



LITERATURE CONNECTION ACTIVITY

Government: How Local, State, and Federal Government Works by Mark Friedman

OBJECTIVE

Students learn how the government operates and how it affects them.

MATERIALS

Government: How Local, State, and Federal Government Works – Mark Friedman; writing materials

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

- ✓ Ask your students how many places they live. This may confuse them at first as they will think that they live in only one place, so ask them to name where they live.
- ✓ You will undoubtedly hear at least a few different responses, some of which might be a state or a city name. Inform your students that they all live in multiple places: a county, a state, a country, and probably a town or city as well.
- ✓ Tell your students that just as you live in multiple places, you have multiple governments that serve your needs.
- ✓ Tell your students that you are going to read a book that discusses the different types of government: local, state, and federal.
- ✓ Read selections from *Government: How Local, State, and Federal Government Works*.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Which government is the most important: local, state, or federal? Is there a good answer to this question?*
- ★ *What is something your local government might do? Your state government? The federal government?*

- ★ *Consider the branches of government: legislative, judicial, and executive. What do the different branches do?*
- ★ *Is one branch more powerful than another?*
- ★ *What does the term “checks and balances” mean in terms of government?*

ACTIVITY

- ✓ Tell students that they are going to write a short story based on the following prompt: You wake up to find out that the government was shut down for the day. As you write your story, consider how your life would be different without any government.
- ✓ Inform the class that the story must address what would be missing in terms of services provided by the local, state, and federal governments. Say, *Think of everything you normally do during an average day. What could you do now that you couldn't do before? What can't you do now that the government used to enable you to do?*
- ✓ Ask some questions to get your students thinking inventively: *Would you have school if there was no government? Would the traffic signals work?* Encourage your students to be creative in their responses. (You can provide a list of government services to your students if you wish.)
- ✓ Students could alternatively write essays on what the different levels of government provide each citizen.
- ✓ Ask students to share their written responses with the class.