



FEDERALISM—THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN MY LIFE

Learning Objectives: The students will...

1. Understand the role of local, state, and the federal governments in their lives.
2. Analyze which level of government (local, state, or federal) is involved in everyday life.

TEKS: Govt. 7D, Govt. 8H

Materials Needed: One set of the three government cards for each group of three students.

Teaching Strategy:

1. This activity is to be used after students have been taught the division of power between the levels of government (national, state, and local) in a federal system.
2. Divide the class into groups of three and give each group a set of government cards.
3. Explain that in this activity they are going to hear everyday scenarios about the life of an American citizen. Upon hearing the scenario, they are to discuss with their teammates which level of government (local, state, and/or federal) is responsible for the action described.
4. Explain to the students that some of the scenarios will only involve one level of government, while others may involve two or all three levels.
5. Have each team keep tally of the scenarios that they got correct.
6. After all 20 scenarios are covered, ask the following debriefing questions.
 - a. What reasons do you think prompted the founding fathers to choose a federal system of government?
 - b. What are the benefits of dividing power in a federal system rather than a unitary system which would give the central government all of the power? Or a confederation which has equal powers for the levels of government?
 - c. What are the disadvantages of a federal system?
 - d. What would happen if the national government and the state disagreed over the exercise of a power that is shared by both?

Scenarios:

1. Your parents are issued a birth certificate that records your name, date, place of birth, and parentage. (Local)
2. You are assigned a Social Security number which is used for identification purposes throughout your entire life. (National)
3. The services you use such as safe water supply, clean air, and the building and maintenance of roads for your transportation purposes are regulated and maintained all of your life. (All three)
4. Because you were born in the U.S., you automatically become a citizen. (National and State)
5. You are to pay taxes for support of public schools. (Local)
6. Your food, medicine, and clothing are protected by safety standards. (National)
7. You are required to attend public, private, or home schooling until you reach a certain age or meet high school graduation requirements. (State)
8. Taxes are deducted from your first paycheck. (Only national in Texas)
9. You pay property taxes on your house. (Local)
10. You are issued a driver's license after passing the required test. (State)
11. Your first employer is required to pay at least the set minimum wage for your work. (National)
12. If you are male, you are required to register for Selective Service at age 18. (National)
13. The tuition to the public university you attend is raised. (state)
14. You are issued a marriage license and take a blood test in preparation for marriage. (State)
15. You are issued a passport in order to travel outside of the United States. (National)
16. You decide to support the proposal for an increase in the police force. (Local)
17. You decide to create a collection of the new presidential quarters. (National)
18. You receive Social Security benefits upon retirement. (National)
19. You are required to file an annual income tax return. (Only national in Texas)
20. Your death certificate is issued detailing the cause of death. (Local)

National Government



State Government



Local (city and county)



HOW LIVING IN A FEDERAL SYSTEM AFFECTS YOU FROM BIRTH TO DEATH



AT BIRTH



Local government requires and grants you a birth certificate that records your name (which you cannot change without going to court), date and place of birth, and parentage.

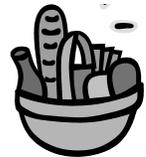
State government regulates the certification of any doctors and nurses who may assist your birth.

National government assigns you a Social Security number (which will identify you for governments and other institutions for life).

If born in the United States, you automatically become a citizen of the *nation* and of the *state* in which you were born.



IN INFANCY



Local government requires that you get vaccinations against dangerous and communicable childhood diseases and usually offers them free for those who can't afford them.

National government establishes standards for the safety of food, medicine, clothing, and other goods, now and for the rest of your life.

National, state, and local governments regulate (now and for the rest of your life) the public water supply from which you drink and the air quality, and build and maintain the roads you travel on.



IN CHILDHOOD



Local government establishes and largely funds the public school you are entitled to attend.

State government requires you to attend a public or private school, or to be home schooled, until you meet high school graduation requirements or reach an age in your teens (which varies from state to state). It also sets curricular standards for your schooling and helps fund public education.

National government establishes and funds programs for early childhood education, especially for the disadvantaged.

National government creates, prints, and coins the money you get, use, or save.

National and *state* governments establish and fund various programs of economic assistance for which you may be eligible.



IN EARLY ADULTHOOD



Local government invites you to register to vote if you are a citizen and conducts regular elections for offices at all levels of government in accordance with *national* and *state* election laws.

Local governments (city and county) collect various taxes on property you own.

National, *state*, and *local* governments charge taxes on the telephone you use.

State and *local* governments charge sales taxes on many things you purchase.

State government issues you a driver's license if you pass its test, requires you to register any car you buy, and sells you required license plates for any car you buy.

State and *local* governments run colleges you may attend.

National government establishes and enforces child labor laws and minimum wage laws that regulate any employment you may have.

National government requires all males to register for Selective Service at age 18.

National, most *state*, and some *local* governments tax income from any job you have, and *national* government deducts Social Security contributions from your paycheck, while *state* government deducts unemployment insurance from it, now and for the rest of your life.

National, *state*, and often *local* governments pass and enforce laws to prevent discrimination in school, work, and play because of your race, ethnicity, beliefs, gender, age, or disability.



IN ADULTHOOD



State government issues the marriage license and requires blood tests should you decide to marry.

Local government provides fire and police protection and might control your water supply and collect your garbage.

National government issues the passport you need to travel abroad and runs the customs office you must pass through when you return.

National, most *state*, and some *local* governments require you to file annual income tax returns and make and enforce laws affecting your work.

National and *state* governments regulate most aspects of your use of money, including banks and other financial institutions such as insurance companies and credit card services you use.



IN OLD AGE



National government protects you against certain forms of discrimination based on age.

National, *state*, and sometimes *local* governments pass and enforce laws concerning retirement.

National government pays you Social Security benefits if you qualify.

National and *state* governments regulate the medical care you receive and require payments from you to support it.

Local government issues your death certificate and may investigate the cause of your death.

National and *state* governments supervise the inheritance of your money and goods by those you designate, in accordance with their laws.

Practicing American Politics, An Introduction to Government, pg. 83