

identify and explain essential ideas of constitutional government, which include limited government; rule of law; due process of law; separated and shared powers; checks and balances; federalism; popular sovereignty; republicanism; representative government; and individual rights to life, liberty, and property; and freedom of conscience and religion.

Objective

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to identify and explain essential ideas of constitutional government, including limited government, rule of law, due process of law, separated and shared powers, checks and balances, federalism, popular sovereignty, republicanism, representative government, and individual rights to life, liberty, and property, as well as freedom of conscience and religion.

Materials and Prep

- Notebook or paper
- Pencil or pen

No prior knowledge or materials are required for this lesson.

Activities

- **Activity 1: Constitutional Government Scavenger Hunt**
Search for examples of the essential ideas of constitutional government in your home or community. Take notes on what you find and be prepared to share your findings.
- **Activity 2: Create a Founding Fathers Comic Strip**
Choose three essential ideas of constitutional government and create a comic strip featuring the Founding Fathers discussing and implementing these ideas.
- **Activity 3: Debate on Individual Rights**
Divide into two teams and hold a friendly debate on the importance of individual rights in a constitutional government. Use evidence and examples to support your arguments.

Talking Points

- **Limited Government:** In a constitutional government, the power of the government is limited to prevent it from becoming too powerful and infringing on people's rights. This means that the government can only do what the Constitution allows it to do.
- **Rule of Law:** The rule of law means that everyone, including the government, must follow the laws. No one is above the law, and it helps ensure fairness and justice.
- **Due Process of Law:** Due process of law means that everyone is entitled to fair treatment under the law. This includes the right to a fair trial and the opportunity to present evidence and arguments.
- **Separated and Shared Powers:** The powers of the government are divided among different branches, such as the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. This helps prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful.
- **Checks and Balances:** Each branch of government has the ability to check, or limit, the power of the other branches. This ensures a balance of power and prevents any one branch from becoming too dominant.
- **Federalism:** Federalism is the division of power between the national government and state governments. This allows for a balance of power and helps protect individual rights.
- **Popular Sovereignty:** Popular sovereignty means that the power of the government comes from the people. The people have the right to govern themselves and make decisions through voting and participating in the democratic process.
- **Republicanism:** Republicanism is a form of government where the people elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf. This allows for a large and diverse population to be represented in the government.
- **Representative Government:** In a representative government, the people elect individuals to represent them and make decisions on their behalf. This ensures that the government is accountable to the people.

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/ Lesson 1: The Constitution

Individual Rights to Life, Liberty, and Property: In a constitutional government, individuals have certain rights that are protected by the Constitution. These include the right to life, liberty, and property, which means that the government cannot take away these rights without due process of law.

- **Freedom of Conscience and Religion:** The Constitution guarantees the freedom of conscience and religion, which means that individuals have the right to believe and worship as they choose. This protects religious freedom and allows for diversity of beliefs.