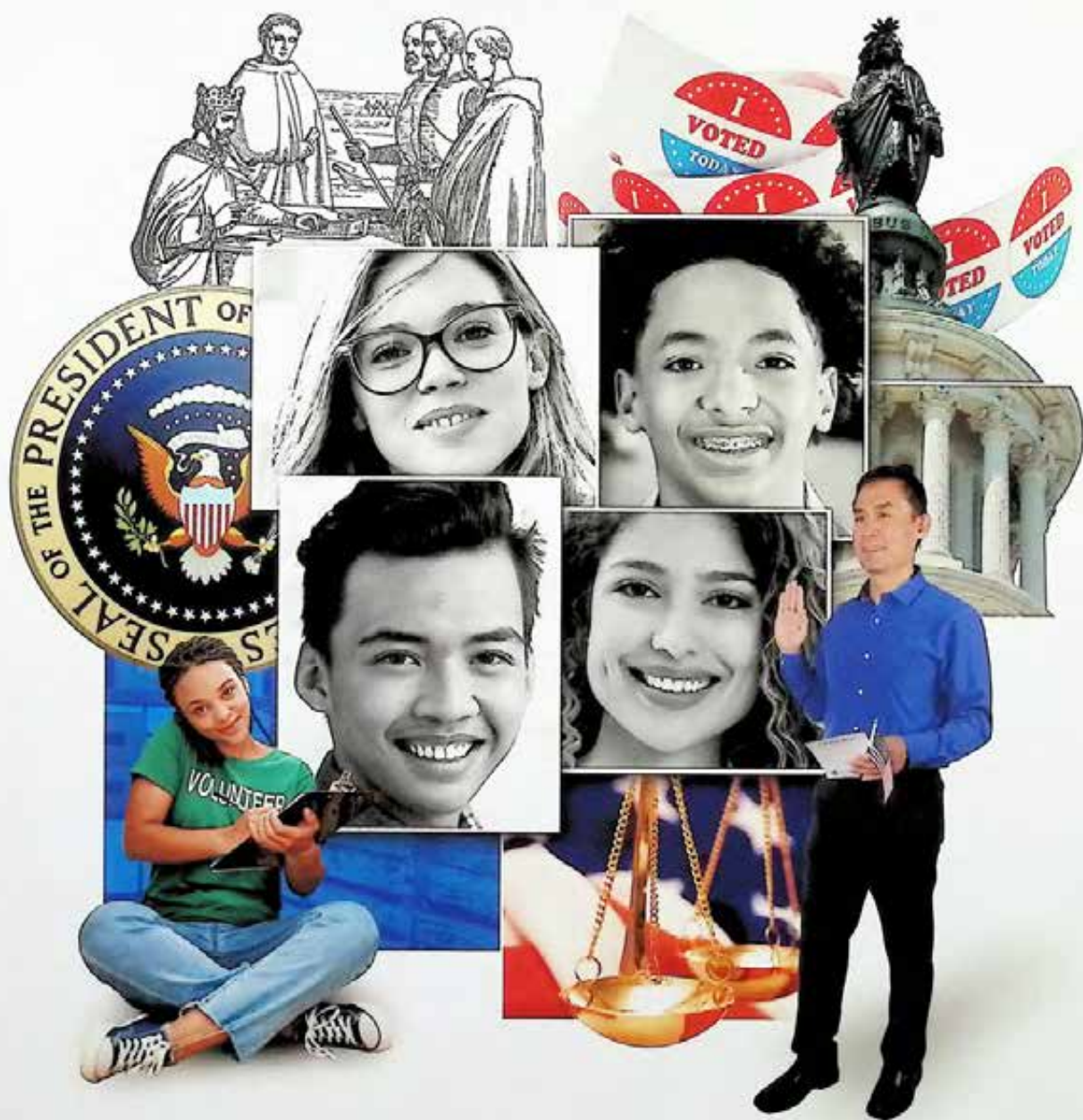


MAGRUDER'S



American Government

INTERACTIVE

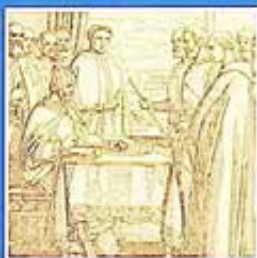
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American Government

INTERACTIVE

England's King John had little choice but to sign the Magna Carta in 1215.

The rights expressed in that charter rippled across time until, nearly 600 years later, they reemerged across the Atlantic Ocean in the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.



The scales of justice symbolize the impartial weighing of the two sides in a legal dispute, while the American flag represents the nation's history, as well as liberty, equality, and patriotism. What do these ideals mean to you?

Not long ago, people sacrificed their lives to win the right to vote and today, millions of people wait in line for hours to exercise that right. Millions of others, however, do not vote. What do you think would motivate more people to cast their ballots on Election Day?



Volunteering is fun! It also gives a person a sense of purpose and a way to make the world a better place by helping the elderly, the ill, the homeless and others. Volunteers help build communities and democracy thrives when communities thrive.

The Presidential Seal bears the motto of the United States: "E Pluribus Unum" or "out of many, one." Other symbols on the seal stand for the 50 states, peace, war, the 13 colonies, and Congress. Why are symbols so important to a nation?



In a twist of irony, an enslaved man named Philip Reid played a key role in creating the bronze statue, *Freedom*, that adorns the top of the Capitol dome in Washington, D.C. Which of the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution do you feel strongly about?

Weidong came to the United States from China as a graduate student in 1997 and became an American citizen in 2018.

As a naturalized citizen and a software engineer, Weidong is a living example of the hope and promise that the United States offers to immigrants.



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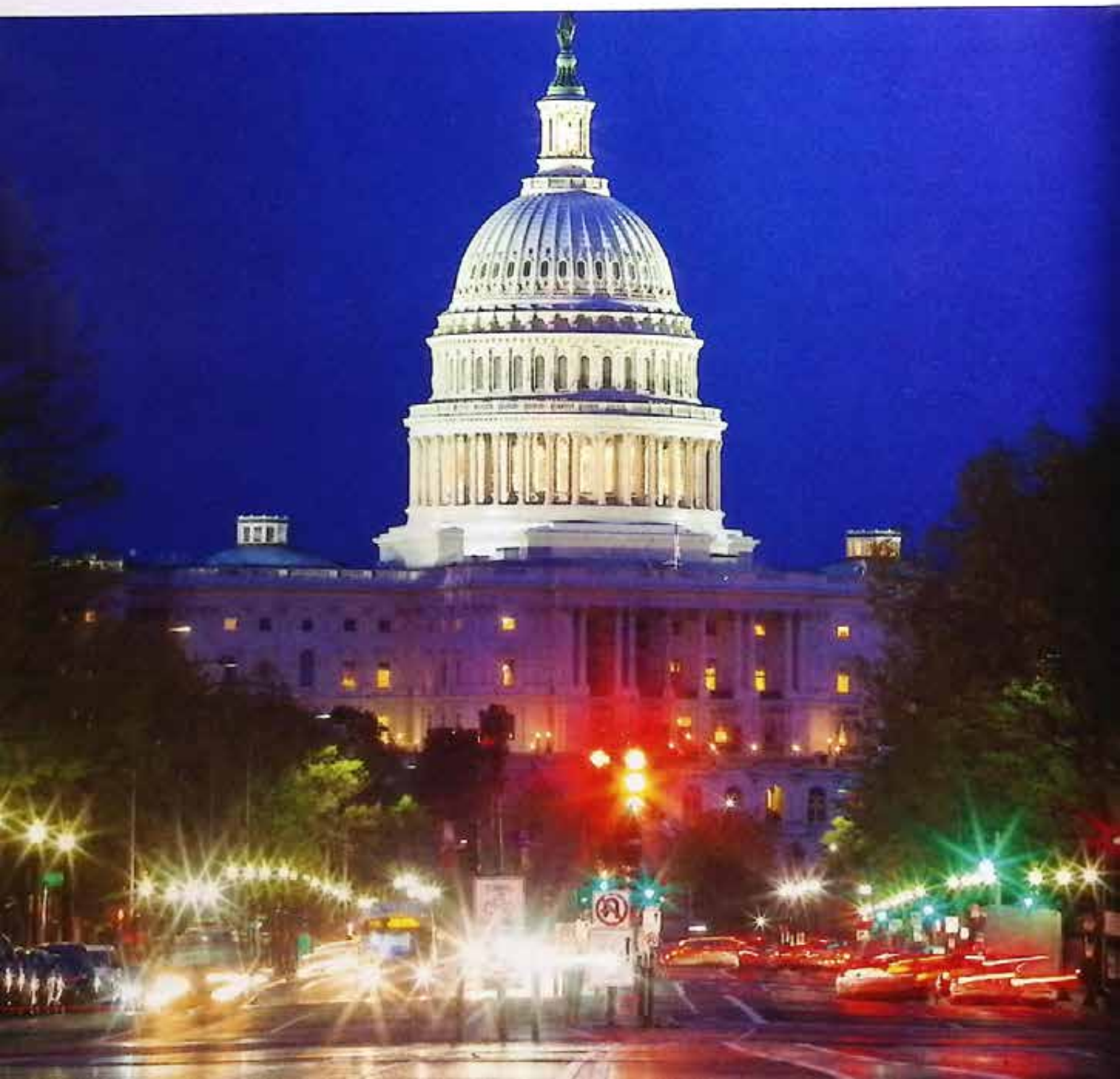
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Foundations of Government and Citizenship

ESSENTIAL QUESTION What Should Governments Do?



United States Capitol in
Washington, D.C.



Connections to Today

It is hard for all people to agree on all issues all the time. Think about a time when you strongly disagreed with a family member or friends. How did you handle it?

People in the United States sometimes disagree about national or local issues. In a democracy, the ability to compromise to settle these disagreements is critical. In this Topic, you'll learn how societies developed governments to make policies to regulate actions and resolve differences. How does the government help resolve differences among Americans today?



Learn about political philosopher John Locke and his theory of natural rights.

 **BOUNCE** to Activate My Story Video



Topic 1 Overview

In this Topic, you will learn about the roots of American Government and the different types of governments in the world today. Look at the lesson outline and explore the flow chart. As you study this Topic, you can work on your Quest Inquiry.

LESSON OUTLINE

1.1 Principles of Government

1.2 Types of Government

1.3 Origins of the Modern Democratic State

1.4 The Basics of Democracy

ROOTS OF DEMOCRACY

ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

The Athenians introduced direct democracy. Citizens debated public questions and decided them by majority vote. Courts administered justice.

ROMAN REPUBLIC

The Roman Republic gave decision-making power to an elite Senate and consuls who could check each other and, in theory, represented the people. The laws of Rome were written for all to see.

FEUDALISM

In the Feudal Era, Europe's first parliaments emerged and began to limit the powers of kings. England provided for trial by a jury of one's peers.

SOVEREIGNTY

Sovereignty emerged in the 17th century, with states with fixed borders, a national identity, and a centralized government with broad authority.

DEMOCRACY

Signed on September 17, 1787, the U.S. Constitution established an American government based on Enlightenment philosophies. The Constitution limited the power of the Federal Government and separated it into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

Inquiry Center

Want to become an active and effective citizen? Make a difference in your community and beyond by using the **Inquiry Center** on the digital course.

Connect with issues you're passionate about by using the **Interest Finder**.

Investigate public policies, get involved in your community, influence public opinion, and develop leadership skills.

Synthesize the work you've done and what you've learned along the way.

Demonstrate what you've learned once you've finished your project by sharing your work.

1.1

The Preamble to the Constitution spells out the purpose of the U.S. Constitution and identifies the values and principles of the government.



BOUNCE to Activate Flipped Video

Objectives

Define government and the basic powers every government holds.

Describe the four defining characteristics of a state.

Identify the four theories that attempt to explain the origin of the state.

Understand the purpose of government in the United States and other countries.

Key Terms

government
public policies
legislative power
executive power
judicial power
dictatorship
democracy
Aristotle
state
sovereign
Thomas Hobbes
John Locke

Principles of Government

This is a course about government—and, more specifically, about government in the United States. The Preamble to the U.S. Constitution begins with the phrase, “We the People of the United States.” As a citizen, you are an important member of the “We.” For that reason alone, you should know as much as you possibly can about government. Government affects you in an uncountable number of very important ways. It does so today, it did so yesterday, and it will do so every day for the rest of your life.

Government—We the People

Think of the point in this light: What would your life be like *without* government? Who would protect you, and all of the rest of us, against attacks? Who would provide for education, guard the public’s health, and protect the environment? Who would pave the streets, regulate traffic, punish criminals, and respond to fires and other human-made and natural disasters? Who would protect civil rights and care for the elderly, the poor, and those who cannot care for themselves? Who would protect consumers and property owners?

The Need for Government Government does all of these things, of course—and much more. In short, if government did not exist, we would have to invent it.

Government is the institution through which a society makes and enforces its public policies. Government is made up of those people who exercise its powers, all those who have authority and control over people.

The **public policies** of a government are, in short, all of those things a government decides to do. Public policies cover matters ranging from taxation, defense, education, crime, and healthcare

to transportation, the environment, civil rights, and working conditions. Indeed, the list of public policy issues handled by government is nearly endless.

Basic Powers of Government Governments must have power in order to make and carry out public policies. Power is the ability to command or prevent action, the ability to achieve a desired end.

Every government has and exercises three basic kinds of power: (1) **legislative power**—the power to make laws and to frame public policies; (2) **executive power**—the power to execute, enforce, and administer laws; and (3) **judicial power**—the power to interpret laws, to determine their meaning, and to settle disputes that arise within the society. These powers of government are often outlined in a country's constitution. A constitution is the body of fundamental laws setting out the principles, structures, and processes of a government.

The ultimate responsibility for the exercise of these powers may be held by a single person or by a small group, as in a **dictatorship**. In this form of government, those who rule are not held responsible to the will of the people. The fundamental components that typically distinguish democracies from dictatorships include state control of the media, a lack of political and personal freedoms, corruption of public officials, a lack of governmental transparency, and the lack of any mechanisms through which citizens can change the government. In short, a dictatorship, unlike a democracy, does not rest on the consent of the governed.

When the responsibility for the exercise of these powers rests with a majority of the people, that form of government is known as a democracy. In a **democracy**, supreme authority rests with the people.

Government as Human Invention Government is among the oldest of all human inventions. It first appeared when human beings realized that they could not survive without some way to regulate their own actions, as well as those of their neighbors.

The appearance of major political ideas began early in history. The earliest known evidence of government dates from the ancient Babylonian Empire, Egypt, India and China, and as far back as 1700 BCE. More than 2,300 years ago, the Greek philosopher **Aristotle** observed that "man is by nature a political animal." When he wrote those words, Aristotle was only recording an observation that, even then, had been obvious for thousands of years.

What did Aristotle mean by "political"? That is to say, what is "politics"? Although people often equate the two, politics and government are very different



>> Many governments carry out their work through legislative bodies. Today in the U.S. Congress, legislators decide matters of public policy as they did in ancient Rome or Greece.



>> When the emerging Roman republic was threatened by war with neighboring Sabine tribes, the Roman senate appointed Lartius as a dictator to defeat the enemy.

change. Politics is a process, while government is an institution. More specifically, politics is the process by which a society decides how power and resources will be distributed within that society.

EXPLAIN What are public policies?

The State

We often use the term **"state"** to mean any body of people living in a defined territory, organized politically (that is, with a government), and with the power to make and enforce law without the consent of any higher authority.

Note that the word *state* describes a legal entity. In popular usage, a state is often called a "nation" or a "country." In a strict sense, however, the word *nation* is an ethnic term, referring to races or other large groups of people. The word *country* is a geographic term, referring to a particular place, region, or area of land.

There are nearly 200 states in the world today. They vary greatly in size, military power, natural resources, and economic importance. Still, each of them possesses all four of the characteristics of a state. That is, each of them has population, territory, sovereignty, and government.

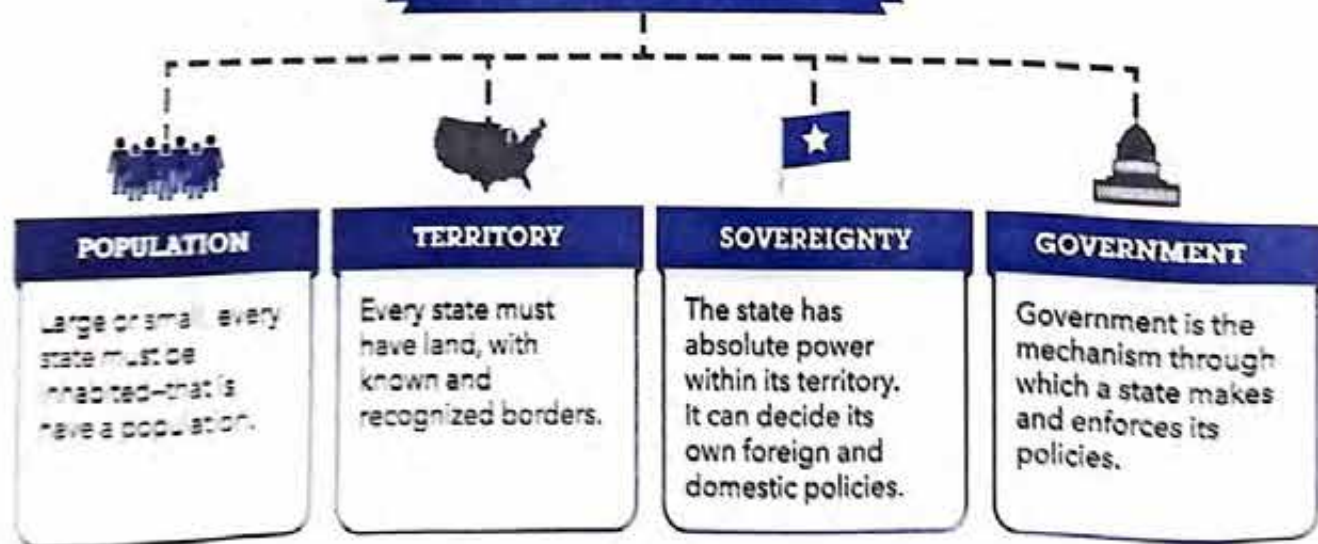
Population Clearly, a state must have people—a population. The size of that population, however, has nothing directly to do with the existence of a state. One of the world's smallest states, in population terms, is San Marino. Bound on all sides by Italy, it has only some 30,000 people. The People's Republic of China is the world's most populous state, with more than 1 billion people. The more than 300 million people who live in the United States make it among the world's most populous states, after China and India.

The people who make up a state may or may not be homogeneous. The adjective *homogeneous* describes members of a group who share customs, a common language, and ethnic background. Today, the population of the United States includes people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Still, most Americans think of themselves as exactly that: Americans.

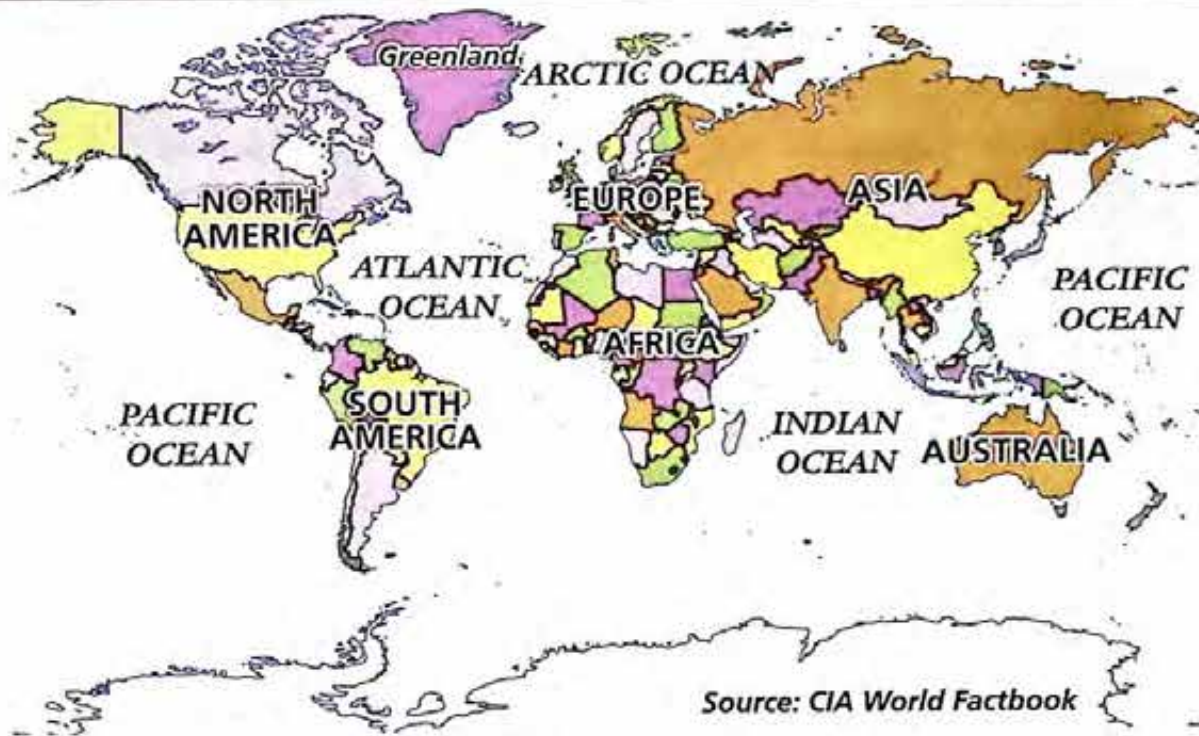
Territory Just as a state cannot exist without people, so must it have land—territory—with known and recognized boundaries. The states in today's world vary as widely in terms of territory as they do in population. Here, too, San Marino ranks among the world's smallest states. It covers less than 24 square miles, and so is smaller than thousands of cities and towns in the United States. The United States also recognizes the state of Vatican City.

FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF A STATE

WHAT MAKES A STATE?



» Every state in the world has four characteristics. **Analyze Charts** How does the sovereignty of a state in the U.S. compare to the national sovereignty of the U.S. as a whole?



>> Sovereignty is one of the four characteristics possessed by every state in the world.

Analyze Maps How many sovereign states are in the United States?

which is completely surrounded by the city of Rome. It has a permanent population of less than 900 and an area of only about 109 acres.

Russia, the world's largest state, stretches across some 6.6 million square miles. The total area of the United States is about 3.8 million square miles.

Sovereignty Every state is **sovereign**—that is, it has supreme and absolute power within its own territory and can decide its own foreign and domestic policies. It is neither subordinate nor responsible to any other authority. Sovereignty is the one characteristic that distinguishes the state from all other, lesser political units in the world.

Thus, as a sovereign state, the United States can determine its form of government, frame its own economic system, and shape its own foreign policies. The States within the United States are not sovereign and so are not states in the international, legal sense. Each State is subordinate to the Constitution of the United States. At the United States' international borders, citizens observe the laws and serve the public good of countries on both sides of the border by showing passports and other identification in compliance with the rules of each state.

Government Every state is politically organized. That is, every state has a government. Recall, a government is the institution through which society makes and enforces its public policies and is the agency through

which the state works to accomplish its goals.

Government includes the machinery and the personnel by which the state is ruled.

Government is necessary to avoid what the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) called “the war of every man against every man.” Without government, people would live in what is called the state of nature. In this condition, wrote Hobbes, there would be “continual fear and danger of violent death and the life of man [would be] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” Indeed, in Lebanon, Bosnia, Somalia, and many other places over recent years, the world has seen a number of sobering examples of what happens when government disappears.

☒ **DESCRIBE** How would you describe the concept of sovereignty?

How States Arose

For centuries, historians, philosophers, and others have pondered the question of the origin of the state. What major political ideas in history resulted in the emergence of states?

Over time, many different answers have been offered, but history provides no conclusive evidence to support any of them. However, four theories have emerged as the most widely accepted explanations for the origin of the state.