

# The American People

## TOPIC SUMMARY

The democratic heritage and values of the United States government are important to its citizens. The principles upon which representative government is based originated in ancient Greece and Rome. This nation's history of immigration has made its population diverse. Immigrants may go through the process of naturalization to become U.S. citizens and enjoy all the rights and privileges of citizenship. Our local, state, and federal governments provide order and security as well as public services such as libraries, schools, and parks. Our government is a democracy, but other types of governments, including monarchies and dictatorships, exist throughout the world. The representative democracy of the United States uses a presidential system of government in which voters elect the president directly. Some other democracies use the parliamentary system, in which the government is headed by a prime minister.

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**FOLDABLES™**  
Study Organizer

**Comparing Information Study Foldable** *This Foldable will help students compare information about citizenship and government in a democracy.*

**Step 1** Use one sheet of paper folded in half the long way.



**Step 3** Cut the folded top sheet in half to create two tabs.

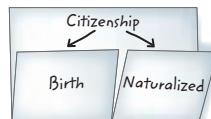


**Reading and Writing**  
*Note details about the processes of becoming a citizen from birth or by naturalization.*

**Step 2** Fold in half again to create cutting lines.



**Step 4** Label the tabs as shown.



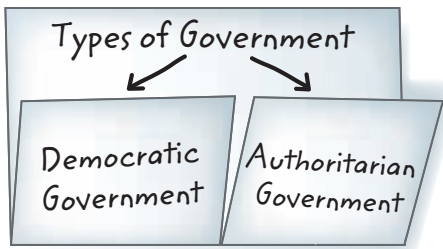
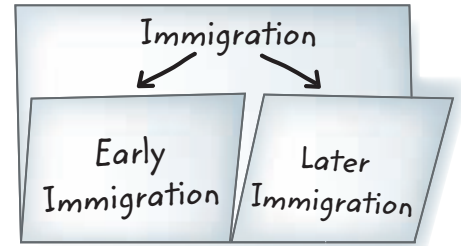
## TOPIC ACTIVITY IDEAS

### Comparing

Have students use the Comparing Information Study Foldable to compare facts about types of citizenship. As they read and listen in class, they should write facts behind the appropriate tab about natural born citizens and naturalized citizens. Then ask students to use the back of the foldable to develop a list of activities in which only American citizens can participate. Lists may include voting and running for office. Point out to students that only native-born citizens may become president of the United States. Lead a class discussion about the differences in students' lists and to analyze reasons that certain privileges are available only to citizens.

### DIFFERENTIATING

Have students use the Comparing Information Study Foldable to explore the history of immigration to the United States. Students should identify countries of origin for immigrants to the United States in the early 1900s and compare those with countries of origin for immigrants to the United States today. Beneath each appropriate tab, have students list several countries of origin, and the number of immigrants who came to the United States from these countries, for each of the two time periods. Lead a class discussion about how immigration patterns have changed and the possible reasons for these changes.



### CONTRASTING

Have students use the Foldable to compare a current form of democratic government, such as those of Italy or Mexico, with a current form of authoritarian government, such as those of China or Cuba. Beneath the appropriate tabs, have students write details about these governments and how each is organized. Then have students describe what they think life might be like under the authoritarian government they listed on the Foldable.

### Student Study Tip

Point out that charts and graphs can convey a great deal of information in a visual format. Challenge students to search the Internet and other resources for charts and graphs related to immigration patterns.