The Sovereign State

Time Needed: Two class periods

Materials Needed:
- Student Worksheets
- Power Point w/projector (optional)
- Colored pencils (optional)

Copy Instructions:
- Anticipation & Closing Activities (half pages back to back; class set)
- Guided notes organizer (1 page; class set)
- Create a State Worksheets (2 pages; class set)

Learning Objectives. Students will be able to:
- Identify and describe the four features of a state.
- Differentiate between a sovereign state and the “states” in the United States by deciding whether the four features of a state apply to each.
- List the four roles of government.
- Apply the features and roles of a state by creating a profile of a new, fictional sovereign state and deciding on its priorities.

STEP BY STEP

☐ ANTIMICATE  the lesson by asking students to fill out the Anticipation Activity graphic organizer. Call on students to share their ideas about what makes a country a country.

☐ DISTRIBUTE  one Guided Notes organizer to each student.

☐ DISTRIBUTE  one Reading page to each student.

☐ READ  the reading page with the class, pausing to discuss and let students fill in their Guided Notes organizers. If you wish, project a copy of the Guided Notes organizer as a teaching tool to fill in along with the students.

☐ ALLOW  students to complete the Four Roles of Government graphic organizer. As an alternative, consider projecting the projection master and completing the organizer as a class, OR run the Power Point supplement. The Power Point presents the graphic organizer as an active participation activity so you can have the class tell you as a chorus where each item should go.

☐ REVIEW  the answers by reading them aloud OR by projecting the Four Roles of Government organizer transparency master and completing it as a class OR by running the Power Point supplement

☐ CHECK  for understanding by running the Power Point supplement activities or by doing the active participation activities on the Active Participation Guide.

☐ DISTRIBUTE  one Create a State activity to each student, along with colored pencils if you wish, and review the instructions.

☐ ASSIGN  students to complete the activity.

☐ ALLOW  students to share information about their countries with the class.

☐ CLOSE  by having students complete the Closing Activity organizer on the back side of their Anticipation Activity organizers. Call on students to share what they remember from the lesson.
Brainstorm! What features do all countries have in common? What must a country have, or else it wouldn’t be a country? Think of as many features as you can. (Add more circles if you need to.)
Don’t Peek! Complete this graphic organizer using ONLY what you remember about states.

**Features of a State**

One thing I learned about this feature:

Another thing I learned:

Another thing I learned:

Another thing I learned:

Closing Activity
The State

No, not Texas, Oregon, Vermont . . . Those are states, but “a state” is something more than that. A state is a body of people, living in a defined space, with the power to make and enforce laws, and with an organization to do this. A state does not have to check with any higher authority in order to make and enforce laws. Its own organization, or government, is its highest authority.

Population

A population is the group of people who are the members or citizens of a state. A population can be large or small. China has a population of more than 1.3 billion people, while the island state of Fiji has just over 860,000.

The population of a state also has a variety of features. The population might be mainly rural or mostly urban. A state’s economic situation might mean most people are very poor, with little access to electricity or even water. Or the people might be generally wealthy, enjoying modern homes, running water, and the latest technology. Often this is connected to the level of education most people within the population have achieved. Populations also have their own cultural traditions, and they usually speak a common language.

Territory

A state’s territory is the area in which a state’s rule applies. A state must have set boundaries. However, countries do not always agree on what each other’s boundaries are.

Boundaries can change over time. Sometimes they change after a war, when the states involved agree on new boundaries. When there is a dispute, states might also negotiate with each other to decide what the actual boundaries should be. Finally, states can purchase territory from other states, although this is less common today than it was in the past. In 1867, the U.S. bought Alaska from Russia for $7.2 million.

Sovereignty

Sovereignty (pronounced SAW-vren-tee) is the ability to rule absolutely within a territory. The principle of sovereignty means that all states are considered equal to each other, and no state may interfere in the affairs of another state. In reality, the world’s states have created a higher authority, called the United Nations. States agree to follow the UN’s rules for dealing with each other — but they don’t have to follow them. Sovereign states are free to set their own foreign policy, meaning the kind of relationships they will have with other states. States also have the power to decide how things will operate inside their own boundaries. Today, though, if a state is unable to keep its population safe and many people are being killed—perhaps even by the government—the UN allows other states to use military force to protect the population.
Government

A government is the organization inside a state that controls the actions and policies of the state. A government has four main roles.

First a government makes laws. In this role, the government provides rules for how things inside the state are run. A government is also responsible for protecting the state. In this role, the government provides a military to defend the state against outside attack. Third, a government keeps order inside the state. It does this by establishing law enforcement agencies that deal with criminal activity. Finally, a government usually helps its citizens by providing services people need. This can be anything from a post office to paving streets to providing health care or unemployment benefits.

Government’s Roles. Use the word bank below to complete the graphic organizer. Write the four roles in the stars. Then put examples of each role at each point of the stars. Each role has 4 examples.

- Keep Order
  - Kids under 14 can’t work
  - Army
  - The voting age is 18
  - Marines
- Protect the Country
  - Highway Patrol
  - People have freedom of speech
  - Help Citizens
  - FBI
- Help Citizens
  - FBI
  - Retirement benefits
  - Highway system
- Sheriffs
  - Navy
  - Veterans’ hospital
  - Air Force
  - Schools
  - Jobs must pay minimum wage
FOUR ROLES OF GOVERNMENT

The Sovereign State
A state is...

1) a body of ____________________
2) living in a ___________________________
3) with the power to make and enforce _____________ and 4) an ____________________ to do this.

A state must have set ____________________

A population might be __________ or ________

Populations have different _______________

States don't always _________ on where their boundaries are.

Boundaries can ______________

States decide what kind of _____________ they will have with other states. This is a states' ____________.

States decide how things will be done inside their boundaries.

All states are considered to each other.

A population have set ____________________

The Sovereign State

Guided Notes

I. A STATE IS...

1) a body of ____________
2) living in a _______________
3) _______________
4) an _______________ to do this.

Name:
**The Sovereign State**

**Territory.** Draw a map of the boundaries of your new country. Then draw the geographical features inside. Is it on the ocean? Does it have rivers and lakes? Mountains? Canyons? Where are the cities and towns?

**Flag.** Draw your country’s flag here.

**Populations.** Describe the features of your country’s population:

- **Level of Wealth:**
  - [ ] Poverty
  - [ ] Middle
  - [ ] Wealthy

  Draw a pie graph to show how wealthy your population is. **Hint:** Wealth and education are directly related!

- **Language(s) Spoken:**

- **Level of Education:**
  - [ ] No school
  - Elementary
  - Middle
  - High School
  - College—2 yrs
  - College—4 yrs
  - Graduate Degree

  Put an X next to the highest level of education your country will require.

- **Where People Live:**
  - [ ] Live near large city
  - [ ] Live in rural area

  Draw a bar graph to show how many people live near cities or in the country.

- **Cultural Traditions:**

  Name one holiday only your country has:

  How did it get started?

**Your Country’s Name:**

_________
**Government.** Choose one feature from each column to create your country’s government. Be careful — some options don’t go together!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Legislative Assembly</strong></th>
<th><strong>Head of State</strong></th>
<th><strong>Elections</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Citizens elect legislators</td>
<td>☐ Legislative assembly chooses a Prime Minister</td>
<td>☐ Citizens don’t get to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Head of state appoints legislators</td>
<td>☐ Citizens elect a President</td>
<td>☐ Citizens vote every ____ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ No legislative assembly</td>
<td>☐ Dictator appoints self to power</td>
<td>☐ Citizens vote whenever the government calls an election</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Protecting the Country.** What outside threat do your citizens fear the most? Draw a picture of the threat and how your military is preparing to defend the country against it:

**Keeping Order.** Paul has been convicted of robbing a bank at gunpoint in your capitol city. Police records show Paul has a history of drug addiction and had a lot of problems as a child. In your country, what would Paul’s sentence be?

**Official Court Document**

Starting today, Paul will...

**Helping Citizens.** Look at the list of some needs your citizens will have. Decide what your country will do about these needs, if anything.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>NEED</strong></th>
<th><strong>MY COUNTRY WILL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Making Laws.** Your country’s governing document is called the Five Freedoms. What freedoms do people in your country have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The citizens of _________ have the freedom to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, name three things *everyone* in your country knows are against the law:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Active Participation Guide

If you are not using the Power Point supplement, check for understanding by doing the following activities with your class.

A. Is That a State? Write the following list on the board:

- Does it have a population? YES NO
- Does it have a territory? YES NO
- Does it have sovereignty? YES NO
- Does it have government? YES NO

First, ask the class whether the United States is a state. Have them answer “yes” or “no” as a chorus for each question. Next, ask whether the state you live in is a state. Again, have them answer as a chorus for each question. (Answers: United States, yes; individual states, no—they don’t have sovereignty)

B. Mini Quiz. Have the class show thumbs up or thumbs down for each statement:

1. A state can’t have less than 30,000 people. (/thumb down Monaco only has 27000.)
2. The boundaries of a territory can change. (/thumb up War, negotiation, or purchase)
3. Sovereignty means you have to check with someone above you. (/thumb down There is nobody above you.)
4. Government only exists to keep order and provide security. (/thumb down Governments also make laws and help citizens.)
5. The 50 states that make up the USA are not considered independent “states.” (/thumb down They don’t have sovereignty.)
Government’s Roles. Use the word bank below to complete the graphic organizer. Write the four roles in the stars. Then put examples of each role at each point of the stars. Each role has 4 examples.

- Keep Order: Kids under 14 can’t work, Army, The voting age is 18, Make Laws, Police
- Protect the Country: Highway Patrol, People have freedom of speech, Help Citizens, FBI, Retirement benefits, Highway system
- Sheriffs: Navy, Veterans’ hospital, Air Force, Schools
- Jobs must pay minimum wage: FBI, Sheriff, Army, Police

![Diagram of Four Roles of Government]

- Keep Order: Kids under 14 can’t work, Army, The voting age is 18, Make Laws, Police
- Protect the Country: Highway Patrol, People have freedom of speech, Help Citizens, FBI, Retirement benefits, Highway system
- Sheriffs: Navy, Veterans’ hospital, Air Force, Schools
- Jobs must pay minimum wage: FBI, Sheriff, Army, Police
The state 1) a body of people living in a defined space 2) with the power to make and enforce laws and 3) an organization to do this.

People who are the members or citizens of a state.

The area in which a state's rule applies.

A state is...