**Unit 5 Politics: Types of Government and Laws**

**Vocabulary**

**Ruled by One**

***Autocracy: Supreme power is concentrated in the hands of ONE PERSON***

**Monarchy:** a state or nation in which the supreme power is actually held by a single person. Sole power is held in the hands of a monarch who reigns over a nation usually for life.

* King, Queen, or Emperor
* **Empire** – Many territories and people controlled by one government
* **Emperor** – A ruler over widespread lands
* **Dynasty** – A family line of rulers

**Absolute monarchy** - a form of government where the monarch rules unhindered, i.e., without any laws, constitution or legally organized opposition. Not limited by laws or a constitution

(Egypt, Mesoamerica)

**Theocracy:** a form of government in which God or a deity is recognized as the supreme civil ruler.

(Islamic Empire and Mesoamerican Rulers)

* Ruler has a divine religious right to rule
* Legal system based on religious law
* Ruler may be considered a god or god-like
* Ruler may also be a priest or religious leader

**Tyranny:** a government ruled by someone who uses power oppressively or unjustly

* **Tyrant** – A ruler who took power by force with the support of the middle or working class. Historically cruel or violent.

(Assyrians)

**Dictatorship** - a form of government in which a ruler has absolute power and control over government.   
(not restricted by a constitution or laws).

* **Dictator** – A ruler who has total control of government

**Ruled by Small Group**

**Oligarchy:** ”government by the few”, a form of government in which all power is vested in a few people

* Ruled by a small group of people made up of the dominant class, the wealthy, royalty, military, or social status such as being ruled by the elders.
* Small group selected based on wealth or power.

(Sparta)

**Aristocracy:** a government or state ruled by an elite or privileged upper class.

* Power is placed in the hands of a small privileged ruling class.
* “Ruled by the best”
* **Aristocrat** – A member of a rich and powerful family

(Ancient India)

**Ruled by the People**

**Democracy:** “government by the people”, a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them

* Citizens govern themselves.
* Majority Rules
* **Direct Democracy** - Citizens themselves vote for or against specific proposals or laws

(Athens)

**Ruled by Representatives of the People**

**Republic:** a state in which the supreme power rests in the body of citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by representatives chosen directly or indirectly by them.

* Also called a democratic republic, a representative democracy, or an indirect democracy
* Ruled by representatives of the citizen body
* Citizens elect representatives to make laws on their behalf

(Rome, USA)

**Ruled by None**

**Anarchy** - a condition of lawlessness or political disorder brought about by the absence of governmental authority.

**Additional Vocabulary for background information**

**Authoritarian** - a form of government in which state authority is imposed onto many aspects of citizens' lives.

**Communist** - a system of government in which the state plans and controls the economy and a single -- often authoritarian -- party holds power; state controls are imposed with the elimination of private ownership of property or capital while claiming to make progress toward a higher social order in which all goods are equally shared by the people (i.e., a classless society).

**Parliamentary monarchy** - a state headed by a monarch who is not actively involved in policy formation or implementation (i.e., the exercise of sovereign powers by a monarch in a ceremonial capacity); true governmental leadership is carried out by a cabinet and its head - a prime minister, premier or chancellor - who are drawn from a legislature (parliament).

**Socialism** - a government in which the means of planning, producing and distributing goods is controlled by a central government that theoretically seeks a more just and equitable distribution of property and labor; in actuality, most socialist governments have ended up being no more than dictatorships over workers by a ruling elite.

**Totalitarian**- a government that seeks to subordinate the individual to the state by controlling not only all political and economic matters, but also the attitudes, values and beliefs of its population.