TOWER POWER

Learning Objectives: The students will…

1. Introduce different forms of government.
2. Compare the dignity and value of the individual as it relates to ownership in the product created in the activity.
3. Compare the productivity and process of the various systems of government.

TEKS: Govt. 12A

Materials Needed: A box of straws and a roll of tape for each group, copies of Tower Power Evaluation handout for each student.

Vocabulary: democracy, republic, theocracy, monarchy, dictatorship, totalitarianism, anarchy

Teaching Strategy:

1. This is a good lesson to introduce the various forms of government by providing an opportunity for students to experience and evaluate one of the forms. Students will experience either government by one—dictatorship, totalitarian, or monarchy; government by a few—theocracy; government by the many—democracy or a republic; and no government—anarchy.
2. Divide the class into four or five groups. The groups need to be fairly large to complete the task in the required time. Each group will draw for a type of government. The leader of the group will be selected by the method identified in the description of the task.
    a. Government by One—Age is used as the criteria for both monarchy (born first) and dictatorship (strongest).
    b. Government by Few—Personal preference (religious beliefs) is used by the leader for theocracy.
    c. Government by Many—Voting and participation by members of the group is used for both democracy (direct) and republic (indirect).
3. After the type of government is drawn by the group and the leader (if there is one) is selected, all groups must follow the description of the type of leadership and the directions exactly.
4. With the straws and tape, each group will compete in a contest to construct the (a) tallest free standing; (b) structurally strongest; and (c) the most attractive structure. Groups will be given approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the structures.
5. When time is up all students should take an evaluation sheet and judge the structures of the other groups (students should not evaluate their own structures).
6. After announcing the results, have each group reveal the type of government under which they worked and how they liked this form of leadership. Ask the following debriefing questions:
    a. Which groups tended to get the earliest start?
    b. Before the groups began, which type of government did you think would win? Why?
    c. Did you notice differences in group members' attitudes?
    d. Which group(s) accomplished the most in the final minutes?
    e. How would you define each form of government?
    f. What conclusions can one draw about each form of government? About support for leaders? About fair and equal treatment of individuals by their leaders?

Lesson adapted from one by Gary Mast in the Constitutional Sampler, Winston-Salem, North Carolina: Center for Research and Development in Law-Related Education, 1988.

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Evaluation

Directions: Judge all groups except your own in the categories indicated. Give scores from one to five, one being lowest and five being highest. Maximum score for any group should be 15 points.

	STRENGTH	HEIGHT	BEAUTY	TOTAL POINTS
GROUP 1				
GROUP 2				
GROUP 3				
GROUP 4				
GROUP 5				
GROUP 6				

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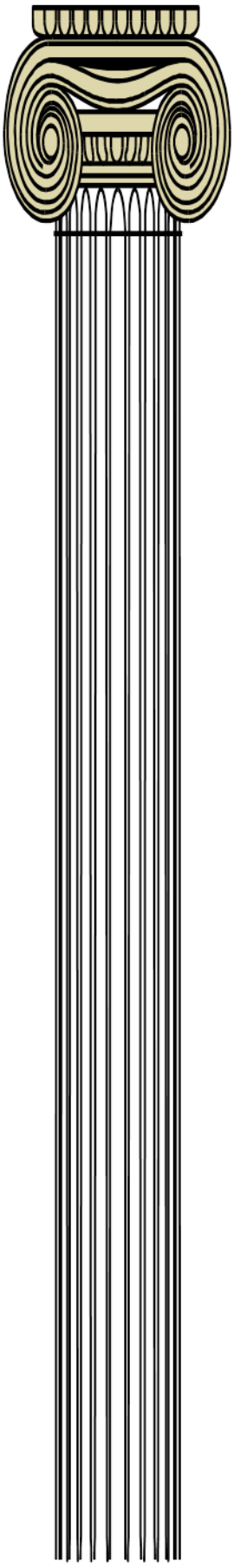

TYPES of GOVERNMENT

Dictator or Totalitarian: The leader is the determined by the strongest in the group. This person is to make all of the decisions about how to build the structure and assign duties to other group members without regard to their desires or talents. In fact the leader is the only one who can speak and if other members of the group want to speak and offer suggestions, they must raise their hand for permission which may or may not be granted by the leader.

Monarchy: The leader is determined by the oldest in the group (preferably male). The leader is to make all decisions on the design and building of the structure and can solicit ideas of the others in the group if desired, especially from his/her friends. However, all final decisions are made by the monarch. All others in the group are to complete the work on the structure.

Theocracy: The leader (oldest) in the group is to choose two of his/her friends with whom to share power. This ruling class is to be consulted and can dictate to the others how the structure is to be built. All others in the group are the workers and will be directed by the elite or ruling group.

Democracy: Hold an election to determine the leader. The leader will be selected by the entire group and will treat all group members equally and fairly. **All decisions** about the design and the assignments for building the structure are to be reached by a vote of everyone in the group. A majority vote is needed for each decision. There is to be discussion before each vote is taken. This group will be penalized if votes are not taken on every decision.

Republic: Hold an election to elect five members to design and build the structure. The remaining members of the group are to sit to the side and observe. The five that are charged with building are to **vote on each decision** with a majority vote needed. If the observing group wants to offer suggestions to the group, they are to write them on a petition and submit to the ruling group. These suggestions may or may not be incorporated into the design, but must be discussed by the builders. This group will be penalized if votes are not taken on each decision.

Anarchy: There is never to be a leader in this group. No one provides instruction, assistance, or expertise. Every member in this group will “do” their own thing and stick the product together however they want. No talking is allowed in this group.

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