Forms of Government and Democratic Representation

First & Last Name: _____ Date: _____

CENTRAL QUESTION

How should we compare governments without confusing labels with actual power?

Learning objective

Analyze four source sets, evaluate evidence and limitations, and defend a civic judgment through interdisciplinary inquiry.

Demonstration of learning

Complete the daily evidence tasks, earn a score on 15 multiple choice items, and write a source based RACE response using the 19 point rubric.

Standards and task alignment

NJSLS Social Studies: 6.3.8.CivicsPI.1; 6.3.8.CivicsPI.2; 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b. Applied in daily analysis and the final civic judgment. NJSLS ELA (2023): RI.CR.6.1 (evidence), RI.CI.6.2 (central ideas), W.AW.6.1 (argument), SL.PE.6.1 (discussion). National CCSS: RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, RH.6-8.7; WHST.6-8.1 and WHST.6-8.9. NJSLS / CCSS Math: 6.RP.A.3 (ratios and percent); Science, technology, arts, history, and civic participation are integrated through the named tasks; no additional science or arts code is claimed.

Five lesson sequence

Days 1 to 4: read, annotate, analyze, collaborate, and write. Day 5: 15 question assessment and extended RACE response. Each lesson is designed for 40 minutes; teacher notes provide timing and supports.

Academic vocabulary

democracy: rule grounded in the people; direct democracy: people vote on policies themselves; representative democracy: elected officials decide policies; autocracy: concentrated rule by one leader; oligarchy: rule by a small group; constitutional monarchy: monarchy limited by constitutional rules

Source integrity

Readings are original Ma’at instructional syntheses. Exact historical excerpts are marked. Classroom datasets and scenarios are labeled; they are not historical records or actual government budgets. Source references appear on page 13.

Intellectual Property of Ma’at Cultural Curriculum Consultants © 2026

DAY 1

Source A | Labels and institutions

Do Now

What evidence would you need before describing a government as democratic?

[1] A form of government describes how authority is organized. Democracy places public authority in the people. Autocracy concentrates authority in one ruler. Oligarchy concentrates authority in a small group. A monarchy has a monarch, but that label alone does not reveal how much power the monarch holds. In a constitutional monarchy, elected institutions may exercise governing authority while constitutional rules limit the monarch.

[2] Theocracy describes a system in which religious authority is central to government. A country can display more than one characteristic, so categories are analytical tools rather than perfectly separate boxes. Anarchy refers to the absence of governing authority; it is not simply any scene of disagreement.

[3] Students should investigate how leaders are chosen, how decisions are challenged, who can participate, and whether laws limit rulers. A government may call itself democratic while preventing meaningful opposition. Conversely, the existence of a monarch does not establish that citizens have no democratic institutions. Evidence about institutions and practice is stronger than a name alone.

Annotation task: underline a central claim; box one civic term; mark one detail as evidence; add a question where evidence or authority needs clarification.

Intellectual Property of Ma’at Cultural Curriculum Consultants © 2026