# Lesson Note-Taking Organizer

Topic: What makes a country?

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| Comprehension Question(s):   1. What characteristics define a country? Answer: sovereignty, territory, population, organized government 2. What is sovereignty? Answer: the right to rule oneself 3. What is the definition of territory? Answer: the land and waters under the jurisdiction of a government 4. What is the key feature of an organized government? Answer: Government members have defined powers and responsibilities. |

Summary:

What is a nation?

A nation-state is defined by four main characteristics. A nation (the homogenous cultural group) has two characteristics:

1. Population
   1. Number of people
   2. Without population, a nation cannot exist (example: Antarctica)
   3. Has different ethnic groups:
      1. Meaning: a division of humans distinguished by common customs, physical characteristics, or language.
      2. The United States has many different ethnic groups
      3. Japan has only one ethnic group. As a result, it is called a nation-state, or where a nation’s borders coincide with cultural boundaries
2. Sovereignty
3. When all people inside the nation agree to be ruled by the government
4. Example: Canada. Canada is not sovereign to native peoples, so they signed a treaty creating First Nations (separate nations for native peoples). Their governments are monitored by Canada in exchange for funding and the criminal justice system.
5. Sometimes sovereignty issues are complicated.
6. Example: Taiwan. Taiwan believes that it has right to rule itself, so U.S. considers it a nation state. However, China considers it to be Chinese territory.

A state (the political power that defines the land) just needs two things:

1. Territory
2. Land, waterways, and sea controlled by a country.
3. Usually defined from treaties
4. Example: Israel, which created a treaty with Palestinians to create the nation-state of Israel. Israel transferred from nation to nation-state, with mainly Jewish people.
5. Organized Government
6. Defines and defends territory
7. Has positions and people who fill them with clear powers and responsibilities
8. This helps the nation-state to deal with other countries

Topic: What are Constitutions?

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| Comprehension Question(s):   1. What did the Magna Carta do? Possible response: It limited the powers of the king so that he would respect certain liberties. 2. Which document influenced the First Congress of the United States to adopt the first 10 amendments? Answer: the English Bill of Rights 3. What three goals did Thomas Jefferson have when writing the Declaration of Independence? Possible response: First, Jefferson wanted to present a theory of government that would justify a formal break with England. Second, he had to have a method of persuading fellow colonists that his actions to break from England were justified. Third, he had to convince foreigners that the colonists were serious. 4. What was the first constitution used by the United States? Answer: the Articles of Confederation |

Summary:

What is a constitution?

1. Any government that has a constitution is limited.
2. A constitution has set of rules, or a plan, that government has to follow.
3. Constitution also lists certain rights of individuals and can be amended.
4. Constitutions can also be rejected and rewritten.
5. Earliest example in English-speaking world is Magna Carta, which limited King John’s powers and forced him to respect rights of noblemen.
6. However, it didn’t protect freedom of religion. So, Puritans fled to Massachusetts in 1620. On the way, they signed a new constitution call Mayflower Compact, which gave religious freedom and voting rights for property-owning men.
7. In England, a fight over civil rihts led to civil war, leading to English Bill of Rights, which listed rights of people and required monarch to respect them.
8. This Bill of Rights was based on John Locke, who said that government was given wealth and power, but had to respect the rights of people. Otherwise, rebellion would ensue.
9. He believed that this contract was from God. A similar thought was put forth by Chinese thinker Wang Yangming.
10. In France, Montesquieu came up with idea of separation of powers to prevent government from ignoring rights of people.
11. This influenced Thomas Jefferson when writing the Declaration of Independence. He had three main goals while writing it:
12. Presenting a theory of government that justified a formal break from England
13. Persuading fellow colonists that this was justified
14. Convincing world that the colonists were serious
15. First constitution, Articles of Confederation, was written by John Dickinson of Pennsylvania
16. Created a confederation, or alliance of states, giving most power to states
17. However, states could not handle things on their own, shown by the Pennsylvania counties revolting and the state government not being able to control it.
18. Therefore, Founding Fathers created the Constitution, creating a true central government with the power to raise taxes and armies.
19. They borrowed ideas from:
20. Magna Carta: The government’s powers are limited
21. Mayflower Compact: Property-owning men can vote
22. John Locke: Government has a duty to protect rights and welfare of citizens.
23. Montesquieu: Separation of powers
24. English Bill of Rights: Protecting rights of people

Topic: Types of Constitutional Governments

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| Comprehension Question(s):   1. How does the confederal system of government differ from the federal system of government? Possible response: Confederal systems place all power in the hands of the states, who choose to give up some authority to the central government. Federal systems split power between the two according to an established set of rules. 2. What are characteristics of the unitary system? Possible response: Laws are created for citizens by the national central government and local governments are granted only certain powers. 3. How are state constitutions and the U.S. Constitution similar? Possible response: State constitutions and the U.S. Constitution outline the structure of the government and establish a bill of rights. |

Summary:

What are the different types of government?

1. Types of government based on powers:
2. Confederal system:
3. States hold all powers, give some powers to central government
4. Example: Iroquois Confederacy
   * + 1. People select representative to go to war council
       2. War council handles foreign relations, but cannot take money or tax people
5. Government usually falls apart
6. Federal system:
7. Shares power between states and federal government.
8. Both federal government and states have constitutions
9. Both make laws
10. Examples: U.S., Canada, Mexico
11. Unitary system:
12. National government holds all powers, giving only certain powers to local governments
13. Only national government makes laws
14. Example: France
15. Types of government based on way government is organized:
16. Parliamentary system:
17. Legislature has complete power over other branches
18. Chooses people to lead and grants power to other branches
19. Little separation of powers, as people who chooses to pas laws also chooses who enforces them
20. Example: Britain and India
21. Presidential system:
22. President is chosen by general vote of nation’s citizens
23. Creates separation of powers
24. Examples: United States, Germany

What type of government is the United States?

1. Federal Presidential System
2. Federal system:
3. National government shares power with the states in system called federalism
4. Federal government has powers such as signing foreign treaties
5. Other powers are reserved for states
6. Presidential system:
7. Divides power among three branches: legislative, judicial, executive
8. Executive and legislative branches are chosn by people

What type of government is the United Kingdom?

1. Parliamentary system:
2. Legislative branch (parliament):
3. House of Lords:
4. Consists of wealthy noblemen
5. House of Commons:
6. More powerful than House of Lords
7. Represents the common people
8. Executive branch (prime minister):
9. Chosen by legislative branch
10. Monarch
11. Is head of state (not of the government)

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| Lesson Activity and Review: |