

SS.7.C.3.2-Compare parliamentary, federal, confederal, and unitary systems of government.

## Different Governments: **Federal, Confederal and Unitary**

### What role does the central government play?

#### Federal: “Set of Chairs”

A federal form of government splits power between independent states and a central government. The power rests in both places, and each gets its authority from a governing document, like the U.S. Constitution. Independent branches inside the central government may also share power.

**Mark each characteristic of federalism S if it's a strength of that type of government and W if it's a weakness.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ There is national unity, but local governments can act as well
- \_\_\_\_\_ Citizens have more opportunities to be heard
- \_\_\_\_\_ Services can be duplicated by different levels of government
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disputes occur between national power and states' rights



The states and central government must work together and balance each other out, like a set of chairs around the table.

#### Confederal: “Many Different Chairs”

The confederal form of government is an association of independent states. The central government gets its authority from the independent states. Power rests in each individual state, whose representatives meet to address the needs of the group. America tried a confederal system before writing an entirely new constitution. This type of plan didn't work for us because the states did not give the central government enough power to do its job.

**Mark each characteristic of a confederal form of government S if it's a strength of that type of government and W if it's a weakness.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Keeps the power of government at the local level
- \_\_\_\_\_ States cooperate without losing their independence
- \_\_\_\_\_ Central government may be too weak to be effective
- \_\_\_\_\_ Laws may differ from state to state; no uniformity



A confederation of states is like a bunch of different chairs grouped together. They hold power independently but work collectively.

#### Unitary: “One Big Chair”

In a unitary form of government, all the power rests in a central government. The country may be divided into states or other sub-units, but they have no power of their own. For example, England depends on its Parliament, a legislative body, to create and enforce the laws in the country. The leader of the nation, the Prime Minister, is a member of the Parliament and does not have any more power than its members.

**Mark each characteristic of a unitary government S if it's a strength of that type of government and W if it's a weakness.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Uniform laws, policies, and enforcement across the country
- \_\_\_\_\_ Little conflict between state and national governments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Government may be slow to meet local problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Difficult to meet all the needs of all the citizens



A unitary government is like one really big chair with all of the government's power sitting in one place.

