

Local Government

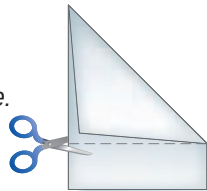
TOPIC SUMMARY

Local governments are created by and are dependent on the states. State constitutions usually allow cities to draft their own charters to explain the powers and duties of that local government. A city charter usually creates one of three forms of government: mayor and city council, city council and city manager, or commission. Some charters allow the city's mayor strong executive powers, but others have weak mayors. Some areas are organized into county governments. These governments act as legislatures for their areas. The geographical area encompassed by a county is usually divided into smaller political units, such as towns or townships. A village is the smallest unit of local government.

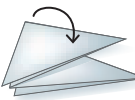
FOLDABLES™
Study Organizer

Identifying Main Ideas Foldable *This Foldable will help students identify the main ideas about city, county, and township governments and their responsibilities and roles.*

Step 1 *Fold down the paper from the top right corner so edges line up. Cut off the leftover piece.*



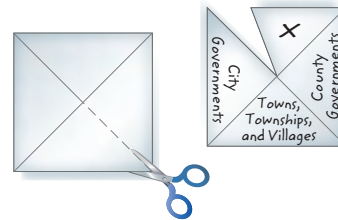
Step 2 *Fold the triangle in half. Then unfold the top layer one inch from the left edge.*



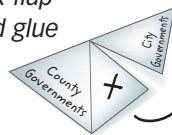
The fold will form an X, making four equal sections.



Step 3 *Cut on the fold, stopping in the middle. Draw an X on one tab and label the other three as shown.*



Step 4 *Fold the X flap under the flap and glue or tape together.*



This makes a three-sided pyramid.

Reading and Writing *Make note of the details of the different levels of government for cities, counties, and townships. Write a summary paragraph of the details.*

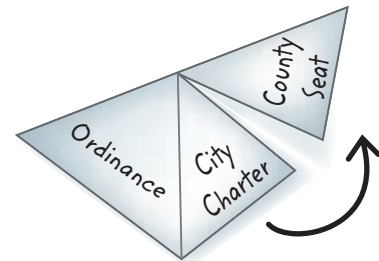
TOPIC ACTIVITY IDEAS

Researching

Have students use the Foldable activity above as a starting point to investigate a service provided by their local government. Ask students to peruse local government resources to determine which branch of local government provides this service. Challenge students to determine information that is pertinent to carrying out this service, such as the number of employees who work to provide it and the costs related to it. Students should include these details in the Foldable.

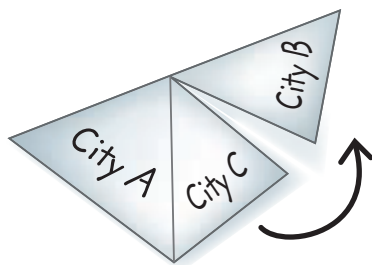
DESCRIBING

Have students use the Foldable to describe the forms of city government. Organize the class in three groups and ask each group to research three cities or towns in your region. Have students research government resources to determine the type of local government used in each town or city. Students may also wish to find out how and when each plan of government was adopted, if this information is available. Students should write the names of the cities on the sides of their pyramids and then record specific information beneath each tab. When students have finished their work, have groups present their findings to the class.



DEFINING

Ask students to choose three unfamiliar or challenging terms from the current chapter. Students should record one term on each flap of the Foldable and define that term in their own words beneath the appropriate tab. In addition, have students write a sentence that includes the term beneath the appropriate tab. When students have finished, have pairs quiz each other on the definitions of the key terms. If their definitions vary, have partners compare the differences and, if necessary, work together to revise the definitions for clarity.



Student Study Tip

Challenge students to create graphic organizers that trace the different organizational patterns of government bodies on the federal, state, and local levels. Suggest that students start with a pyramid structure. Have students compare and contrast the graphic organizers they have created. Students should work together to determine which graphic organizer format presents the information in the most accessible way.