of Government

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Published by *K20 Center*

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	75 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	1-2 class period(s)
Course	U.S. Government		

Essential Question

How do governments distribute power?

Summary

In this lesson, students will discover the attributes of three systems of government by discussing advantages and disadvantages of each type and then sorting characteristics of each type. Students will reflect on potential issues faced by citizens living under each type of system and will summarize their learning by giving each system a grade with their reasoning.

Snapshot

Engage

Students reflect on the role of government in people's lives.

Explore

Students analyze advantages and disadvantages of different governmental systems.

Explain

Students sort characteristics of unitary, confederal, and federal governments.

Extend

Students discuss potential problems that can arise from different governmental systems.

Evaluate

Students grade unitary, confederal, and federal governments and provide reasoning for the grades.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States Government (9th through 12th grade))

USG.1.3: Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the ways governmental power is distributed, shared and structured in unitary, federal and confederal systems in terms of effectiveness, prevention of abuse of power and responsiveness to the popular will.

Attachments

- Chat Stations Posters—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.docx
- Chat Stations Posters—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.pdf
- Chat Stations Posters—A Seat at the Table.docx
- Chat Stations Posters—A Seat at the Table.pdf
- Lesson Slides—A Seat at the Table.pptx
- Systems Card Sort—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.docx
- Systems Card Sort—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.pdf
- Systems Card Sort—A Seat at the Table.docx
- Systems Card Sort—A Seat at the Table.pdf
- Systems Report Card—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.docx
- Systems Report Card—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.pdf
- Systems Report Card—A Seat at the Table.docx
- Systems Report Card—A Seat at the Table.pdf
- Systems T-Chart—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.docx
- Systems T-Chart—A Seat at the Table - Spanish.pdf
- Systems T-Chart—A Seat at the Table.docx
- Systems T-Chart—A Seat at the Table.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Systems T-Chart handout (attached; one page per group; make sure each type of system is analyzed by at least one group)
- Systems Card Sort handout (attached; one per group; optional)
- Chat Stations Posters (attached; three posters per class; can be duplicated if necessary)
- Systems of Government Report Card handout (attached; one per student)
- Scissors (one per group; optional)
- Pens or pencils
- Student devices with Internet access

10 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Review the essential question on **slide 3** and the lesson objectives on **slide 4** to the extent necessary.

Move to **slide 5,** and read the question to students: *What is the role of government in people's lives?* Using the Think-Pair-Share strategy, allow time for students to think of a response before pairing up with a partner and sharing their thoughts.

Ask for several volunteers to share what they have talked about with their partner. Have a short class discussion about the ways in which the government is involved in citizens' lives.

15 minutes

Explore

Place students into groups of three to four. As you pass out the attached **Systems T-Chart** handout to students, make sure that each group receives only one of the three pages and that there will be at least one group analyzing each of the governmental systems. Move to **slide 6,** and tell students to work in their groups to read over the country information. After they read about the country, have students use the T-Chart strategy to work as a group to write down the advantages and disadvantages the citizens experience from the system of government utilized by the described country.

Ask each group to share something that they have written about their country, until all groups have shared. As students share, take some notes on the whiteboard by creating a heading for each of the three countries and adding information underneath. After students have shared, tell students that each country represents a unique system of government that is either unitary, confederal, and federal. Explain to students that the countries they read about each have a system of government that divides power in different ways. The countries described have the following system:

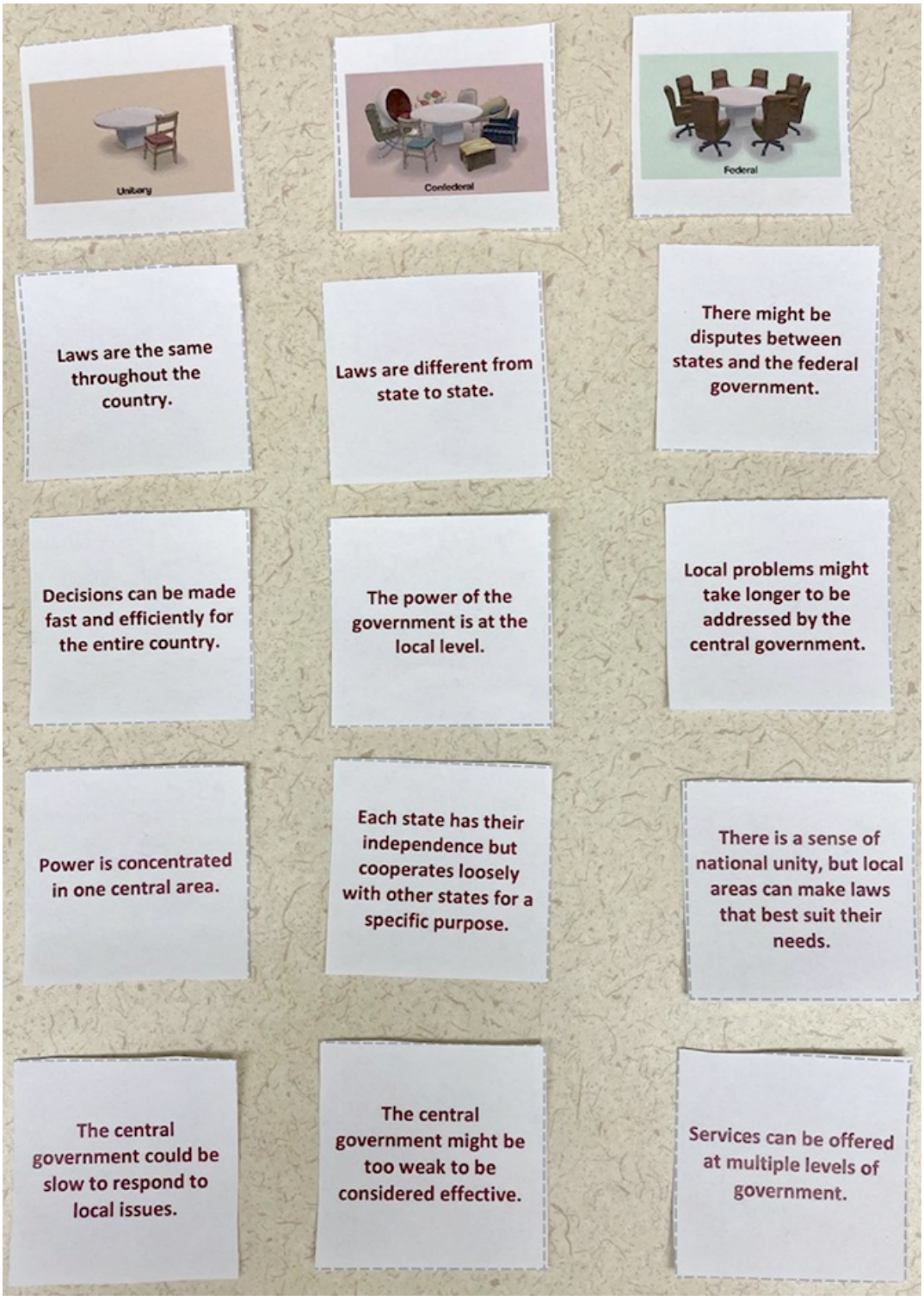
- Country A - Unitary
- Country B - Federal
- Country C - Confederal

15 minutes

Explain

Pass out the attached **Systems Card Sort** handout to each group. Have students cut out the cards. Display **slide 7,** and review the formal definitions of unitary, confederal, and federal systems of government with students. Have students sort the cards into the appropriate government system.

Circulate and monitor as students complete the Card Sort, answering questions and clarifying the concept as needed. The image below displays the card sort solution:



Optional: Digital Card Sort Preparation

If you prefer a digital Card Sort activity, prepare the following Amplify Classroom activity.

Go to *Amplify Classroom: A Seat at the Table Card Sort*. Sign up to create an account or log in. Select the "Assign" dropdown button, and then select "Create single session code." Adjust the settings as desired, then select "Create Invite Code." Prepare this session invitation code to distribute to students during the lesson. For help assigning an Amplify Classroom activity, see k20.ou.edu/AssignActivity.

Once students are ready to begin, provide your prepared session code. Have them go to student.amplify.com/join and enter the session code. Students do not need to sign in unless they intend to pause and resume the activity at a later time. Students are notified when they have sorted the cards correctly.

For more information about getting started with Amplify Classroom, go to k20.ou.edu/StartAmplify.

15 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Prior to teaching the lesson, print out the attached **Chat Stations Posters,** and hang them around the room. Print each of the three posters the number of times that best suits your class size needs.

Display **slide 8,** and tell students they are going to use the Chat Stations strategy to rotate to each poster, read the prompt, and discuss the questions on the poster. Have students choose a poster to begin with, and start the timer on slide 8. When time stops after three minutes, have students move to the next poster and repeat the process until they have visited all the posters. Afterward, tell students to return their seats. Ask students to share what they talked about at each poster, and have a class discussion about the issues that can arise from the different governmental systems.

20 minutes

Evaluate

Pass out the attached **Systems of Government Report Card** handout to each student. Move to **slide 9,** and have students individually give each of the three systems of government a grade with their reasoning. Collect the handouts to review and check for student understanding of the lesson content.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Amplify classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/1081
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Card sort. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/147
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Chat stations. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/944
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 3 minute timer [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iISP02KPau0
- K20 Center. (n.d.). T-chart. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/86
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-pair-share. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/139
- Rahhal, R. (n.d.). A seat at the table card sort. Desmos Classroom. https://teacher.desmos.com/activitybuilder/custom/63e11571747f35d24ac00776