



# **Citizen Participation in Government**

Autocracy, Oligarchy, & Democracy

# Teachers:

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I have many more files on government & economics in my store. I am currently working on creating files/activities/notes/etc. for all of the social studies' GPS, so check back often!

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# Teachers:

Have students create a three-flap foldable for the different types of government. They should write the definition, examples, symbol, etc. in each flap.

You can print off the following pages and use as posters around the room, or project each page and discuss it.

# What is Citizen Participation?

In each country, the people have different rights to participate in the government.

- In some countries, any citizen can run for office or vote in elections.
- In other countries, there are restrictions placed on who can run for office and who can vote.
- There are also countries where NO citizen can vote and there are no elections.

# Three Types of Government

Types of Government are based on two key questions:

- 1 Who governs the country?
- 2 What is the citizen participation like?

The way a country answers these questions determines its government type:

**Autocracy**      **Oligarchy**      **Democracy**

# Autocratic Governments:

- Have a single ruler with unlimited power.
- Citizens cannot participate in the selection of the ruler or vote on the country's laws.
- One benefit – decisions for the country can be made quickly.
  - However...the needs of the citizens may be ignored.
  - The leader may make poor or selfish decisions that hurt the citizens.

# Autocracy

Generally the power to rule the country is inherited (kings/queens) or is taken by military force.

There are two main types of autocracies:

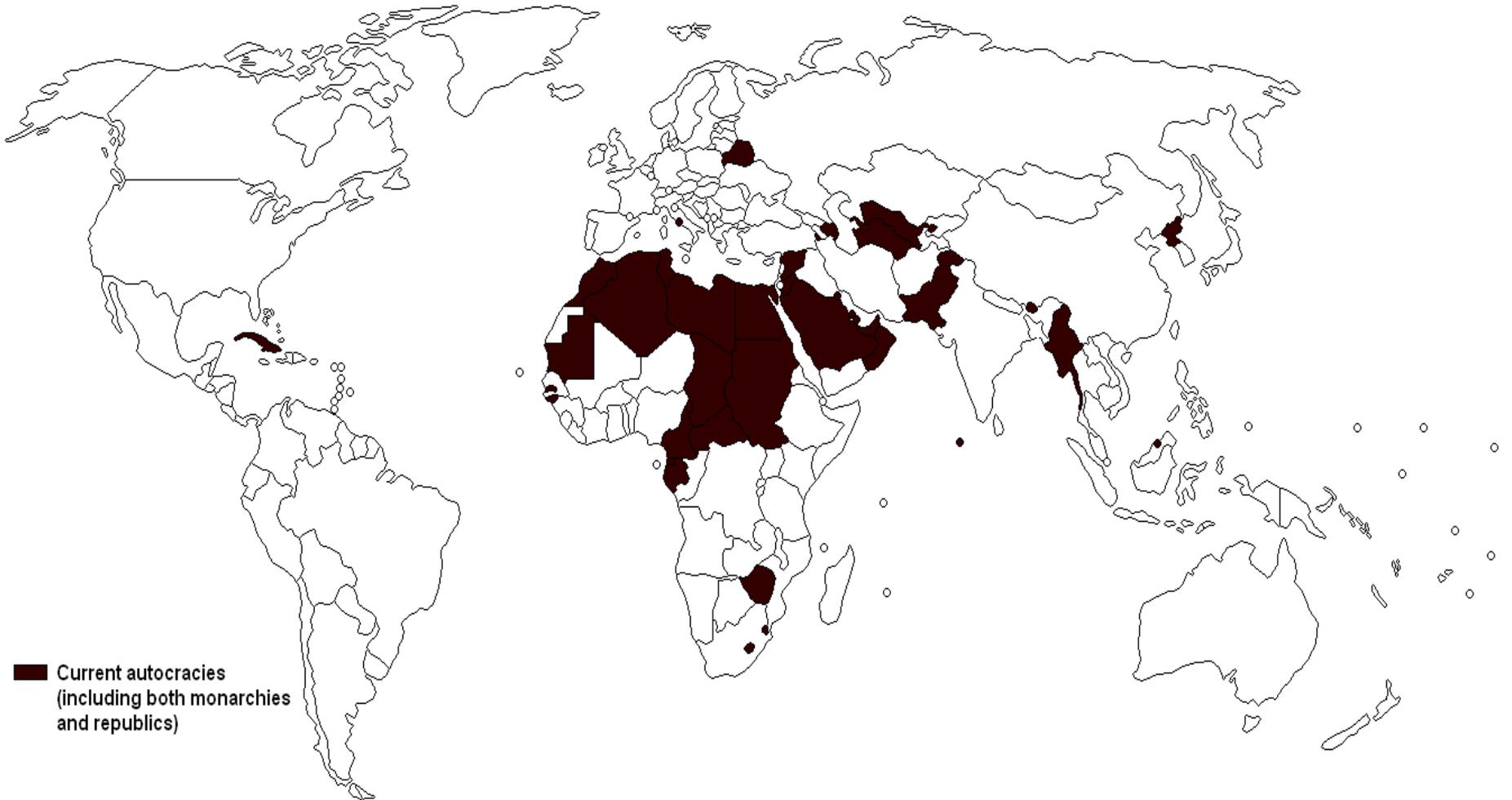
## **Dictatorship**

- The leader uses force to control the citizens.
- Example? Hitler

## **Absolute Monarchy**

- The monarch has absolute power (no constitution) over the citizens.

# Autocracies of the World:



# Oligarchic Governments:

- The country is ruled by a small group of people.
  - The group gets their power from either religion, military force, or wealth & resources.
- The citizens do not select the members of this group or vote on the country's laws.

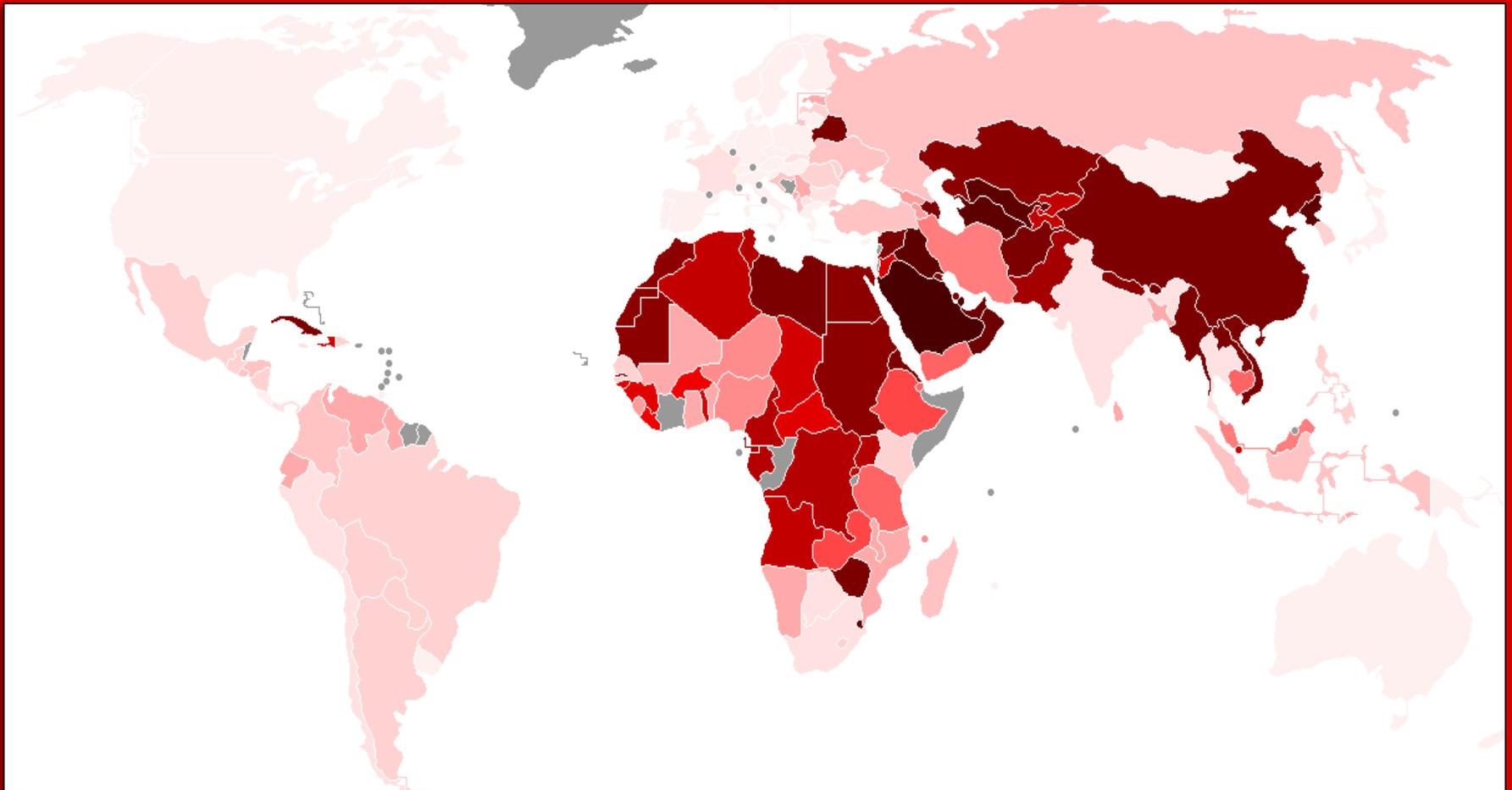
# Democratic Governments:

The citizens hold the power of the government.

Citizens have the opportunity to participate in the government:

- All citizens have the opportunity to be a leader.
- All citizens have the opportunity to vote for leaders & laws.

This Polity Data Series Map tries to measure a country's true democracy in government. The countries in the lightest pink have the highest democracy score. The darker the color, the lower the score.



# Democratic Governments:

There are two forms of democratic governments:

**Presidential**

**Parliamentary**

Both are designed to represent and protect the rights of the citizens.

# Presidential Democracy

The citizens vote directly for the leader of the country.

Citizens also vote for members of the legislature, but separately from the leader.

- The leader of the country does not make the laws. The legislature does this.

- Example: US, Russia, Mexico

# Parliamentary Democracy

The citizens vote for members of the legislature, not directly for the leader.

The legislature then chooses the country's leader among its members.

- The leader is part of the legislature, so he/she has a hand in making laws.
- Examples: United Kingdom, Canada, & Australia

# Teachers:

The following pages have the vocabulary words that the students should familiar with regarding the types of government. I also included some blank ones to make your own.

## IDEAS:

1. Print these words out and stick them on your Word Wall.
2. Give each student a set & have them write definitions & symbols on the back.
3. Use the cards to study—play review games with the cards!

**Autocracy**

**Oligarchy**

**Democracy**

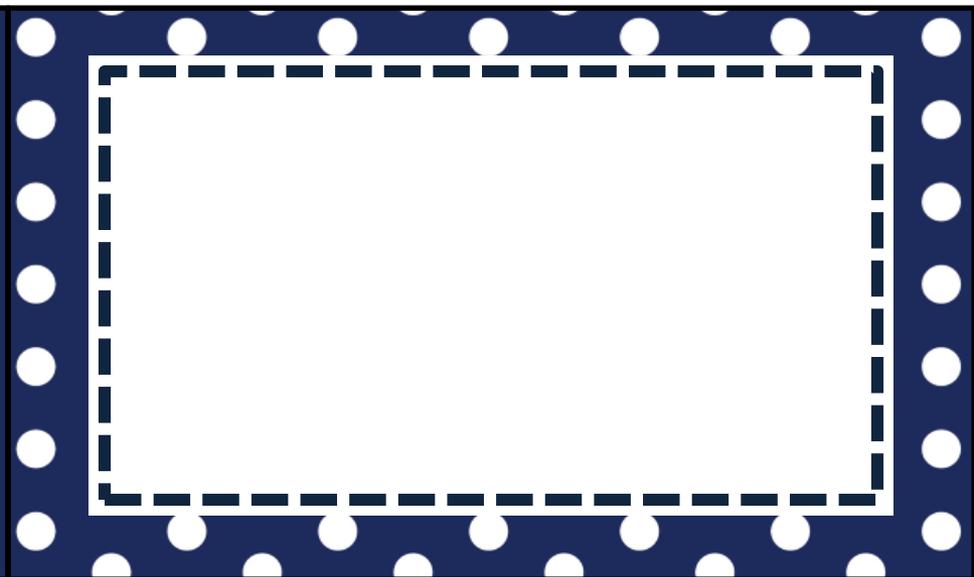
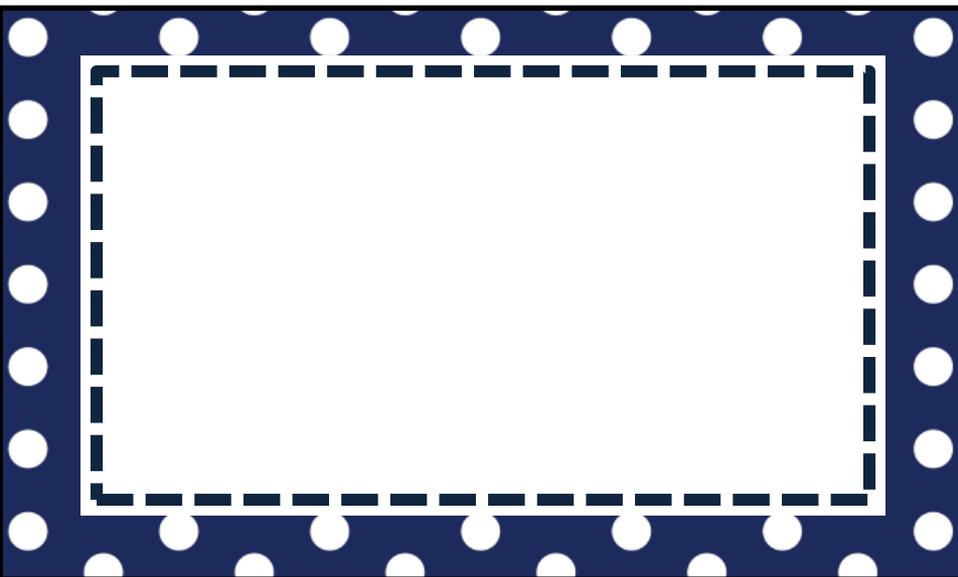
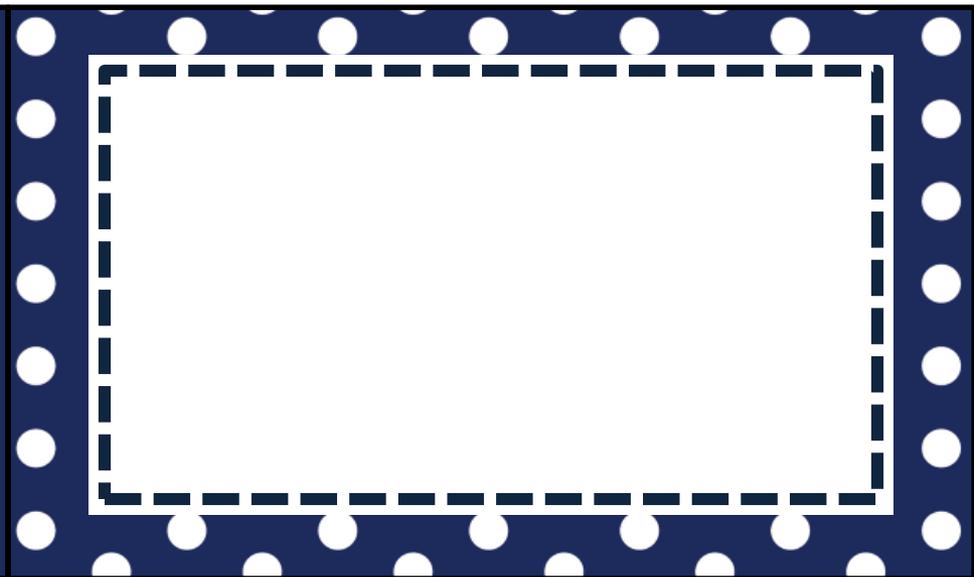
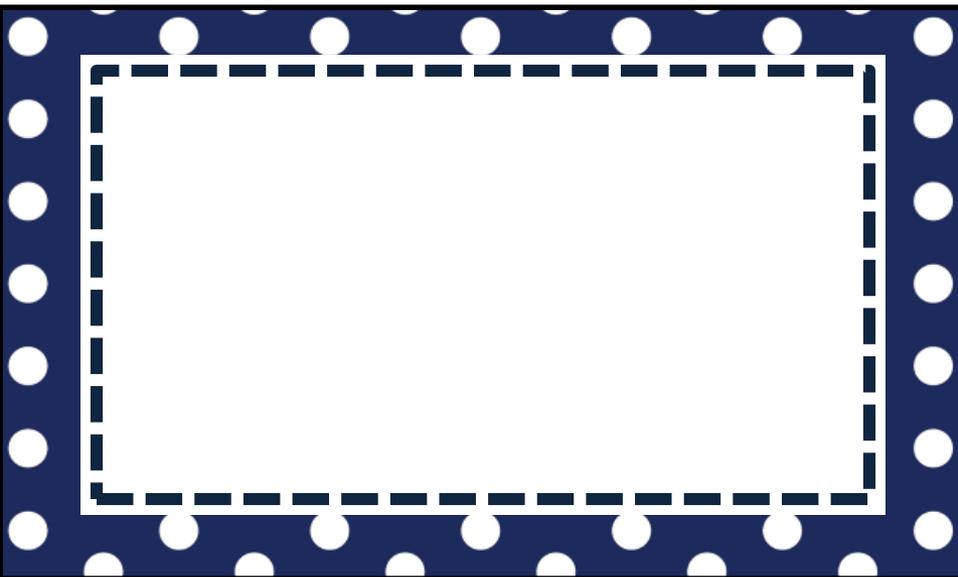
**Dictator**

**Citizen**

**Presidential  
Democracy**

**Parliamentary  
Democracy**

**Legislature**

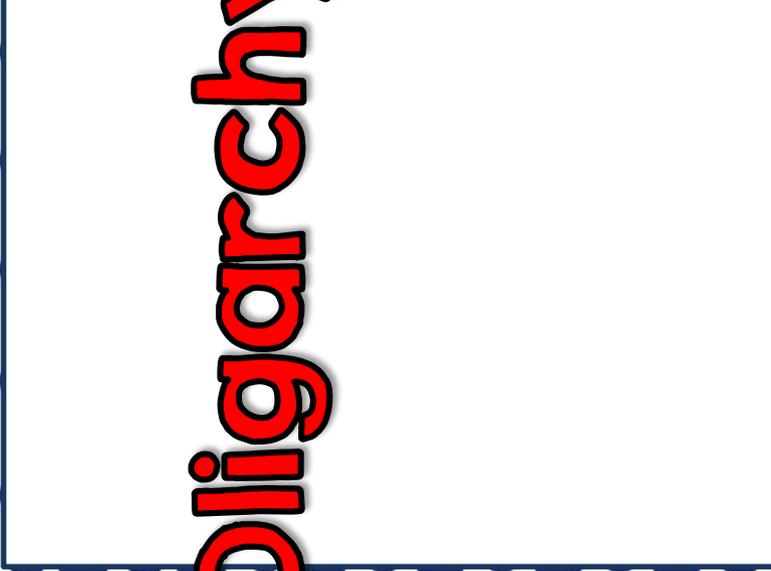


# Teachers:

Print off the cards on the following page and have students tape them back to back.

Project the following "Who Am I?" statements and have the students hold up the correct end of the card.

**Oligarchy**



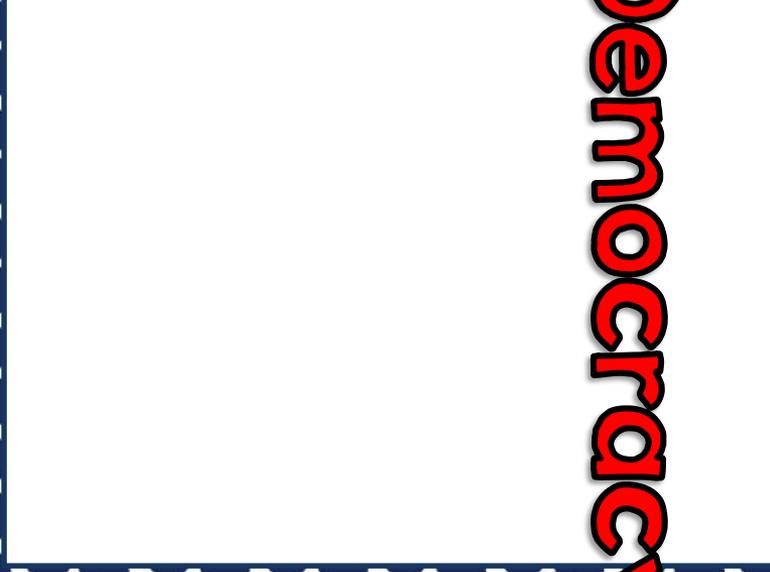
**Autocracy**



**Not  
Sure**



**Democracy**



# Who Am I?

I have a single ruler with  
absolute power.

# Who Am I?

In my country, the people  
are in charge because they  
can vote.

# Who Am I?

I can be a dictatorship or an absolute monarchy.

# Who Am I?

I have a small group of  
people ruling my country.

# Who Am I?

The citizens have no participation in my government.

# Who Am I?

I can be presidential or  
parliamentary.

# Teachers:

Have the students answer the following questions on their own paper (or white boards) to check for understanding.

# Let's Review

1. What are the two types of **Autocratic** governments?
2. Who rules the country in an **Oligarchy**?
3. Compare and contrast **Autocracy vs. Democracy**.
4. What are the two types of **Democratic** governments?
5. How is the leader chosen in a **Parliamentary democracy**?
6. Do the citizens get to choose the leader in a **Parliamentary democracy**?
7. How is the leader chosen in a **Presidential democracy**?

# Teachers:

Have the students fold a piece of copy paper into 8 sections. The first section is the title, and every other section is a different scene in the comic strip.

# Government Comic Strip

- Choose the type of government that you would like to represent in your cartoon: **Autocracy, Oligarchy, or Democracy.**
- Create a comic strip that represents the leadership of the government and the citizen participation (who votes) in the government.
  - Your characters & countries may be fictional, but you need to make sure that your cartoon includes realistic information about how your government type actually works.

# Teachers:

- The next page is the Mascot directions for students.
- Assign each table a different vocabulary word: Autocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy, Presidential Democracy, Parliamentary Democracy, Dictatorship
- Give each group a large piece of construction paper or butcher paper—the bigger, the better!

# Government Mascots

- Create a mascot that will represent your group's vocabulary word. ♥ Can be a real OR made up thing!
- Draw & color your mascot on the paper provided.
- Be sure to give your mascot a creative name.
- Write down at least 3 reasons why/how your mascot represents your group's vocabulary word.

# Teachers:

- Give each group/table a dice. The students will roll the dice to determine which Think Dots activity they will do.
- This can be individual, or they may work in groups.
- Vocabulary Words used: Autocracy, Oligarchy, & Democracy (but really, you could add any that you choose).

# THINK DOTS

Create a simile for each of the vocabulary words. A simile is a comparison of two things or ideas using like or as. It is not enough just to write the simile, you must explain it too.



Which type of government do you prefer to live under? Write a paragraph explaining your position.



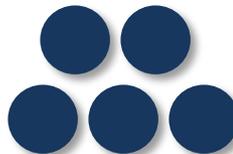
Create facial expressions for each of the vocabulary words to summarize how a person would feel living under that government. (You only need to draw the heads)



Create an acrostic poem for each of the vocabulary words.



Create a crossword puzzle using the vocabulary words.



Create a "Who Am I?" riddle for each of the vocabulary words. Each riddle should have a minimum of 3 lines.

