

# XVI. Organizing Our Own Home Rule City

# 16 Activity

## WHAT?

Students will analyze the various forms of city government and design their own municipal government.

## WHY?

- To explain the changes in the types of jobs and occupations that have resulted from the urbanization of Texas
- To describe the structure and functions of government at municipal, county, and state levels
- To describe how people from selected racial, ethnic, and religious groups attempt to maintain their cultural heritage while adapting to the larger Texas culture
- To analyze the economic impact of the free enterprise system in local, national, and international markets
- To analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions
- To use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages/disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution
- To use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision

## Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills addressed in this lesson:

### *Geography:*

- Understand the location and characteristics of places and regions of Texas
- Understand the effects of the interaction between humans and the environment in Texas

### *Economic:*

- Understand the factors that caused Texas to change from an agrarian to an urban society
- Understand the interdependence of the Texas economy with the United States and the world

### *Government:*

- Understand the basic principles reflected in the Texas Constitution
- Understand the structure and functions of government created by the Texas Constitution

### *Citizenship:*

- Understand the rights and responsibilities of Texas citizens
- Understand the importance of the expression of different points of view in a democratic society

### *Culture:*

- Understand the concept of diversity within unity in Texas

### *Social Studies Skills:*

- Apply critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology

### *Communicate in written, oral, and visual form*

- Uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings

## TAAS:

- Objective 1: Civic Values and Responsibilities
- Objective 2: Economic Influences on U. S. History
- Objective 3: Political Influences on U. S. History
- Objective 4: Geographic Influences on U. S. History
- Objective 6: Sociological and Cultural Influences on U. S. History
- Objective 8: Critical-Thinking Skills



## HOW?

### Material Needed:

- Copies of questions that students must answer by organizing their city government

**Suggested Teaching Time:** two class periods

### Suggested Procedures:

1. Divide class into groups of three to four students
2. Tell students that they will have the responsibility for planning the government of a town that will be seeking a city charter in the near future.
3. Instruct groups to think carefully and decide on the following issues:
  - How many leaders do you want? Why?
  - Do you want the mayor to be strong or weak? Explain.
  - Do you want a City Manager? Why?
  - Would you pass high or low property taxes for the new city?
  - What are the budget priorities in your city? What programs or projects will you fund most generously? Explain your thinking.
  - Which city departments will you form? (Name two to twenty). Why should those be the first ones?
  - How will you encourage citizens to get involved in your town?
  - Name your town.
4. Have groups present their ideas with the class in a creative presentation.
5. After all presentations, discuss the decision-making process used by each group.

**Follow-Up Possibilities:** Invite a local official to provide input on the ideas. Vote on the best city plan from all the ones created by the class. Determine what features of that plan made it favored over the others.

**Evaluation:** Grade the group presentations on how thoroughly they answered the questions in their presentation.