

# CIVICS SUMMER PACKET

## Renaissance High School



### INSTRUCTIONS

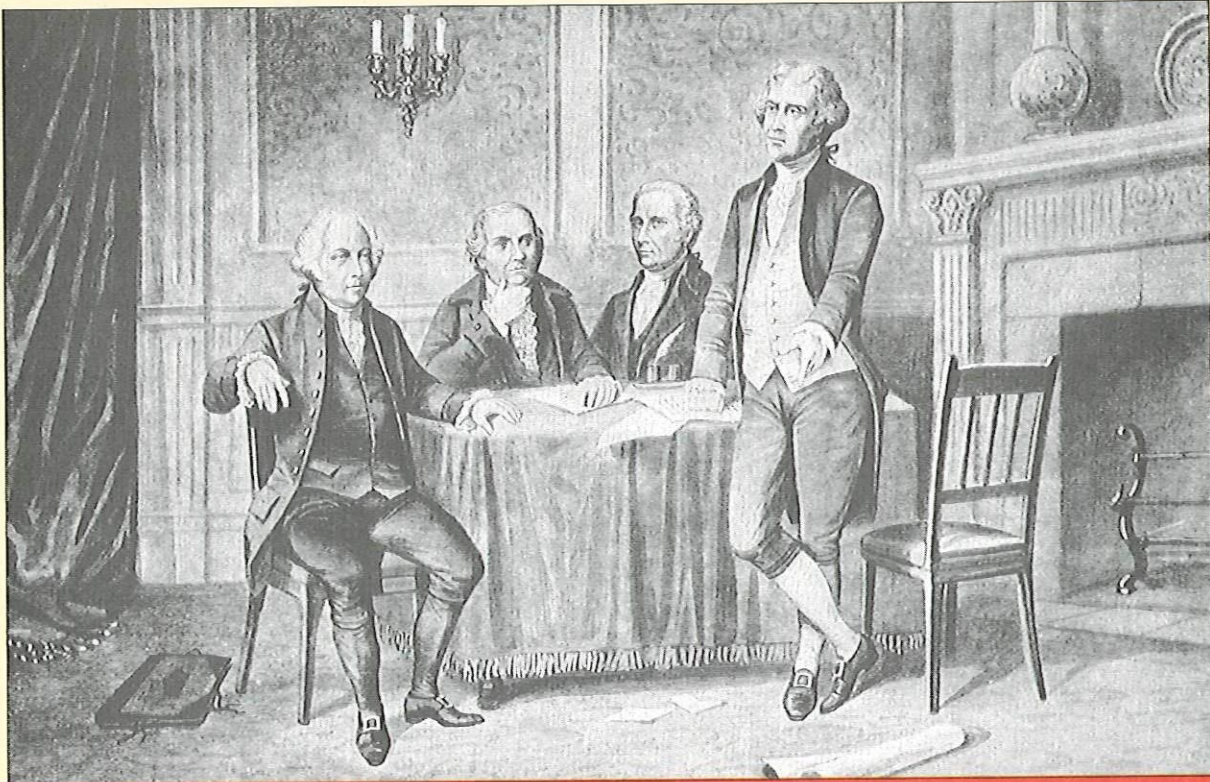
1. Read the **FOUR** Civics lessons enclosed in this packet. (Lesson 2, Lesson 7, Lesson 11, and Lesson 23.)
2. *Print the "Review the Lesson" page at the end of each lesson and answer the questions.*
3. Turn in your answers to your Civics teacher on the first day of school. Two grades will be given for this assignment.

-Department of Social Sciences-



# Lesson 2

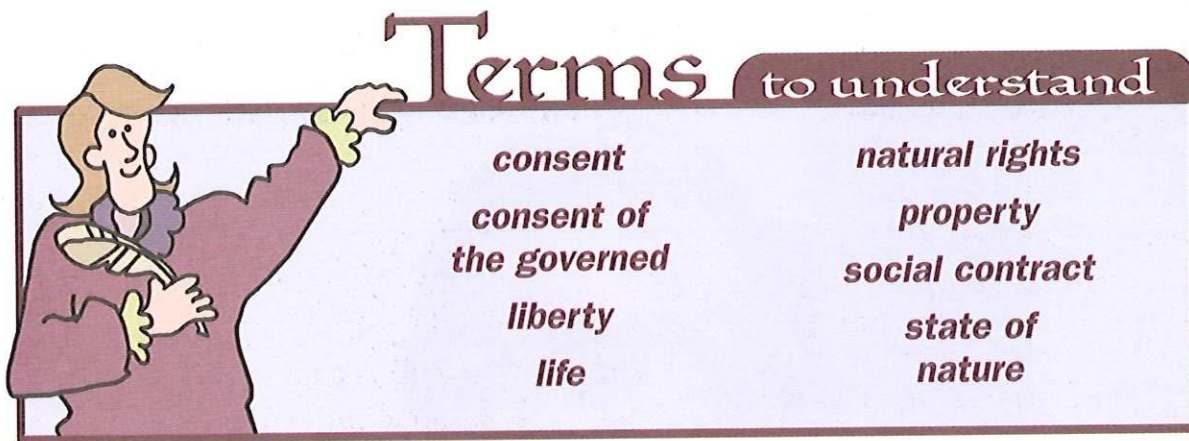
## Why did the Founders believe that people needed a government?



### Purpose of the lesson

In this lesson, you will learn some of the Founders' most important ideas about our basic rights. You will learn the Founders' beliefs about where these rights come from. Finally, you will learn why the Founders believed that people must have government.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to explain the Founders' ideas about our rights and the purposes of our government.

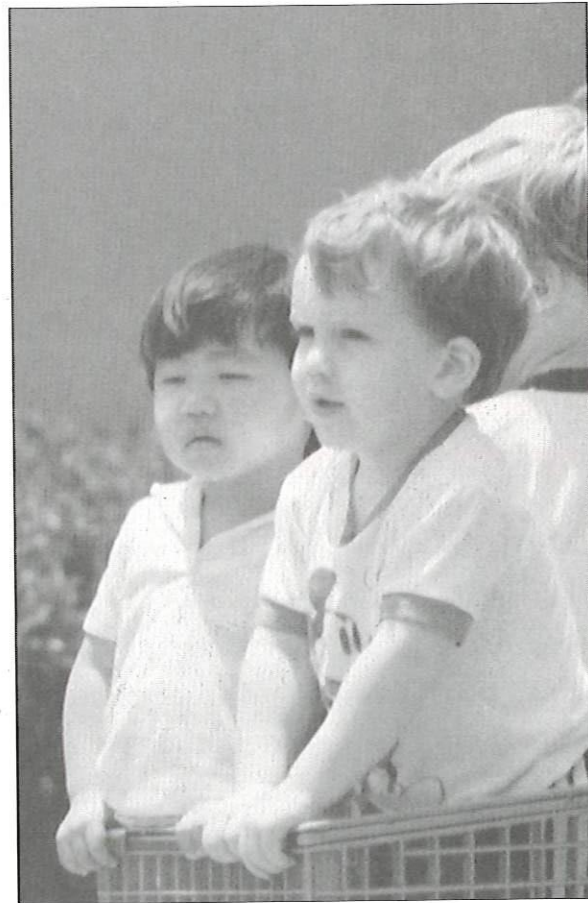


### **What were the Founders' beliefs about rights?**

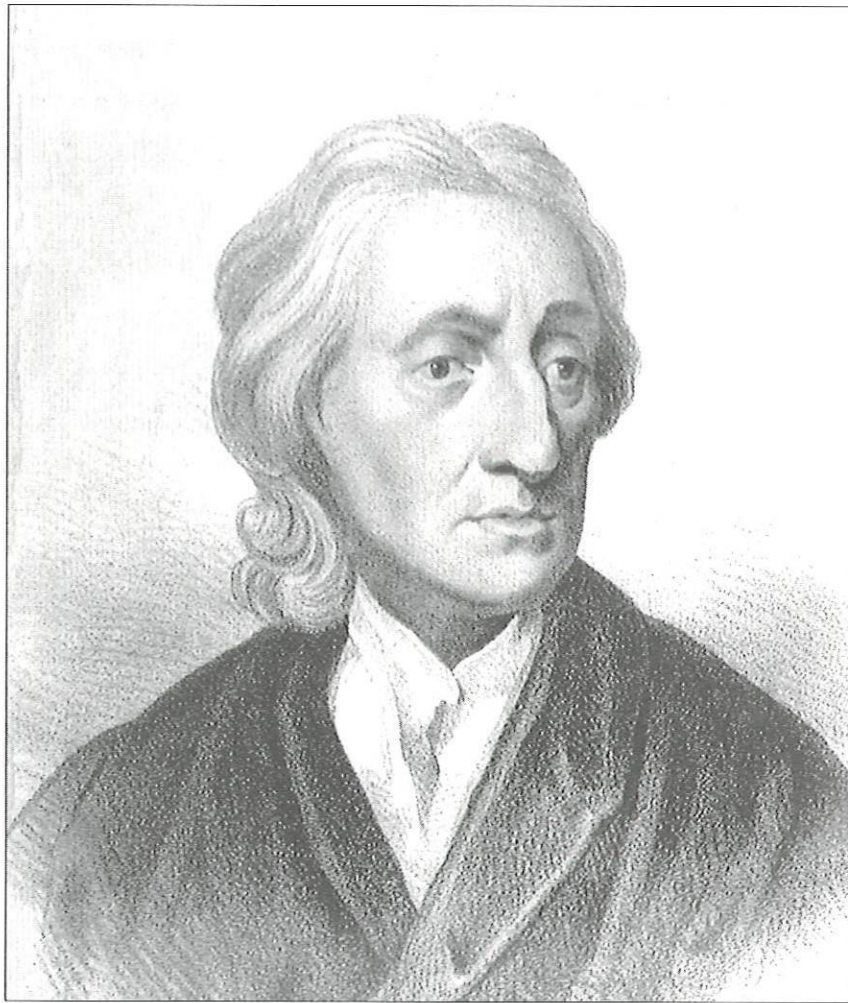
Most of the Founders believed that people have certain natural rights. Natural rights include the rights to life, liberty, and property. All persons have **natural rights** just because they are human beings. Everyone is born with these rights. No one can take these rights away. Here is what these natural rights mean.

- **Life** is the right to live without fear of being injured or killed by others.
- **Liberty** is the right to be free. Some examples of liberties are the rights to believe what you wish, to read what you want, to speak freely, and to travel wherever you want to go.

- **Property** is the right to own things such as books, a house, land, or a business. Your labor or work is also your property.



▶ *What natural rights do all people have from the time they are born?*



▶ Do you agree with John Locke's ideas? Why?

### **What problems might we have protecting our rights?**

The Founders knew that protecting the rights of the people was not an easy thing to do. Sometimes people try to take the rights of others away from them. The Founders thought they should have a plan to protect their own rights and the rights of others.

Many Founders had read a book by John Locke. John Locke

was an Englishman. He lived from 1632 to 1704. Locke wrote about natural rights. His ideas help us to understand more clearly the problem of protecting the rights of people.

John Locke suggested that you imagine living in a state of nature. A **state of nature** is a situation where there is no government, no rules, no laws. Think about what your life might be like in a state of nature.

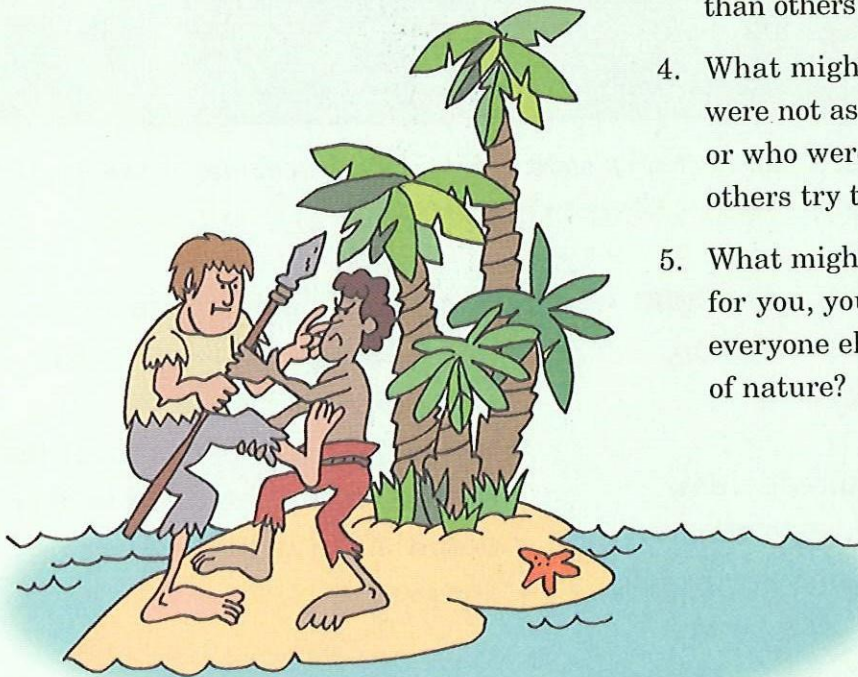


## Ideas to discuss

### **What might happen if there were no rules, laws, or government?**

Imagine that you live on an island far away. There are no rules, no laws, and no government. There is no one to tell you what to do.

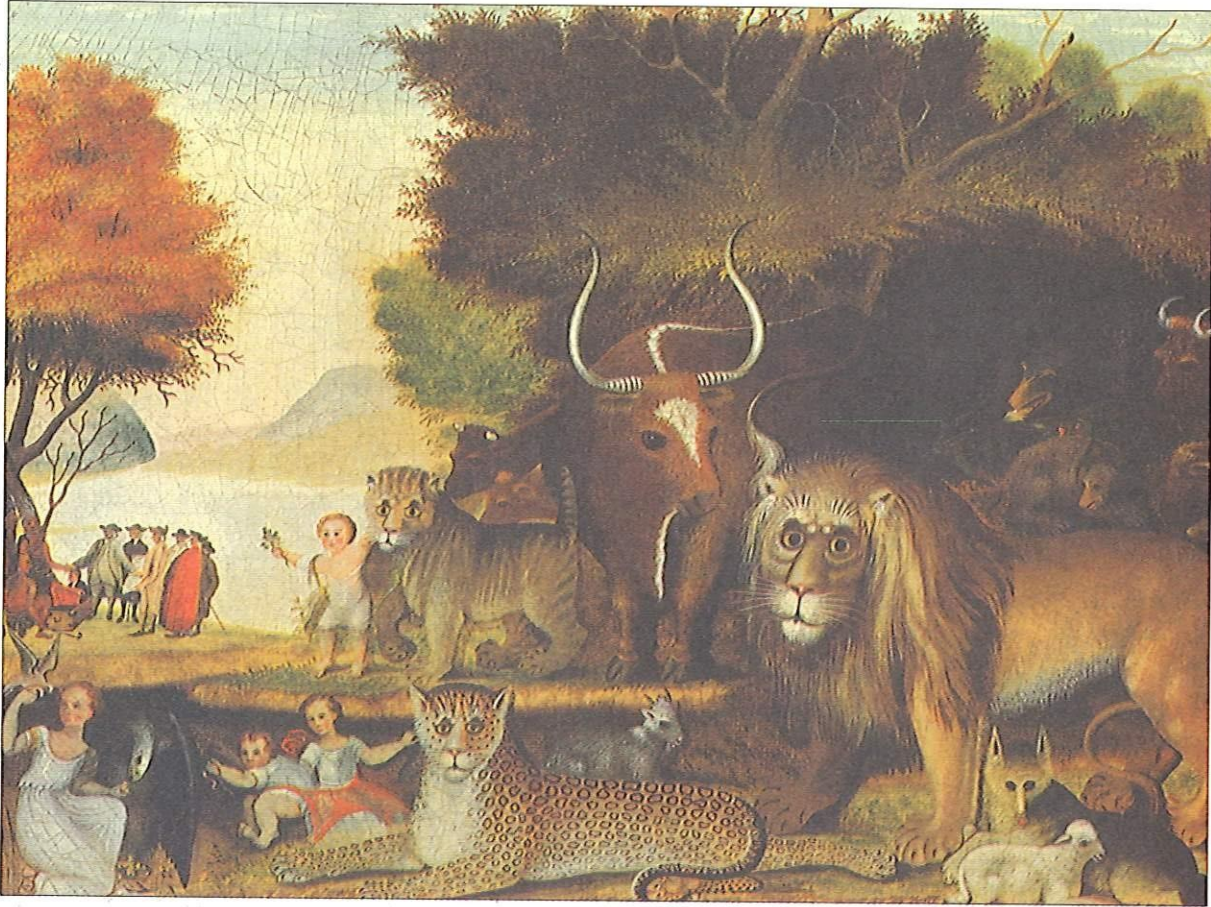
Work with a partner or in a group of three to five students.



Together answer the following questions. Be prepared to share your ideas with the class.

1. Would anyone have the right to govern you? Would you have the right to govern anyone else? Why?
2. Would you have any rights? What might they be?
3. What might people who were smarter or stronger than others try to do? Why?
4. What might people who were not as smart as others or who were weaker than others try to do? Why?
5. What might life be like for you, your family, and everyone else in a state of nature?

▶ *What would life be like without any government?  
How would people protect their rights?*



▶ *How does this artist's view of life in a state of nature differ from that of John Locke?*

Edward Hicks, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, © 1840, Holger Cahill Collection

**What did John Locke say might happen if there were no rules, laws, or government?**

You just had a chance to think about your rights in a state of nature. Now, you might want to compare your thinking with that of John Locke. Locke thought that life would be very difficult without laws or government. He worried about the problems that might happen. He said:

1. Some people might try to take away other people's rights. The stronger people might force the weaker people to do the things the stronger people want. The weaker people might unite against the stronger people.
2. People would have natural rights, but their rights would not be safe.
3. It would be very hard to live a safe, peaceful, and happy life in a state of nature.

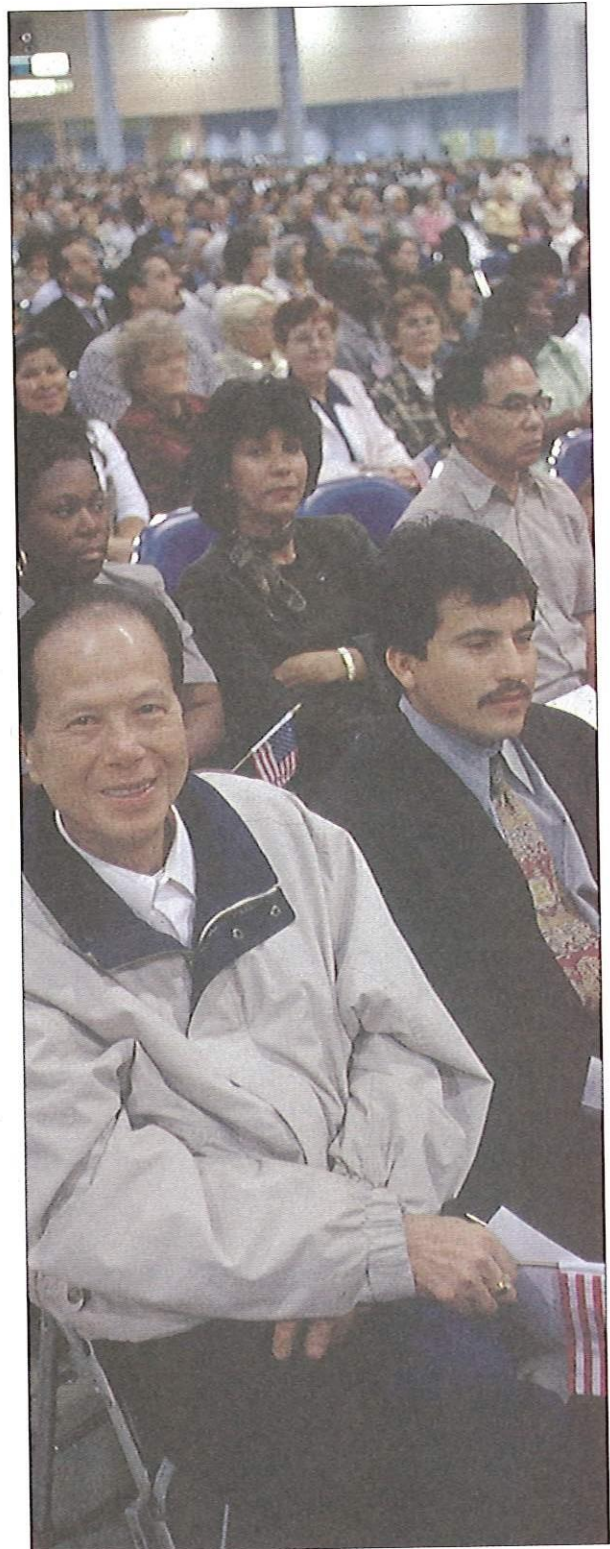
## **Why did the Founders believe we needed a government?**

John Locke wrote about how to solve the problems of life in a state of nature. He said people could make a social contract. A **social contract** is an agreement among the people to set up a government. The people agree to give up something and then they receive something in return.

The people give up some of their freedom. They **consent**, or agree, to create a government and laws. The **consent of the governed** means that the people consent to obey the laws and the government they create. The people no longer will be able to do whatever they want.

What the people gain is protection for their rights. The government protects the rights of the people. It protects their rights to life, liberty, and property. People would feel safer than they did in a state of nature. The people might live more secure and happier lives.

The Founders believed that people need government to protect their rights. Therefore, the main purpose of government, they said, is to protect a person's rights to life, liberty, and property.



▶ How do citizens show their consent to be governed?



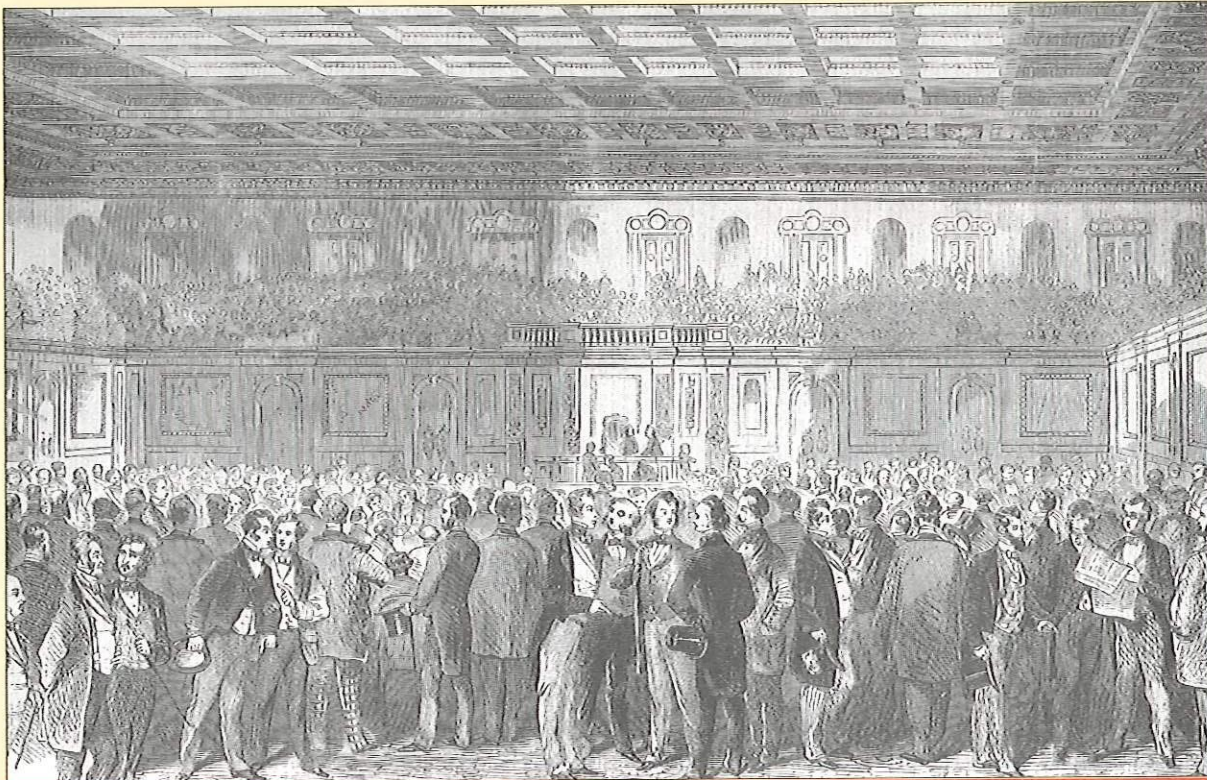
Directions: Answer the following questions in your journal under the following title:  
Lesson 1 Review Questions.

## Review the lesson

1. What basic rights did the Founders believe people should have?
2. What are natural rights? How do you get natural rights?
3. What might life be like if there were no rules, laws, or government?
4. What is a social contract?
5. What did the Founders think should be the main purpose of government?

# Lesson 7

## What was the first national government like?



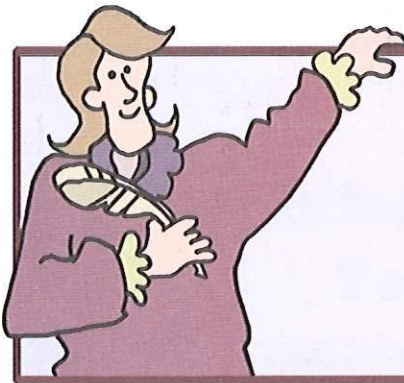
### Purpose of the lesson

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, the Founders needed to create a new government for all the states of the new nation. They did this by creating our first constitution. It was called the Articles of Confederation.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to describe the national

government under the Articles of Confederation. You should also be able to explain how the problems of the new government led the Founders to decide to write a new constitution.

# Terms to understand



**Articles of Confederation**  
confederation  
delegate

**Northwest Ordinance**  
ordinance  
Shays' Rebellion

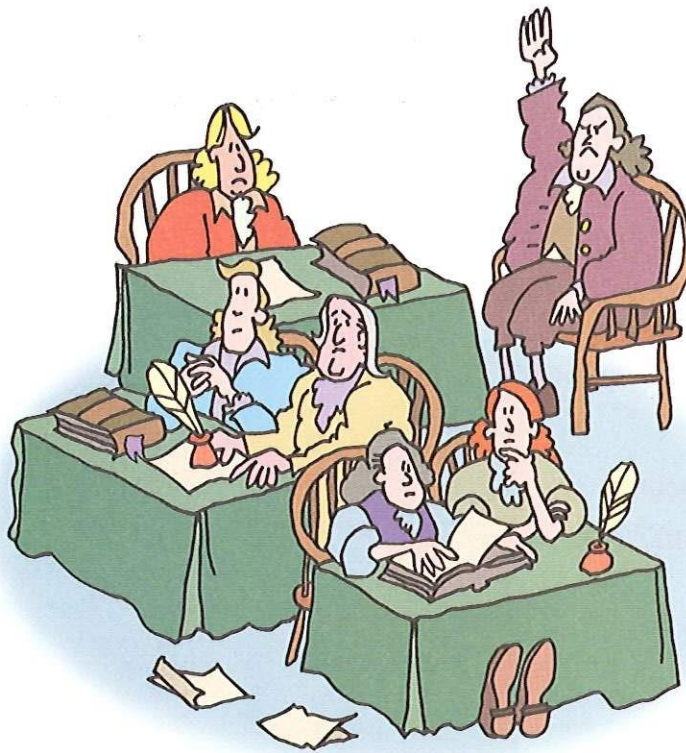
## **What kind of national government did the Founders create under the Articles of Confederation?**

At the start of the Revolutionary War, the Second Continental Congress talked about a plan to set up a national government. At that time, the Congress was more concerned about fighting the war, so it took no action.

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, the Second Continental Congress sent the plan to the states. Congress asked the states to approve it. This first plan of government for the United States was the **Articles of Confederation**. The Articles set up a loose union of states with equal powers. We call such a union a **confederation**.



*If you had been a member of the Second Continental Congress, which would have been more important to you: setting up a national government or fighting the war against Great Britain? Why?*



How did the Articles of Confederation organize the first national government?

The Founders faced two main problems when they wrote the Articles of Confederation.

1. The people feared a strong national government. They just had a revolution to get rid of a strong British government. They did not want another one like it. They felt that a strong national government might take away the rights of the states and the people.
2. The people feared that some states would have more power than other states in the new government.

These fears influenced the Founders who wrote the Articles of Confederation. Therefore, they chose to set up a weak

national government. It was a government with very limited powers.

Under the Articles, there were neither national courts nor a president. The power of government was in the Congress. The Articles did not give Congress very much power, either. For example, Congress could not raise money to run the government by directly taxing the people. Congress had to ask the states for money. The states gave money if and when they wanted to. The states made sure they kept most of the power for themselves.

Each state had one vote in Congress. The size of a state's population did not matter. States with more people had the same vote as states with far fewer people. The Congress could not

do anything important without having the approval of all the state governments.

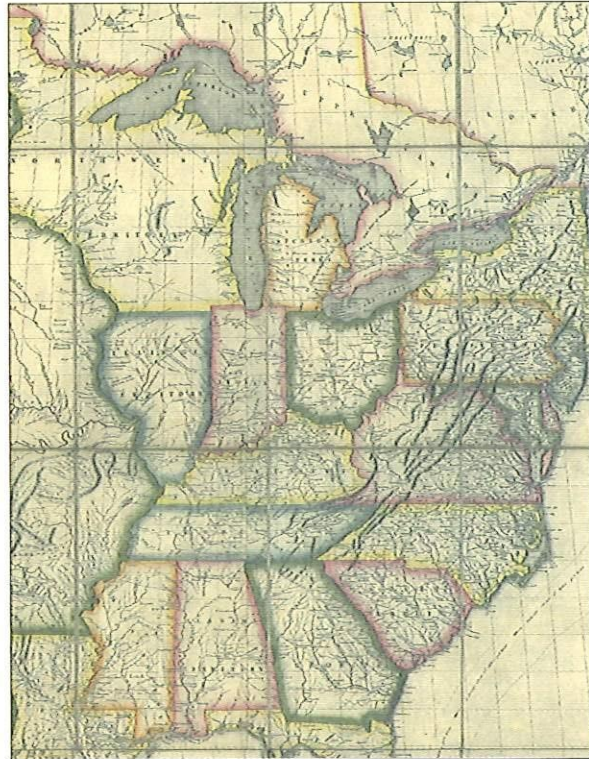
After much debate, the states approved the Articles of Confederation. The Articles were in effect for seven years. Let's look at what the people were able to do under the Articles.

### **What was accomplished under the Articles of Confederation?**

Even with their weaknesses, the Articles of Confederation were useful to the new nation. The national government was able to accomplish the following tasks:

- keeping the states together during the war against Great Britain
- winning the war for independence
- making a peace treaty with Great Britain
- preventing each state from conducting its own foreign affairs, making treaties, and declaring war

The government under the Articles of Confederation passed the **Northwest Ordinance of 1787**. An **ordinance** is an order or law made by a government. This government order was a plan for adding new states. It



▶ *Which new states were created as a result of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787?*

allowed people living in the Northwest Territories—the land between the Mississippi River, the Great Lakes, and the Ohio River—to organize their own governments. When a territory had a large enough population, it could join the Union. The new states would be equals of the original states, not colonies. The Ordinance said that part of all public lands must be set aside for public schools. It declared slavery unlawful in any new state in the Northwest Territories. The Ordinance also guaranteed freedom of religion, speech, and press.

### **What problems did the national government have under the Articles of Confederation?**

When the Revolution was over, each state acted as a separate country. Each had its own interests. People did not think of themselves as citizens of the United States. They thought of themselves as citizens of their own states, such as Virginians, New Yorkers, or Georgians. Often the state governments did not cooperate with each other to solve common problems.

The national government under the Articles was weak. It did not have the power to unite the states. It did not have money and it did not have the authority to get it. There were no courts to settle disputes among the states.

By 1786, there was little trade between the states or with other nations. It was hard for Americans to make a living. Many businesses were failing. Many people were in debt. Soldiers who had fought in the Revolutionary War still had not been paid.



▶ What was the function of Congress under the Articles of Confederation?



► *Why did Daniel Shays and his followers rebel? What did they hope to gain?*

### ***Why was Shays' Rebellion an important event?***

The states had their own problems. In Massachusetts, many farmers did not have any money. They could not trade their products in other states or countries. When they could not pay their bills, they lost their farms and homes. Some were put in prison because they could not pay their bills. Many people protested because they felt this situation was unfair.

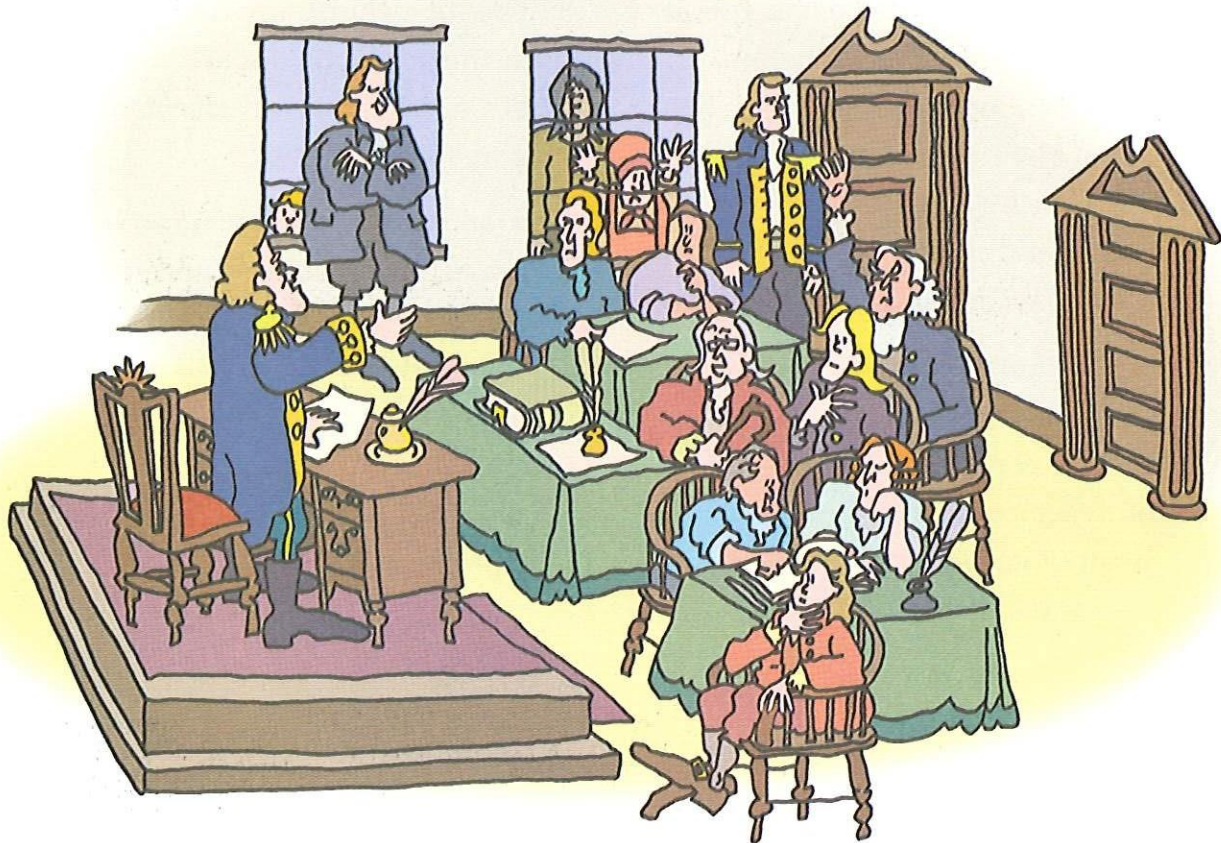
In November 1786, more than one thousand angry farmers gathered under a leader named Daniel Shays. They were ready to fight the Massachusetts government. They shut down the courts to prevent the government from taking their property and jailing them. They tried to capture weapons to use in their struggle.

State troops stopped **Shays' Rebellion**. Many people were frightened by the rebellion. They worried that it might spread to other states.

**How might the national government under the Articles of Confederation be improved?**

The Founders knew that the Articles of Confederation had many weaknesses. The national government under the Articles was not effective. It was time to make improvements. Congress agreed and called for a meeting to be held in Philadelphia in 1787.

Each state was asked to send delegates. A **delegate** is someone whom you trust to represent your interests. The delegates were supposed to suggest ways to improve the Articles. Once they all got together, something else happened. They decided to put the Articles aside and start over again. The delegates then began to write a new constitution.



- What did the delegates to the Philadelphia Convention decide to do about improving the Articles of Confederation?



## Review the lesson

1. Why did the Founders create a weak national government?
2. What did the first national government accomplish under the Articles of Confederation?
3. What were some problems under the Articles of Confederation?
4. Describe Shays' Rebellion. Why was it important?
5. What did the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 require of new states?
6. Why did the Founders decide to have a meeting?

# Lesson 11

## What basic ideas about government are included in the Preamble to the Constitution?



### Purpose of the lesson

The Framers wrote an introduction, also called a **preamble**, to the Constitution. The Preamble states the purposes of our Constitution. It includes some basic

ideas about government that you have studied in this book. When you finish this lesson, you should be able to explain these ideas.



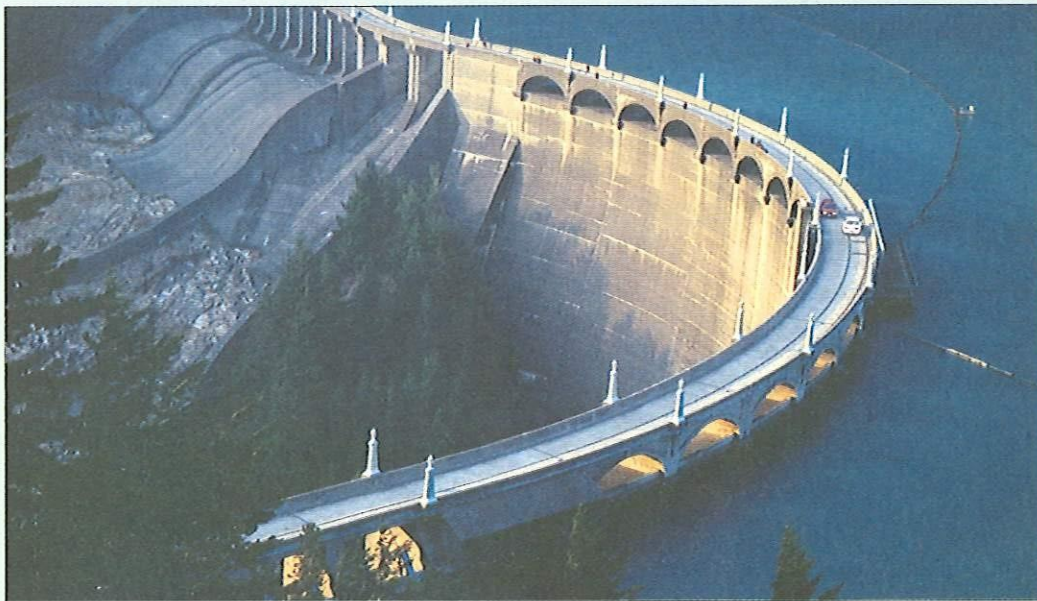
## Ideas to discuss

### ***What do you think should be the purposes of government?***

Before you learn about the purposes stated in the Preamble, let's examine your own ideas. Then you can compare your ideas with those in the Constitution. You might find that you and the Framers have many of the same ideas.

Work with a partner or in a group of three to five students. Discuss the questions that follow. Be prepared to share your ideas with the class.

1. What is a purpose?
2. Why is it important to know what your own purposes are?
3. Why is it important to know what the purposes of a government are?
4. List five or six purposes that you think a government should have.
5. Explain why you think each of the purposes you have listed for government is important.



- ▶ *The Federal Power Commission approved the construction of the Diablo Dam in Washington in 1927. Do you think government should regulate this type of project? Why or Why not?*



**Why does the Preamble say “We the People... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America”?**

In 1787, the Framers wrote and signed the Constitution. The Preamble to the Constitution says that “We the People of the United States... do **ordain** (give official approval) and **establish** (accept) this Constitution for the United States of America.” This means that the Constitution was approved by the people of the United States and that they agreed to live under the government it created. Each generation of Americans—including yours—must give its approval or consent to live under the government created by the Constitution.

- How do you and other Americans show that you consent to be governed under the Constitution?
- How do you, as one of the people, ordain and establish the Constitution?

There are many ways of answering these questions. One way is by willingly obeying the laws. Another way to show your consent is by repeating the Pledge of Allegiance. When you are older, you can give your consent by voting, serving on a jury, or holding public office. You also give consent when you take part in solving your community’s problems. Taking your place as a citizen, one of “We the People,” means that you consent to live under the Constitution.



How can citizens show that they give approval to be governed by the Constitution?



## Problem to solve

### **What ideas are expressed in the Preamble?**

The Preamble to the Constitution explains who created the Constitution and the basic purposes of our government. "We the People..." are the first words in the Preamble. These words are very important. They show that the power to govern belongs to the people. The people established the Constitution. They used it to create a government to protect their rights and their welfare.



► **Why are the first words of the Constitution, "We the People," so important?**

The ideas in the Preamble are so important that you should study them carefully. To do this, first read the entire Preamble.

### **Preamble to the Constitution of the United States**

*We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*

The Preamble is made up of many words that might be hard to understand when you first read them. But if you study them, you will find they are not that difficult.

Let's examine the basic ideas in the Preamble to see how important they are to all of us. To do this, your class may work in small groups. Each group should study one part of the Preamble.

## Review the lesson

1. Some people have said the most important words in our Constitution are the first three words of the Preamble. These are the words, "We the People." Explain why you agree or disagree with this opinion.
2. In your own words, explain what establishing justice means. Why is this an important purpose of government?
3. Explain the difference between ensuring domestic tranquility and providing for the common defense.
4. What is the general welfare? What are some ways to promote the general welfare?
5. What are some of the blessings of liberty that you enjoy? How can you help to make sure that future generations will also enjoy them?
6. How can you and other Americans show that you consent to live under the Constitution?

# Lesson 23

## What are some important responsibilities of citizens?



### Purpose of the lesson

Suppose your government does everything it can to protect your rights. Is this enough? Will your rights be protected? Do we have any responsibility to protect not only our own rights, but each other's as well? In this lesson, you will discuss some important questions about the responsibilities of citizens. You must develop your own answers to these

questions. We hope this lesson helps you develop good answers.

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to explain some of the responsibilities related to important rights. You should also be able to evaluate a situation in which the rights of individuals conflict with the common good, and take and defend a position on the issue.



## Who is a citizen of the United States?

A **citizen** is a member of an official political body, such as a nation or a state. Citizens of the United States are those who are



► What rights do resident aliens have?  
What rights don't they have?

- born in the United States
- born to United States citizens living in another country
- born elsewhere, living legally in the United States, and have passed a test on the Constitution and history of the United States to become **naturalized citizens**
- children of naturalized citizens who were under the age of 18 when their parents became citizens

The national government protects the rights of all people who live in the United States. People who are not citizens, but who live legally in the United States, are called resident aliens. **Resident aliens** enjoy most of the rights of citizens. They have the same right to due process of law as citizens.

Resident aliens do not have the right to vote, serve on a jury, or run for public office. Like citizens, resident aliens have a responsibility to obey the law.



### *Is a good constitution enough to protect your rights?*

The Framers planned our government carefully. They organized it so its powers were limited. They separated the powers of our government among three different branches. They balanced the powers among these branches. They provided ways each branch could check or limit the powers of the other branches. Finally, they added a Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights now protects our rights from unfair treatment by our national, state, and local governments.

Some of the Framers believed they had organized the government very well. They believed the way they planned the government was enough to make sure our rights and the common good would be protected.

Other Framers did not agree. They believed that the government would only work well if there were good people running it. They also believed it would only succeed if the citizens were good citizens.

Today, most people agree that a well-written constitution is not enough to protect our rights. We need to elect leaders who will make and enforce laws that protect our rights and promote our welfare.

Even a good constitution and good leaders may not be enough. If we want

to protect our rights and welfare, we, the people, have certain responsibilities to fulfill. Let's examine what some of these responsibilities might be.



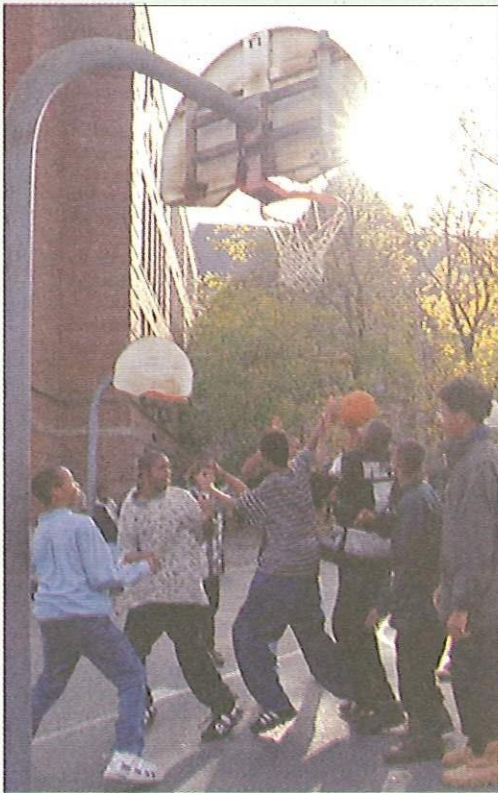
► *What might happen if people did not exercise their rights?*



## Ideas to discuss

### **What responsibilities go along with these rights?**

Let's examine some responsibilities that might go along with your basic rights. Work in small groups. Each group should answer the questions about one of the rights listed below. Then each group should share its ideas with the class.

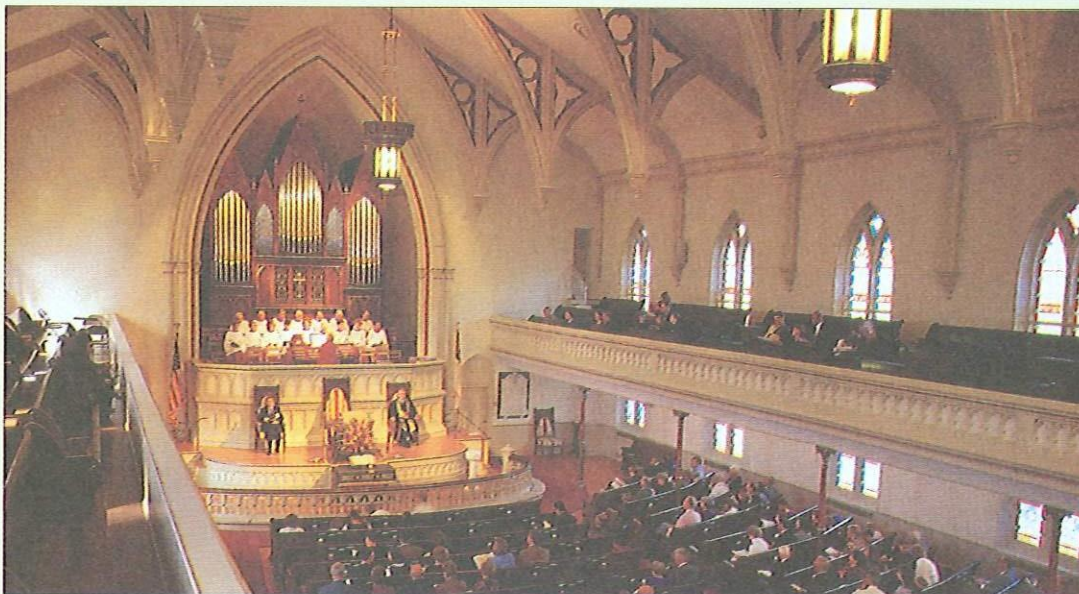


► *Why might people have different ideas about new playground rules? How can we handle different opinions?*

### **Group 1 The right to freedom of expression**

Suppose you attend a meeting of students in your school. The purpose of the meeting is to suggest rules for the playground. Every student has the right to speak and to make suggestions.

1. What should be your responsibilities for the way you speak and what you say?
2. What should be your responsibilities toward the right of others to speak?
3. What responsibilities should the other students have to you and your right to speak?
4. Government may not unfairly limit your right to express your ideas freely. What responsibilities should you have that might go along with this right?
5. Suppose no one fulfilled the responsibilities that you have discussed. What might happen to our right to freedom of expression?



▶ *What does it mean to practice religion responsibly?*

**Booklet  
Page 2**

### **The right to freedom of religion**

Suppose you believe in a particular religion. You attend a church, meeting hall, mosque, or temple in your community.

1. What responsibilities should you have in the way you practice your religious beliefs?
2. What responsibilities should you have toward the right of other people to practice their religious beliefs?
3. What responsibilities should people who hold different religious beliefs have toward your right to practice your religious beliefs?
4. Government may not interfere with your right to believe as you wish. It may not unfairly limit your right to practice your religious beliefs. What responsibilities should you have that go along with these rights?
5. Suppose no one fulfilled the responsibilities that you have discussed. What might happen to our right to freedom of religion?



## Ideas to discuss

### **Group 3** The right to the equal protection of the law

Suppose your city government officials are planning a picnic for the people who live in your community.

1. What responsibilities should officials have to you regardless of your age, gender, race, or religion?
2. If you volunteer to help plan the city's picnic, what responsibilities should you have to others?
3. Government is not permitted to favor some people over others because of their age, gender, race, or religion. What responsibilities should you have that go along with this right?
4. Suppose no one fulfilled the responsibilities that you have discussed. What might happen to our right to the equal protection of the law?

### **Group 4** The right to due process of law

Suppose someone accused you of doing something wrong in your school.

1. What responsibilities should the accuser have toward you?
2. If you were the one who accused another student of doing something wrong, what responsibilities should you have toward her or him?
3. Government must be fair to you when it is gathering information and making decisions. What responsibilities should you have that go along with this right?
4. Suppose no one fulfilled the responsibilities that you have discussed. What might happen to our right to due process of the law?



▶ *What ideas should people consider when deciding how to vote?*

**Group 5** **The right to vote and run for public office**

Suppose you are about to vote in a school election. You must choose between two people running for class president.

1. What responsibilities should you have?
2. You have decided to vote for Bill. Your friends want to vote for John. What responsibilities should you have about their right to vote?
3. What responsibilities should they have about your right to vote?
4. When you are 18, you will have the right to vote in government elections. You will also have the right to run for some public offices. What responsibilities should go along with these rights?
5. Suppose that no one fulfilled the responsibilities that you have discussed. What might happen to our right to vote?

## Review the lesson

1. How does a person become a citizen of the United States?
2. What are some responsibilities of citizens? Why is fulfilling these responsibilities important?
3. What are some responsibilities that go along with your right to free expression, freedom of religion, equal protection of the laws, due process of the laws, and the right to vote?