

**SECTION 1**

Units of Local Government

**BEFORE YOU READ**

The Main Idea

Local governments have grown as the country has grown. As Americans settled in rural communities, towns, cities, and suburbs, they set up local governments.

Reading Focus

1. How are local governments established, and why are they needed?
2. How is county government organized, and what are the main purposes of each level of county government?
3. How do local and state governments work together?

Key Terms

municipality, p. 228
city, p. 228
county, p. 228
sheriff, p. 229
charter, p. 229
ordinances, p. 230

Have you lived through a flood, hurricane, or tornado? Did you lose electricity? Did you need to call the fire department or the police? Most of us do not think about basic services—at least until we do not have them. Your local government often provides all of these services.

The Need for Local Governments

Our local governments provide the conveniences and services that we have come to expect to make our daily lives easier. For example, we expect the roads to be in good repair and to allow us to get to and from work or school safely. Street cleaning and trash collection help keep our neighborhoods neat and disease-free. Electricity, running water, and sewage systems keep our homes, schools, and workplaces comfortable, efficient, and safe.

These services are often provided to us by local governments, such as city governments. A city is the largest type of municipality. Police and fire protection, water-conservation efforts, and snow removal are also provided by local governments. Local governments also provide education and keep records. Some governments supply their citizens with public transportation or recreation areas.

Establishing Local Governments

What level of government is closest to you? As a student, you are most affected by the government of the city or town in which you live, and by the school district in which you attend school. In other words, you are most affected by local government.

Powers Come from the State

In the United States, the states have the right to establish local governments. States use their own constitutions to legalize and define their local governments. Local government is made up of municipalities. A municipality is a unit of local government that is incorporated by the state and that has a large degree of self-government. Municipalities can include a state’s cities, towns, villages, and boroughs.

Answers

Reading Check transportation, roads, running water, sewage systems, sidewalks, street cleaning, trash collection, and other utilities

228
County Governments

The highest level of local government is the county. A county is a division of state government formed to carry out state laws, collect taxes, and supervise elections in a single small area. Louisiana calls its county-level government units parishes, while Alaska calls its counties boroughs.

County government is often the largest unit of local government. County employees provide services such as health care, police protection, welfare, corrections, recreational areas, and libraries. In some areas in a few states, county and city governments are combined into one legislative body.

At the head of county governments is a group of officials elected by the voters. This group may be called the county board, board of commissioners, county court, or board of county supervisors. These officials form the county’s legislative body. They have the power to pass laws regulating health and safety throughout the county. They also may collect real estate taxes, sales taxes, and personal property taxes.

County governments also have an executive branch. However, unlike executive branches at other levels of government, county executive branches usually have no single leader. Instead, county voters elect several county officials, each with his or her own responsibilities. In some places, however, the traditional form of county government has been replaced with a county manager and county executive. The county manager is elected by the voters and the county manager is appointed by the county board to supervise county business and services.

One of these elected officials is the county sheriff, who usually commands several deputies and an office staff. The sheriff arrests lawbreakers and carries out the orders of county courts. In many states, the sheriff is responsible for law enforcement only in the areas of the county that are not part of a city.

Counties also have several other elected officials. The county clerk keeps a record of the actions and decisions of the county board. In addition, the clerk keeps birth records, marriage records, death records, and election results. County treasurers are responsible for the county’s funds. County auditors also watch the money the county receives and the money it spends. County officials may also include a coroner, who investigates unnatural deaths, and a county prosecutor—also known as the district attorney—who represents the state in county trials.

Reading Check

Summarizing Describe the basic structure of county governments.

Collaborative Learning

Create a Newspaper

1. Organize the class into groups of three. Tell groups that they will create a special newspaper page in honor of the county system of government. Their page should explain what county government and its officers do and why they are important to citizens.

2. Have students work together, dividing the work into the following roles: reporter, editor, and headline writer. Make sure all students participate fully in creating their group’s page.

3. Have groups present their pages to the class for discussion. Ask students to compare county government to their town or city’s government. Tell them that they will learn more about city and town government later in the chapter. Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 23: Newspapers

Direct Teach

Reading Focus

1. How are local governments established, and why are they needed?

Establishing Local Governments

Recall Who has the power to establish local governments? the states

Analyze Why do you think the states rather than the national government establish local governments? Possible answer: because they have more knowledge about the needs of the communities in the state

Reading Focus

2. How is county government organized, and what are the main purposes of each level of county government?

County Governments

Identify What services do county workers provide for citizens? Possible answers: health care, police protection, welfare, corrections, recreational areas, libraries

Evaluate Which county official do you think is most important? Students’ answers will vary but should show understanding of the roles and functions of county officials.

Challenge and Enrichment Activities: Chapter 9

Answers

Analyzing Political Cartoons

Possible answer: to show that the sheriff puts a lot of effort into the job of preventing speeding

Reading Check group of elected officials acting as the county’s legislature, several elected leaders in the executive branch, other elected officials
Governments Work Together

The duties of local government officials are usually outlined in state-approved charters. A charter is a basic plan for a local government unit that defines its powers, responsibilities, and organization. Of course, a charter cannot violate state or federal laws.

It is the job of local governments to make communities better places to live. To accomplish this job, local lawmakers have the power to pass ordinances, or regulations that govern a community. Ordinances also cannot conflict with state or federal laws. Local law enforcement groups, such as police departments, are responsible for enforcing both local ordinances and state laws.

Local governments also help the state by making sure election procedures follow state guidelines. Local officials both supervise the voting process and provide citizens with polling places—that is, places where people can cast their ballots. Without local assistance, state and federal elections could not happen.

**Making Inferences** Why is it significant that Villaraigosa is the first Hispanic mayor of Los Angeles in 133 years?

**Critical Thinking**

4. **Summarizing** Use your notes and a chart like this one to summarize the section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County Board</th>
<th>Sheriff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Clerk</td>
<td>County Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Auditor</td>
<td>District Attorney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Supporting a Point of View** Imagine that you are living in a neighborhood in a rural county. Coyotes are beginning to come into the neighborhood and cause problems. Write a letter to the county board asking for assistance in handling the coyotes.

**Answers**

**Focus On** Possible answer: because Hispanics are now better represented in local government in Los Angeles

**Reading Check** so ordinances passed by local governments do not conflict with state laws; so local governments can help enforce some state laws and supervise elections

1. **municipality,** p. 228; city, p. 228

2. **county,** p. 229; sheriff, p. 229

3. **charter,** p. 230; ordinances, p. 230

4. Students should use the graphic organizer to explain the duties of the county board, sheriff, county clerk, county treasurer, county auditor, and district attorney.

5. Students’ letters will vary but should reflect an understanding of the responsibilities of county government.
When you vote in a class election, you participate in direct democracy. In some regions of the country that have small populations, direct democracy is still practiced at town meetings. When a town grows, elected representatives are needed to make the decisions.

Town Government

Towns first developed as New England colonists built homes and churches. A town is a unit of local government, usually larger than a village and smaller than a city. The colonial town included both the homes, churches, and other buildings and surrounding farmlands.

The people who lived in early New England towns created the town meeting, a simple yet powerful form of local government. In a town meeting, all citizens meet regularly to discuss town issues. After all opinions regarding an issue have been voiced, the people at the meeting vote on that issue. This means that each person has a direct voice in the government.

Why It Matters

Preview the headings in Section 2 with students. Ask students to name their type of local government. (Answers may vary for students who attend regional schools, but students should name a city, town, township, or village government.) Explain to students that local governments provide places such as town meetings where people can share their opinion about local issues or problems with others in their community. Discuss with students why it might be easier for citizens to become involved in local government than in other levels of government.

Key Terms

Preteach the following terms:

town unit of local government, usually larger than a village but smaller than a city (p. 231)
town meeting public meeting at which townspeople meet regularly to discuss and vote on town issues (p. 231)
township small unit of local government (p. 232)
special district unit of government formed to meet many different needs (p. 233)

Taking Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Governments</th>
<th>Kind</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td></td>
<td>to govern an area smaller than a city but larger than a village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townships, Special districts</td>
<td>township: to perform a variety of local functions, special district: to meet an area’s specific need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages, Boroughs</td>
<td></td>
<td>to provide services in a growing rural area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teach the Main Idea

1. **Teach** Ask students the Reading Focus questions to teach this section.
2. **Apply** Have students write the section’s three main heads on separate sheets of paper. As students read, ask them to record details about each type of government on the appropriate page.
3. **Review** Lead the class in a discussion about local government. Allow students to refer to their notes during the discussion.
4. **Practice/Homework** Have students create an encyclopedia entry about one form of local government.

Many smaller communities in New England still hold town meetings to deal with local issues.
Town meetings often are held in conjunction with town elections. At the elections, townspeople typically elect from three to five officials to manage the town’s affairs between town meetings. The town meeting form of government can work well in areas that have small populations. Direct democracy is practical in such towns because it is easier for all the voters to gather in one central location at one time.

**Finding Information on the Internet**

Does your town have leash laws for pets? How many people live in your state? These questions can all be answered by using Web sites provided by your local government. The Internet is also a great place to find practical information for daily life. Unfortunately, it can be hard to know if the Web sites you visit contain complete and accurate information. Many sites are sponsored by groups trying to sell a particular product or service.

Using a Web site sponsored and maintained by your local government can help you avoid these problems. These sites provide residents with useful information.

**Town Government**

**Identify** Where did the first towns develop in the United States? *in the New England colonies*

**Make Inferences** What kinds of issues are discussed at town meetings? Possible answer: issues that affect the local community.

**Townships and Special Districts**

**Explain** Why have many township governments decreased in importance? Cities have taken over many governmental responsibilities.

**Summarize** What benefits do special districts provide citizens? They meet health, safety, and cultural needs such as fire protection, libraries, parks, public transportation, and sewage disposal.

From the Source: Readings in Economics and Government: Reading 55: Democracy in America

Town meetings often are held in conjunction with town elections. At the elections, townspeople typically elect from three to five officials to manage the town’s affairs between town meetings. The town meeting form of government can work well in areas that have small populations. Direct democracy is practical in such towns because it is easier for all the voters to gather in one central location at one time.

**Reading Check** Analyzing Information

In what kind of community does a town meeting work well?

**Townships and Special Districts**

In some states, land is often divided into other smaller units. Two common subdivisions are townships and special districts. Townships are more common in certain states, but special districts are found in every state.

**Townships**

In colonial times, New England states used the town form of government. Other states, especially New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, used a form of government called a *township*. Townships in other parts of the country, especially the Midwest, have a different history. In the early 1800s, the United States expanded westward. Americans moved into new land where they had not previously settled. Congress divided this new land into perfectly square units, usually 6 miles (an hour’s buggy ride) by 6 miles on a side. As people from the East moved in, they set up local governments they called civil townships. Colonial townships were usually smaller than New England towns, while the Midwestern townships may have been larger than towns. But all townships perform many of the same governmental functions, such as building schools and roads, that towns perform. In general, a township is headed by an elected chairperson or supervisor. Voters also elect a board of commissioners or trustees to make township rules and regulations. An elected constable enforces the laws, and often an elected justice of the peace tries minor legal cases. Today, many township governments have decreased in importance as cities have taken over many of the governmental responsibilities.

**Answers**

**Media Investigation** Government Web sites usually end with “.gov”.

**Reading Check** a small community

**Hold a Town Meeting**

1. Assign students roles as town officials and townspeople.

2. Have students hold a mock town meeting, with officials giving reports and presenting new issues. Suggest that students find and research community issues in local newspapers. They can also present fictional issues.

3. Have students debate and vote on the community issues that have been raised by the “town officials.”

**Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 11: Discussions**

**Above Level**

**Research Required**

**Direct Teach**

**Reading Focus**

1. Where did town government begin, and what is the purpose of the town meeting?

2. Why did townships and special districts develop, and how does each function?
Special Districts
People living in a certain area may have a special need. In such cases these people may go directly to the state legislature and ask for a charter to set up a special district. A special district is a unit of government formed to meet many different needs, including fire protection, libraries, parks and recreation centers, public transportation, and sewage disposal. A special district may include several cities. For example, a hospital district might serve several cities. Each city would have to pay taxes for the services it receives. The state legislature usually sets up a commission to handle the details of establishing and operating the special district. The commission members may be elected or appointed.

School districts are considered special districts by some researchers. These districts are created by states to provide funds for local schools. There are more than 13,000 school districts in the United States. Each district has its own governing body called a board of education. An executive, usually called a superintendent of schools, manages the district’s day-to-day operations.

Section 2 Assessment Answers

Village and Borough Governments
When rural communities grow to a population of 200 to 300, their residents often encounter problems that require them to work together. The residents may decide to establish a village or a borough and create their own local government.

A request to establish a village or borough must be approved by the state legislature. The legislature permits the village or borough to be a self-governing municipality. It then can collect taxes, set up fire and police departments, and provide other services that larger communities offer their residents.

A village or borough is often governed by a small council, or board of trustees. The voters also elect an executive or president of the board of trustees to carry out the laws. If the population of a village or borough becomes large enough, the people may ask the state legislature to grant the community a city charter. When this happens its government would change accordingly.

Reading Check (left) They provide funds specifically for local schools. (right) As population grows, the need for community services and cooperation increases.
City government can get very big. New York City, for example, has nearly 9,000 sanitation workers alone. The Los Angeles Police Department employs 12,500 people. These departments are the size of many small towns. To provide good service, a city must be organized in an efficient manner.

**Home Rule Organization**

A city is generally the largest kind of municipality. Cities vary greatly, however, in size. New York City, for example, has a population of more than 8 million. On the other hand, the city of Parker, Pennsylvania, has only 799 people.

Traditionally, cities received their charters and their authority from the state legislature. Increasingly, however, states have been granting to cities an authority called home rule. Under home rule, a city can write and amend its own municipal charter. This charter, usually written by a commission, must be approved by the voters.

Using home rule has several advantages. First, a city can change its charter in a way that suits its particular needs. Second, a charter usually expires in 30 years, and the city has the opportunity to amend the charter in that time. Third, a charter can be amended even if it is against the wishes of a majority of the voters. Finally, a charter can only be changed or amended by a commission, which is made up of elected officials from the city. These officials are elected by the voters, so the charter is ratified by a majority of the voters.

City government can get very big. New York City, for example, has nearly 9,000 sanitation workers alone. The Los Angeles Police Department employs 12,500 people. These departments are the size of many small towns. To provide good service, a city must be organized in an efficient manner.

**Home Rule Organization**

A city is generally the largest kind of municipality. Cities vary greatly, however, in size. New York City, for example, has a population of more than 8 million. On the other hand, the city of Parker, Pennsylvania, has only 799 people.

Traditionally, cities received their charters and their authority from the state legislature. Increasingly, however, states have been granting to cities an authority called home rule. Under home rule, a city can write and amend its own municipal charter. This charter, usually written by a commission, must be approved by the voters.

Using home rule has several advantages. First, a city can change its charter in a way that suits its particular needs. Second, a charter usually expires in 30 years, and the city has the opportunity to amend the charter in that time. Third, a charter can be amended even if it is against the wishes of a majority of the voters. Finally, a charter can only be changed or amended by a commission, which is made up of elected officials from the city. These officials are elected by the voters, so the charter is ratified by a majority of the voters.
Forms of City Government

Cities manage a variety of responsibilities, such as providing education, health, and safety to their residents. Transportation systems, sanitation, water supplies, and fire and police protection are also part of the daily business of city governments. A city government usually is organized in one of four ways. Depending on its charter, the city will have a mayor-council government, a strong-mayor government, a commission government, or a council-manager government.

**Mayor-Council Government**

The oldest and most common form of city government is the mayor-council government. In this kind of government, the **city council** is the legislative body, while the **mayor** is the city’s chief executive officer.

In mayor-council governments, a city may be divided into several districts, often called wards. The people of each ward elect one person to represent them in a city council. In some cities, several council members at large are elected by all the voters in the city, rather than just the voters of one ward. Usually the mayor is also elected at large.

**Weak-Mayor Plan**

During the country’s early years, Americans remembered British governors who had abused their powers. For this reason, some cities developed the weak-mayor plan to limit the power of the mayor. Under the weak-mayor plan, the city council holds more power than the mayor. For example, the council appoints the city department heads, who report directly to the city council rather than to the mayor.

**Strong-Mayor Plan**

Recently, many city governments using the mayor-council form of government have adopted a strong-mayor plan of city government. Under the strong-mayor plan, the mayor is the city’s chief executive officer and has the primary responsibility for running the city’s government. For example, the mayor appoints most of the city officials. He or she usually also prepares the city budget. In some cities, the mayor can also veto ordinances passed by the city council. Because executive power is concentrated in the mayor, many people think that the strong-mayor plan is more efficient than the weak-mayor form.

**Community Meeting**

The decisions of city governments can have a huge impact on citizens. City governments deal with a large number of issues, including building roads, providing police and fire production, regulating business and industry, and collecting taxes. In order to get the public’s feedback on important issues, city governments often hold community meetings. Citizens are given the opportunity to ask their elected officials questions and give their opinions on the issues facing the city.

Why is it important for citizens to attend community meetings?

Community meetings are a good forum for citizens to express their opinions.

**Differentiating Instruction**

**Learners Having Difficulty**

**Create a Graphic Organizer**

1. Organize students into small groups.
2. Copy the following graphic organizer on the board, omitting the italicized answers:

   ![Graphic Organizer](image)

   - A charter is granted by state government.
   - How City Governments Are Established
   - The state gives the city permission to write its own charter under home rule.

3. Have students complete the organizer to explain how city governments are established. Then ask them to write a definition of home rule in their own words. (Verbal/Linguistic, Visual/Spatial)

**Answers**

(Visual/Spatial) so they can give elected officials feedback on the issues facing the city

**Local Government 235**

**Direct Teach**

**Reading Focus**

1. How are city governments organized under the home rule system?

**Home Rule Organization**

**Recall**

What is the population of New York City? More than 8 million people

**Contrast**

What is the difference between the charter of a city that is under home rule and the charter of a city that is not under home rule? Cities under home rule can write and amend their charters, while those that are not under home rule receive their charters from the state legislature.

**Reading Focus**

2. What are the different forms of city government?

**Forms of City Government**

**Describe**

How is the commission form of city government structured? A commission of elected officials acts as the city’s legislative body; each commissioner also leads a department of city government.

**Rank**

Which form of city government do you think is best? Why? Students’ answers will vary but should show understanding of different forms of city government.

- Graphic Organizer Activities: Chapter 9
- Simulations and Case Studies: Lesson 9: Oakville City Council Meeting on Banning Smoking in Public Places
4 Structures of Local Government

American city governments have four different structures. The weak-mayor system dates back to colonial days and, as cities grew, was mostly replaced by the strong-mayor system. The commission and council-manager plans are closely related.

**Mayor-Council (Weak Mayor)**

In the weak-mayor plan, the mayor has equal voting power with all the members of the council. A weak mayor’s vote, however, may act as a tie breaker.

**Mayor-Council (Strong Mayor)**

In the strong-mayor plan, the mayor has veto power on the decisions of the council. Mayors also appoint city officials and have power over the city budget.

**Commission**

In the commission plan, each council member is in charge of a different city department. The mayor’s vote carries the same weight as each of the commissioners’ votes.

**Council-Manager**

In cities with a council-manager plan, like Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, a city manager is appointed by the city council to run city departments. The mayor leads the city politically, and the manager directs the city’s day-to-day operations.

**Answers**

1. **Mayor-Council (Weak Mayor):** mayor has equal power with council members; Mayor-Council (Strong Mayor): mayor has power over city budget, to appoint officials, and to veto council’s decisions; **Commission:** mayor’s vote counts equally with those of council members, who are each in charge of a city department; Council-Manager: council-appointed manager runs city departments, mayor leads city politically.

2. Students’ answers will vary but should show understanding of the four structures of local government.

**Dramatize Types of City Government**

1. Organize students into four groups.
   - Assign each group one of the forms of city government. Do not let other groups hear your assignments and tell students to keep their group’s assignment to themselves.
   - Have groups work quietly in separate areas of the classroom to create a skit in which students will act out their assigned form of government.

2. Have each group perform its skit in front of the class. Tell student audience members to write down the form of government they think each group is acting out.

3. Review students’ answers and discuss how they knew which type of government each skit represented.

**Interpersonal, Kinesthetic**
Commission Government

A new form of government was introduced in Galveston, Texas, around 1900. Under the commission form of government, a city is governed by a commission that usually consists of three to nine elected officials, or commissioners. The commission acts as the city’s legislative body, passing laws for the community.

The commission also acts as the city’s executive body, with each commissioner heading up a city department and enforcing laws relating to that department. For example, one commissioner usually heads the department of public safety, which includes the police and firefighters. Another commissioner oversees public works. This official sees that the city has an adequate supply of clean water and that the streets are kept in good repair. A third commissioner oversees the city’s finances, including tax collection. Another commissioner might supervise the public welfare department, which helps the city’s disadvantaged citizens. Still another commissioner might run the health department, which supervises hospitals, clinics, and health inspectors in the city.

The commission form of city government has certain disadvantages. For example, voters may find it difficult to elect officials who know how to run a department of the city’s government. In addition, commissioners sometimes disagree about who should manage activities and budgets that fall under the jurisdiction of different departments.

Council-Manager Government

The council-manager plan of government is really a commission with a city manager added. Under the council-manager plan, voters elect a city council to act as the city’s lawmakers. The council then appoints a city manager as the city’s chief executive. The city manager appoints the heads of the city departments. These officials report directly to the city manager, who may also remove them from office.

The council-manager government has several advantages. First, because the city manager is appointed and not elected, he or she is usually free from any political pressure. In addition, the council can fire the city manager if he or she does not do a good job.

However, there are disadvantages to this form of government. Some cities cannot afford to hire a good manager, and some critics argue that city officials should be directly accountable to the voters.

Reading Check

Finding the Main Idea What are the types of city government, and how are they different?

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Reviewing Ideas and Terms

1. a. Define Write a brief definition for the term home rule. b. Draw Inferences and Conclusions How does home rule loosen the restrictions on a city?
2. a. Define Write a brief definition for the terms city council, mayor, and commission. b. Summarize How is a mayor-council government organized? c. Evaluate What are the strengths and weaknesses of the council-manager form of government?

Critical Thinking

3. Evaluating Use your notes and a chart like the one here to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each type of city government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of City Government</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Mayor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Mayor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council-Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus on Writing

4. Supporting Imagine that you are part of a committee establishing a new city. Write a short speech explaining which of the four plans you believe is the most effective form of city government and why.

Section 3 Assessment Answers

1. a. home rule, p. 234 b. The city can write and amend its own municipal charter.
2. a. city council, p. 235; mayor, p. 235; commission, p. 237 b. The city council is the lawmaking body; the chief executive of the city government is the mayor, who enforces the laws. c. Strengths: The appointed city manager is free from political pressure and can be fired if he or she does not do a good job. Weaknesses: Some cities cannot afford to hire a good manager. Managers are not directly accountable to voters.
3. Students should use the chart to explain the advantages and disadvantages of the strong mayor, weak mayor, commission, and council-manager plans.
4. Students’ speeches will vary but should clearly state their position and support it logically.

Answers

Reading Check mayor-council (strong/weak mayor), commission, council-manager; The power of the mayor, the responsibilities of the council, the officials involved in governing the city, and how officials are chosen vary in the different types of city government.
Analyzing an Editorial

Organize students into small groups and have them find an editorial on a local issue in a local newspaper. Ask them to identify the editorial’s subject, the author’s point of view, and what facts the author uses to support the argument. Then tell each group to write a paragraph explaining whether or not the group members find the editorial persuasive, and why. Ask each group to summarize its findings for the class.

**Learn**

Editorials are a special type of newspaper or magazine article. They express the opinion of the writer or of the editorial board of the publication. Oftentimes editorials take a stand on a recent event or policy. Most editorials use facts to support their point of view.

Today many newspapers dedicate a page or section to opinions and editorials. Use the tips below to learn how to analyze an editorial.

**Practice**

1. **Determine the subject.** As you read an editorial, you should ask yourself what issue or event the article is addressing.
2. **Identify the author’s point of view.** What is the author’s opinion? Look for words and phrases that indicate his or her point of view.
3. **Locate the facts.** What facts does the author use to support his or her argument?
4. **Decide where you stand on the issue.** Think carefully about the information presented in the editorial. Is there enough evidence to support the author’s point of view? Do you agree or disagree with the author?

**Apply**

Read the editorial carefully. Use the tips for analyzing an editorial to help you answer the questions below.

1. How is this editorial framed—what issue, policy, or event does it address?
2. What is the author’s point of view? How can you tell?
3. What facts and information does the author provide to support his or her opinion?
4. How would you frame a response to this editorial? What points would you make and how would you support them?

**CONCERNS ABOUT TASERS**

Police departments around the country are debating the use of Tasers, the electronic stunning devices widely used to subdue unruly suspects.

An influential police research group meeting in Houston last week recommended using the stun guns only on people violently resisting arrest because of the weapon's potential to kill. The Police Executive Research Forum also said suspects should be evaluated after one shock before being shocked again . . .

Although police departments, and the research forum, believe Tasers are important to police work, there is ample concern that more caution needs to be exercised when using them. Tasers shoot barbs that deliver 50,000 volts of electricity to the body and incapacitate the target they hit . . .

When it comes to the effectiveness of Tasers, much is still unknown. But in the past four years, more than 70 people have died in the United States after being stunned by Tasers, and that alone is cause for more study to help police officials develop proper training methods and use-of-force protocols . . .

There is widespread belief that Tasers have resulted in a decrease in lethal force when subduing suspects and in fewer injuries to officers. Although there is no doubt that a Taser is not as lethal as a gun, there is concern that officers are using Tasers indiscriminately or in routine confrontations . . . Police should have a clear protocol that directs officers to resort to Tasers only after other methods to subdue suspects fail.

Source: Austin American-Statesman

Answers

**Apply**

1. police use of electronic stunning devices called Tasers 2. that Tasers should be used more carefully and less frequently; The editorial states “Police should…resort to Tasers only after other methods to subdue suspects fail.” 3. Tasers deliver 50,000 volts of electricity to the body and can incapacitate people. More than 70 people in the United States have died after being stunned by Tasers. 4. Students’ responses will vary. Students should state how they would frame their response, what points they would make, and how they would support those points.
If your heart, lungs, and brain did not work together, you could not function properly. The same is true of the three levels of government. If local, state, and federal government did not cooperate, life would be difficult.

Governments Work Together

As you read earlier in this chapter, most local units of government have their powers defined for them in charters written by the state legislatures. This outlines the duties and responsibilities of each level of government and ensures that all governmental bodies have the powers needed to do their jobs.

Under the U.S. federal system of government, the powers of each level of government are clearly defined and understood. At the top, the U.S. Constitution is the supreme law of the land. All levels of government must obey the Constitution. For example, no state or city can require public officials to do things that are prohibited by the U.S. Constitution. State constitutions set up rules that govern the people of each state.

If local, state, and federal government did not cooperate, life would be difficult.

The “Big Dig” in Boston, Massachusetts, is an example of governments working together. The city of Boston is working with surrounding cities and the state to build new roads and interchanges.

The Main Idea
You live under three levels of government—local, state, and federal. Without cooperation among these levels, everyday life would not run smoothly.

Reading Focus
1. How do the different levels of government work together?
2. How do governments cooperate to meet people’s needs?
3. In what ways are different levels of government in competition?

Key Terms
grants-in-aid, p. 241
block grants, p. 241

Why It Matters
Write the term cooperation on the board. Ask students to write down the meaning of the word. Students might suggest that it means “sharing resources and responsibilities to accomplish a common goal.” Explain to students that although different levels of government have different powers, they must cooperate to serve the needs of the community. Tell students that their community governments need money from state and federal government to get projects done. Ask students to consider how their daily life would be affected if their communities did not receive money to maintain roads, parks, or other facilities.

Academic Vocabulary
Review with students the high-use academic term in this section.

implement to put in place (p. 241)

Key Terms
Preteach the following terms:
grants-in-aid federal funds given to state and local governments for specific projects (p. 241)
block grants funds given by the federal government to state and local governments for broadly defined purposes (p. 241)

Vocabulary Activities: Chapter 9

Taking Notes

Working Together
- Federal, state, and local governments work together to build roads.
- City governments cooperate on common interests.

Serving the Public
- Federal government gives grants-in-aid and block grants to state and local governments.
- State and local governments assure citizens’ quality of life.

Competition
- For income, property, and sales taxes
- To attract trade and industry

Teach the Main Idea

How Governments Work Together
1. **Teach** Ask students the Reading Focus questions to teach this section.
2. **Apply** Ask students to create a list of the section’s illustrations and photos. As students read, have them note how each illustration or photo shows cooperation between different levels of government.
3. **Review** Create a master list of the section’s illustrations and photos on the chalkboard.

Ask volunteers to describe how each shows government cooperation.

4. **Practice/Homework** Have students create a chart with categories for government cooperation and correctly categorize each illustration in the appropriate section. Possible categories include education, construction, etc.
Governments Work Together in Times of Crisis

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, local, state, and federal governments worked together to help the victims of the disaster.

Federal
The federal government sent the U.S. Coast Guard to aid in rescue efforts.

Local
New Orleans police and firefighters worked to rescue people trapped by floodwaters.

State
Schools in neighboring states took in many students displaced by the hurricane.

Building Roads Together

Though each level has its defined roles, many issues call for cooperation among local, state, and federal governments. A good example can be seen in the nation’s roads and highway systems. Today every state has a network of roads built with local, state, and federal funds.

In colonial days, building a road was a local project. If a town wanted a road, the townspeople built it. These early, primitive roads were cheap to build, and local governments could easily plan and pay for such roads. As the West opened up, the U.S. government did pay for the construction of some east-west roads. However, in general, road building remained a local responsibility.

In the late 1800s New Jersey became the first state to use state funds to help its counties improve their local roads. Massachusetts went a step further in 1893 when it established a state highway commission to build a statewide highway system. Other states soon established state highway departments to build main roads.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower was instrumental in the construction of the nation’s interstate highway system. He recognized the importance of highway building in 1919 when he was a soldier and took part in the U.S. Army’s first transcontinental motor convoy. The journey was a miserable two-month trip, slowed by poorly kept dirt roads and rickety old bridges. Then, during World War II, General Eisenhower saw the ease with which the German forces could travel through the countryside because of Germany’s highway system. In 1956, partly as a result of his wartime experiences, President Eisenhower signed legislation that funded the creation of the U.S. Interstate highway system.

Today more than 46,000 miles of interstate highways connect almost all parts of the country. The federal government pays 90 percent of the cost of building and maintaining the system and assists state and local governments in building and maintaining other highways.

Linking to Today

Federal Highways

Today the federal government funds the majority of highway construction and repair costs. Expense was among the leading factors that caused the federal government to get involved in highway construction during the early 1800s. The National Road, also known as the Cumberland Road (which is now part of U.S. Route 40) was the first federally funded highway. It cost $6,825,000 to build—a monumental sum at the time of its completion in the 1830s. Today, a complex highway through a major city could cost hundreds of millions of dollars per mile of roadway.

Critical Thinking: Interpreting Political Cartoons

Create a Political Cartoon

1. Ask students why they think that there is a division of powers among different levels of government, to ensure that there are no conflicts about laws passed by different levels of government.

2. Have students draw political cartoons that demonstrate what might happen if the division of powers did not exist. Suggest that they consider ways in which state government and local government might clash over control of local affairs.

3. Display students’ cartoons around the classroom.

Answers

Analyzing Visuals Possible answer: They can all provide different services and deal with the crisis better than just one level of government could.

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 27: Political Cartoons

Visual/Spatial, Verbal/Linguistic
City Governments Work Together
In the same way that the three levels of government work together, governments of different cities may work together to solve common problems. For example, all city governments are concerned about increasing funds for police departments, fire departments, and education. They look for ways to lessen air pollution and to safely dispose of trash. The U.S. Conference of Mayors meets regularly so that the country's mayors may compare problems and discuss possible solutions.

Governments Cooperate to Serve the Public
Public education is one of the most important areas in which governments cooperate to serve the public. State governments grant funds to their communities to help the communities operate their schools. State boards of education provide services for local school districts and see that they obey state laws. However, actual control of the schools is left to local boards of education. These local boards are more familiar with the needs of their communities and the students in their schools.

Federal Government Programs
The federal government ensures the cooperation of state and local governments by providing funds to help them implement important programs. For example, grants-in-aid are federal funds given to state and local governments for specific projects, such as airport construction or pollution control. The government receiving the funds must meet certain standards and conditions, and must often provide some money of its own for the project. Grant-in-aid projects are subject to supervision by the federal government.

Like grants-in-aid, block grants are funds given by the federal government to state and local governments. However, block grants are given for broadly defined purposes. State and local governments develop and carry out the programs on which the funds will be spent. However, they must establish a spending plan and report expenditures to the federal government.

American Religious Liberties
The role of religion and public office
The inauguration of the president receives special attention in the Constitution. Article VI, which states that “no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office” of the United States. A candidate for president does not have to meet a religious test or belong to any religion to be elected.

In an additional effort to make sure that religion does not determine a public official's appointment, Article VI also says that all federal and state officials “shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution.” The option to affirm rather than to swear an oath of office was specifically intended for Quakers, whose religion prohibits swearing oaths.

1. What evidence in the Constitution shows that the founding fathers did not want to impose any formal religious qualifications for public officials?
2. How might an elected official's religion influence his or her position? Give examples.

Differentiating Instruction
English-Language Learners
Compare and Contrast Types of Federal Funds
1. Ask students to reread the paragraphs under the heading Federal Government Programs.
2. Have students write the similarities and differences between grants-in-aid and block grants in their own words.

3. Tell students that if they find themselves using words already found in the excerpt, they should think of synonyms for these words.

Verbal/Linguistic

Answers
American Religious Liberties
1. Article VI states that there should not be any kind of religious test or requirement to hold office.
2. Students’ answers will vary but should show understanding that an elected official’s religious beliefs might affect his or her views on issues related to those beliefs.

Reading Check
Federal government contributes to maintenance and construction of highways and other roads.
### Government in Competition

While local, state, and federal governments often work together on many matters, all of these levels of government also compete with one another in several ways. For example, governments at all levels compete for citizens’ tax dollars in the form of various income taxes, property taxes, and sales taxes.

States compete with each other to attract industry. State officials may offer tax breaks, a good supply of labor, efficient highway systems, and favorable laws to encourage industries to move to their state. Cities compete against each other for trade and industry in similar ways.

The combined system of federal, state, and local governments is complex. Conflicts among governments are to be expected at times. Only by working together can the country’s three levels of government fulfill their duty to serve the American people.

---

###SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

####Reviewing Ideas and Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grants-in-aid</td>
<td>Financial assistance provided by the federal government to states and local governments for specific purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>block grants</td>
<td>Grants provided by the federal government to states and local governments for broad purposes, such as education or health care.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

####Critical Thinking

4. **Finding Main Ideas**

   Using your notes and a chart like the one below, write a main idea sentence for each element of how governments function.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving the Public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **Analyzing Information**

   Imagine you have been invited by the local government to give a short speech titled “How Governmental Cooperation Serves Our Community.” Write a speech that explains how the three levels of government work together to improve life in your community.

---

###Answers

1. **Reading Check (left)**

   - funding public education, requiring good business practices, ensuring qualifications of professional workers
   - taxes, attracting industry

   _Possible Table:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Main Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving the Public</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Possible answers:**

   - The U.S. Constitution
   - grants-in-aid, p. 241; block grants, p. 241
   - local government, because it is more familiar with local schools’ needs
   - taxes, good labor supply, efficient highways, laws favorable to industry
   - All levels of government work together to provide certain services to citizens. Federal, local, and state governments cooperate to maintain and improve citizens’ quality of life. The three levels of government compete for tax dollars, and state governments compete to attract industry.
   - Speeches will vary but should display knowledge of how governments work together to provide local services and improve life in students’ community.