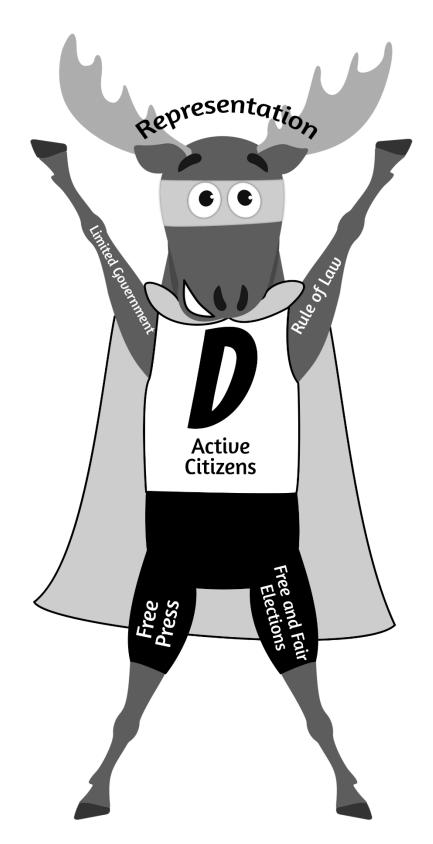


Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy



Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy?





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# Learn it! Characteristics of American Democracy

Read about each of the six characteristics of American democracy in the "Moose on the Loose." Answer the questions about each characteristic.

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	1) Representative democracy
	What is a representative?
	How does a person become a representative?
	How do people change who represents them in government?
	2) Rule of law
	What is the most important set of laws in the United States?
	At what levels of government are laws made?
	Who has to follow laws?



Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy?	
3) Limited Government	
What does it meant to limit something?	
How do Americans limit their government?	
Why did the founders of our democracy limit the federal government?	
4) Free and fair elections	
What is an election?	
Who can vote?	
What helps make elections fair?	
Triac helps make elections fair.	60



Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy? 5) Active citizens What does it mean to be active? What are some ways citizens can be active in government, even if they don't work for the government? 6) Free press What is a journalist? How do journalists help other people understand the government?



### Learn it! Characteristics of American Democracy

ad about each of the six characteristics of American democracy. Answer the questions about each characteristic.
1) Representative democracy. The United States is a representative democracy, which means the people elect other people to represent them in the government. These representatives make decisions for the people who elected them. The representatives have to run for re-election after a certain amount of time (called a term). If the people don't like the way they are being represented, they can vote for someone else to represent them instead. Representative democracy is the only way a democratic government could work in a country with as many people as the United States.
What is a representative?
How does a person become a representative?
How do people change who represents them in government?
2) Rule of law. The United States is governed by laws that are created by the people's representatives in the
government. The most important law in the country is the U.S. Constitution, but there are many other laws as well.
Some laws are made at the national level, while others are made by the states or by local governments. In America, no one is above the law, meaning that every person in the United States is equal before the law. In other words, all
laws apply to all of the people.



What is the most important set of laws in the United States?
At what levels of government are laws made?
Who has to follow laws?
3) Limited Government. Americans believe that the power of government should be limited, and they organized their national and state governments so that their power cannot grow too big. One way that Americans limit government is by writing constitutions for both the federal government and the state governments. Constitutions are documents that say what the government can and cannot do.
Another way that Americans limit the power of government is to divide the government into three levels: the national government, state governments, and local governments. This division is called federalism. The government was

Another way that Americans limit the power of government is to divide the government into three levels: the national government, state governments, and local governments. This division is called federalism. The government was divided this way so that no part of the government will grow too big and powerful. Each level of government can only govern in their own areas.

Americans also limit the power of government by dividing government power between different branches of government and then allowing each branch to check the others. The national government is divided into three branches: the executive branch (the presidency), the legislative branch (Congress), and the judicial branch (the Supreme Court). The branches must work together to govern the country, pass laws, and make sure laws are followed. The government's power is split, or balanced, between them. This is called a separation of powers. One branch can also stop the other branches from getting too much power, which is called a check. This separation of powers and system of checks and balances is also used in states to limit their governments.



moose.mmstory.or
Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy?
What does it meant to limit something?
How do Americans limit their government?
Why did the founders of our democracy limit the federal government?
4) Free and fair elections. Americans choose their representatives by voting. Because voting is so important in America, Americans must trust the results of our elections. The state governments are in charge of running elections. They are responsible for making sure that every citizen is allowed to vote and that every vote counts. Not every adult citizen has always been able to vote. In fact, laws have sometimes been used to deny people the right to vote in the past because of discrimination. Each state makes its own decisions about how to carry out election rules fairly. It is a very complicated and important responsibility. Using technology to cast ballots or count ballots is also a new way of helping citizens vote, although making sure the technology works the way it is supposed to can be a challenge. What is an election?



 esson 18.1: What is Democracy?
Who can vote?
What helps make elections fair?
5) Active citizens. Americans participate in American government in many different ways, including voting, contacting
their representatives, speaking up when they are unhappy with the government, and serving in town, state, or
national governments as elected officials. Americans also form citizen groups to solve problems in the country or their
community, such as the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army. These groups are not part of the government.
They rely on people to volunteer their time to help make things better for others. These groups work outside of the government but often cooperate with the government to solve problems that Americans are facing, which is another
example of an active citizenry.
What does it mean to be active?
What are some ways citizens can be active in government, even if they don't work for the government?



**6) Free press**. Journalists play an important role in American government. They report to the people through written articles; television networks and videos; podcasts and radio; and social media. They tell people what the government is doing and how government officials are doing their jobs. Journalists do not work for the government; they are independent, which helps them report on the government fairly. In the United States, most people depend on the free press to keep them informed about the government.

What is a journalist?

How do journalists help other people understand the government?





Name	Answer Ke	<b>/</b>

### Learn it! Characteristics of American Democracy

Read about each of the six characteristics of American democracy on "Moose on the Loose." Answer the questions about each characteristic.

#### 1) Representative democracy.

What is a representative?

A representative is a person who speaks for another person or a group of people. The representative should make decisions based on the wishes of the people they represent.

How does a person become a representative?

A person becomes a representative by running in an election. If the person gets the most votes, they become the representative.

How do people change who represents them in government?

If people are not happy with the decisions made by the representative, they can vote for another person in the next election. It doesn't necessarily mean the representative will lose the election, but if enough people want a change and vote for it, it can happen.

#### 2) Rule of law.

What is the most important set of laws in the United States?

The most important set of laws in our country is the United States Constitution.

At what levels of government are laws made?

Laws are made at all levels of government: federal, state, and local.

Who has to follow laws?

Everyone has to follow laws! In the United States, no one is above the law, meaning even the President and those appointed to the Supreme Court must follow the laws created by government.



#### 3) Limited Government.

What does it meant to limit something?

To limit means to restrict something or prevent it from continuing or growing.

How do Americans limit their government?

Americans limit their government by writing constitutions, sets of laws that explain how the government works. Americans also separate their government into different levels (federal, state, and local) and branches (executive, legislative, and judicial) so that power is spread out.

Why did the founders of our democracy limit the federal government?

They did not want the federal government to have too much power.

#### 4) Free and fair elections.

What is an election?

An election is a process that allows people to choose, by voting, from different options. The option with the most votes wins.

Who can vote?

All adult citizens can vote in elections.

What helps make elections fair?

States make rules about how votes are cast and counted to make sure that people feel safe voicing their opinion through voting.



#### 5) Active citizens.

What does it mean to be active?

To be active is to do something.

What are some ways citizens can be active in government, even if they don't work for the government?

Citizens can be active in government by voting, contact their representatives, or join groups that march or demonstrate to express their beliefs. Citizens can become involved in bigger organizations that focus on specific needs and ideas.

#### 6) Free press.

What is a journalist?

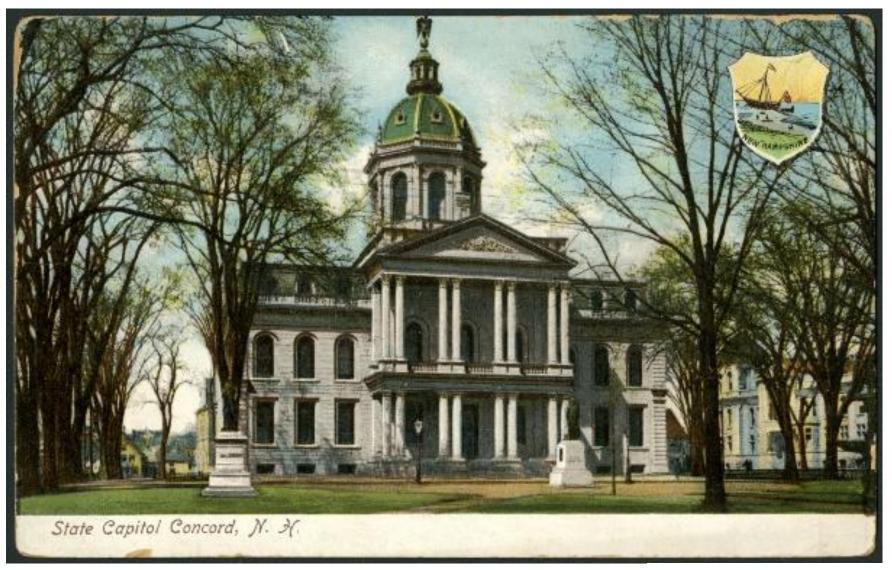
A journalist is a person who shares information through writing for a newspaper, presenting news on television, or through an online media source.

How do journalists help other people understand the government?

Journalists research and interview people to get more information about what the government is doing. They write that information or present it for viewers in a way that helps other people understand what is happening.



Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy?

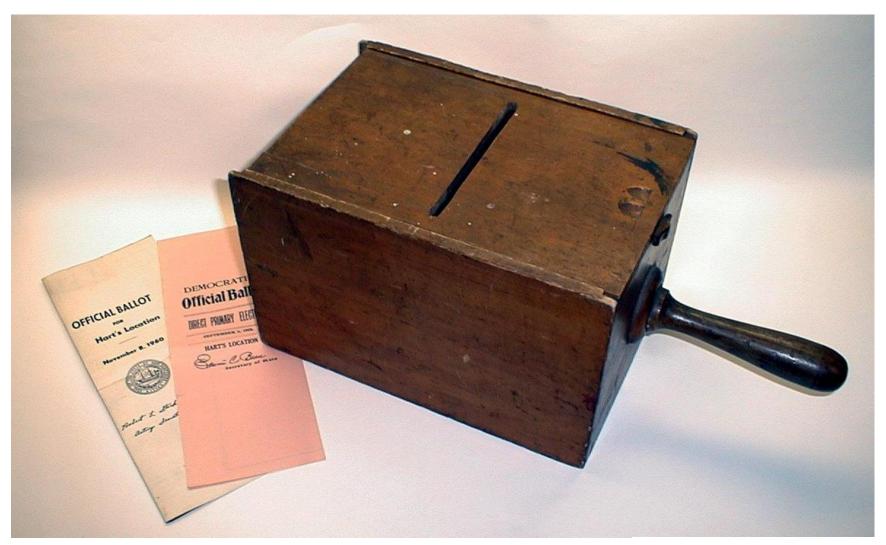


New Hampshire State House, circa 1898–1952 Source: New Hampshire Historical Society

Democracy in Action Image Set (1)



Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy?



Ballot Box, circa 1850 Source: New Hampshire Historical Society

Democracy in Action Image Set (2)





Reporters Covering the 1952 Primary, 1952 Source: New Hampshire Historical Society

Democracy in Action Image Set (3)



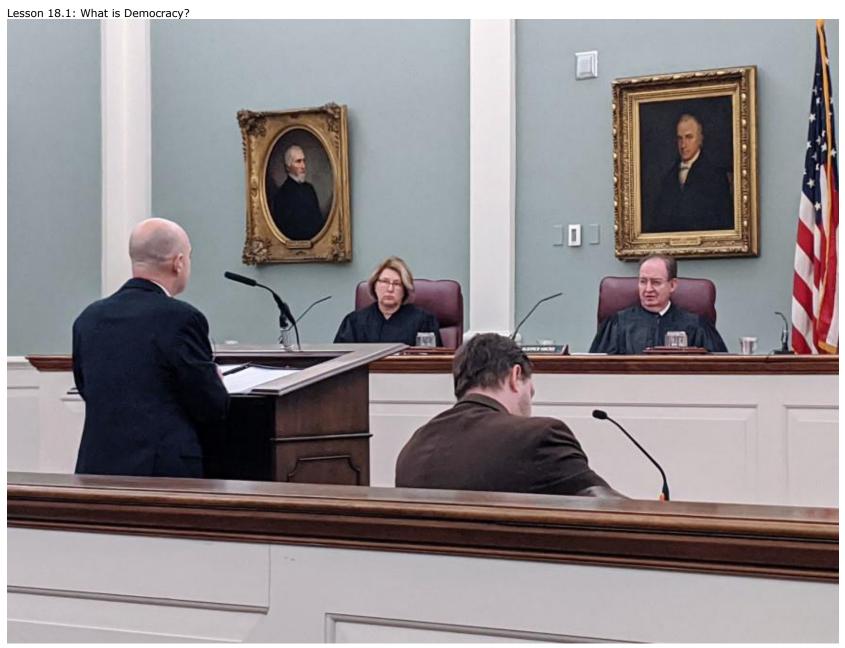
Lesson 18.1: What is Democracy?



Women Marching in Concord, 1915 Source: New Hampshire Historical Society

Democracy in Action Image Set (4)





N.H. Supreme Court, 2020 Image courtesy of NHPR

Democracy in Action Image Set (5)

# In CONGRESS at Exeter,

January 5th, 1776.

TE the Members of the Congress of the Colony of New-Hampshire, chofen and appointed by the free Suffrages of the PEOPLE of faid Colony, and authorized and impowered by them, to meet together, and use such Means, and pursue such Measures, as we should judge best for the public Good; and in particular to establish some Form of Government, provided that Measure should be recommended by the Continental CONGRESS: And a Recommendation to that Purpole having been transmitted to us, from the said CONGRESS: Have taken into our ferious Confideration the unhappy Circumstances, into which this Colony is involved, by means of many grievous & oppressive Acts of the British Parliament; depriving us of our native and constitutional Rights and Priviledges; to enforce Obedience to which Acts, a powerful Fleet and Army have been fent into this Country, by the Ministry of Great-Britain, who have exercised a wanton and cruel Abuse of their Power, in destroying the Lives and Properties of the Colonists, in many Places, with Fire and Sword, taking the Ships and Lading from many of the honest and industrious Inhabitants of this Colony, employed in Commerce, agreable to the Laws and Customs, a long Time used here.

The fudden & abrupt Departure of his Excellency JOHN WENTWORTH, Efq; our late Governor, and several of the Council, leaving us destitute of Legislation; & no Executive Courts being open to punish criminal Offenders, whereby the Lives and Properties of the honest People of this Colony, are liable to the

Machinations and evil Defigns of wicked Men: Therefore for the preservation of peace and good order, and for the Security of the Lives and Properties of the Inhabitants of this Colony, we conceive ourselves reduced to the Necessity, of establishing a Form of Government, to continue during the present unhappy and unnatural contest with Great Britain; Protesting and declaring that we never sought to throw off our Dependance upon Great Britain, but felt ourselves happy under her Protection, while we could enjoy our Constitutional Rights & Privileges .-- and that we shall rejoice if such a Reconciliation be-

tween us, and our Parent State, can be effected as shall be approved by the Continental Congress, in whose Prudence and Wisdom we conside.

Accordingly, purfuant to the Trust reposed in us, We do Resolve that this Congress, assume the Name, Power and Authority of a House of Representatives, or Affembly for the colony of New-Hampshire. And that said House, then proceed to choose Twelve Persons, being reputable Freeholders, & Inhabitants within this colony, in the following manner: viz. Five in the county of Rockingham, Two in the county of Strafford, Two in the county of Hillsborough, Two in the county of Cheshire, and one in the county of Graston, to be a distinct and separate Branch of the Legislature, by the Name of a COUNCIL for this colony, to continue as such until the Third Wednesday in December next; Any Seven of whom to be a Quorum, to do Bufiness.

That fuch Council appoint their Prefident; and in his Absence that the Senior

Councellor prefide.

That a Secretary be appointed by both Branches, who may be a councellor, or otherwise as they shall choose.

That no Act, or Resolve be valid, and put into Execution, unless agreed to and

passed by both Branches of the Legislature.

That all Public Officers for the faid colony, and each county, for the current Year, be appointed by the Council and Assembly, except the several clerks of the Executive courts, who shall be appointed by the Justices of the respective courts. That all Bills, Refolves or Votes for raifing, levying and collecting Money,

originate in the House of Representatives.

That



Name
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### Who is Democracy?

Imagine that democracy, with the "power of the people," is a superhero! What would that superhero look like? Add details to the figure to design a democracy superhero. Then write about what that superhero can do. Think about the characteristics of democracy. What kinds of amazing things does the "power of the people" make possible?

