



GRADE 6+

Local Government - Cities and Towns| Lesson Plan

How do local governments in cities and towns work?

Students learn how local governments function, what powers they can exercise, and the services they provide, and discern similarities and differences between local and federal governments.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the structure of local government and how it functions.
- List the services provided by local governments to their citizens.
- Analyze the similarities and differences between local and federal governments.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Mayor:** a citizen who leads the executive branch within local governments
- **Council:** citizens who govern the legislative branch of local governments
- **Property Taxes:** source of funding for local governments
- **Dillon Rule:** a rule which grants states power to establish local governments
- **Municipal Courts:** courts that make up the judicial branch of local governments

Educational Standards: History, Civics, Government, Western Civilization, American Values

What You'll Need

- Video: *Street Smarts: Local Government - Cities and Towns*.



Scan to watch video.

- Worksheet: *Street Smarts: Local Government - Cities and Towns*. ([Download PDF](#))

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: It's My Favorite! (10 mins.)

1. Ask: *What is your favorite room in your house? What is it like?* Allow the class to share answers.
2. Ask: *Can you tell me what someone else's favorite room is like? Why? Why do you think you may not know as much about their favorite room as they do?* (The key is having students understand that because they do not live there, they would not be as knowledgeable as the person who does.) *For similar reasons, many believe local governments can govern their citizens better than the federal government. Let's see how much we know about local government in cities and towns.*
3. State: Display a copy of Street Smarts: Local Government - Cities and Towns Worksheet on a screen in the classroom.
4. Have a student read each statement aloud and attempt to answer them as a class. Invite students to share out loud (or do this part independently).

Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. State: *Let's play a fun game and see how many answers we got right.*
2. Watch the video.
3. Pause after each question and allow students to try to answer.
4. Play the video to reveal if they were correct or incorrect.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Allow students 10 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Collect as a formative assessment or discuss in class.

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 mins.)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.