

# Southwest Asian Governments

State of Israel, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, &  
Islamic Republic of Iran

# Standards

**SS7CG4 The student will compare and contrast various forms of government.**

- a. Describe the ways government systems distribute power: unitary, confederation, and federal.
- b. Explain how governments determine citizen participation: autocratic, oligarchic, and democratic.
- c. Describe the two predominant forms of democratic governments: parliamentary and presidential.

**SS7CG5 The student will explain the structures of the national governments of Southwest Asia (Middle East).**

- a. Compare the parliamentary democracy of the State of Israel, the monarchy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the theocracy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, distinguishing the form of leadership and the role of the citizen in terms of voting rights and personal freedoms.

# Southwest Asian Governments

**Directions:** Complete the chart below with information from the presentation.

Country	How did the current government gain power?	Distribution of Power	Type of Government	Executive Branch	How is the head of government chosen?	Legislative Branch	Role of Citizen – Who can vote?
<b>State of Israel</b>							
<b>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</b>							
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>							

# Southwest Asian Governments - KEY

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<b>State of Israel</b>	UN created country in 1948 out of the former British mandate of Palestine.	Unitary	Parliamentary Democracy	1. Prime Minister (most power)  2. President	The prime minister is usually the head of the dominant political party. There are two major political parties in Israel and many smaller parties.	The Knesset is the parliament. It holds most of the power in the Israeli government.	Israelis that are 18 and older vote for the Knesset's 120 members (who then choose the Prime Minister)
<b>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</b>	Members of the Saud family have ruled Saudi Arabia since 1932.	Unitary	Oligarchy	King	Hereditary; passed down to males in al-Saud family	Consultative Council; there are 120 members of the Council. King chooses 2/3rds of the members of the Council.	In 2004, the Saudi government began allowing men who are 21 and older to vote for some of their local officials. Women cannot vote
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b>	In 1979, the Islamic Revolution overthrew the monarchy and set up a religious dictatorship.	Unitary	Theocratic Republic	1. Supreme Leader (unlimited power; always an ayatollah)  2. President	The Assembly of Experts chooses the Supreme Leader, and he holds the position for life.  President is elected by the people.	Consultative Assembly	The Iranian people elect the Assembly of the Experts, parliament and the president by popular vote. Citizens eighteen and older can vote for the 290 members of the Assembly

# Southwest Asia's Governments: Anticipation Guide

**Directions:** You will make predictions about the answers to the following questions BEFORE learning about this unit. Write the letter of the vocabulary term that matches the definitions below.

A. Unitary	B. Parliamentary Democracy	C. Democracy	D. Federal	E. Saudi Arabia
F. Confederation	G. Autocracy	H. Israel	I. Iran	J. Theocracy

- \_\_\_\_\_ A form of government in which the citizens elect leaders and rule by majority.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Independent states agree to certain limitations on their freedom to join together for a common purpose. Power is in the hands of the states.
- \_\_\_\_\_ This country has a republic government based on Islamic law.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A form of government in which the central authority has all of the power and does not share it among local governing bodies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A form of government in which a deity (god) is recognized as the supreme civil ruler.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The power is distributed so that both the states and the central government share power.
- \_\_\_\_\_ This country has a parliamentary democracy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A form of government in which a ruler has absolute power; the citizens do not possess the right to choose their own leaders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ In this country, the supreme power is in the hands of a monarch who rules for life
- \_\_\_\_\_ The people elect members of parliament, members of parliament elect the head of state.

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# Anticipation Guide Answers

1. C
2. F
3. I
4. A
5. J
6. D
7. H
8. G
9. E
10. B

# Southwest Asian Governments

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# Let's Review

## Government Systems – Who has the power?

- **Unitary**--power is held by one central authority
- **Confederation**--association of independent states that agree to certain limitations on their freedoms by joining together
- **Federal**--power is divided between central authority & several regional authorities



# Let's Review

## Government Types – how do citizens participate?

- **Autocracy**-- 1 person possesses unlimited power & citizens have limited role in government
- **Oligarchy**-- small group exercises control & citizens have limited role in government
- **Democracy**--supreme power is vested in the people & exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation involving free elections
- **Theocracy**--form of government in which a god is recognized as the supreme civil ruler. Religious institutional representatives often replace or mix into the civilian government.

# Let's Review

## Two Types of Democratic Governments:

- **Parliamentary**— citizens elect members of Parliament, and then the members select the leader
  - Leader works with or through the legislature
- **Presidential**--system of government in which the leader is constitutionally independent of the legislature; citizens directly elect leader
  - Leader works separate from legislature



# State of Israel

Federal Parliamentary Democracy

The Knesset Building, in Tel Aviv, is home to Israel's government.



# Background Info.

- In 1948, the United Nations voted to divide the former British colony of Palestine into two parts.
  - One part became the nation of Israel, a homeland for the Jewish people.
  - The other part was for the Palestinian Arabs.
- The governments of the countries in Southwest Asia often reflect Islamic beliefs, and Arabic people are often Islamic by faith.
  - The emergence of Israel as a Jewish nation became and still is a major political issue in the Middle East.

# Unitary System

- Israel has a unitary system, which means that the national (central) government has all of the power.
  - The districts (states) are under central government control.
- Israel has 6 districts -- Central, Haifa, Jerusalem, Northern, Southern, & Tel Aviv

# Leadership

1. **Prime Minister:** holds the most political power; works closely with the legislature (the Knesset)

2. **Chief of State:** President; has little political power, mostly a ceremonial role

# His Excellency Benjamin Netanyahu



Prime Minister



# His Honour Shimon Peres



President

# How Leaders Are Chosen

- **President:** largely a ceremonial role and is elected by the Knesset for a seven-year term (one-term limit).
- **Prime Minister:** serves a 5-year term; the President nominates a member of the Knesset and the other members vote on him/her. (Generally, the prime minister is usually the leader of the largest political party in the Knesset.)

# Legislature

- Israel's parliament is called the Knesset.
  - It is a unicameral governing body.
- The Knesset passes all laws, elects the president & prime minister, and supervises the work of the government through its committees.
- Israel does not have a formal constitution in place, but members of the Knesset have been working on one since 2003.

# Knesset Chamber



# Parliamentary Democracy

- Generally, whichever political party has the most members in the legislature selects the Prime Minister.
- **This is the major difference between a Presidential Democracy and a Parliamentary Democracy!**
  - Parliamentary Democracy – legislature chooses the executive leader
- In Israel, citizens vote for members of Knesset (parliament), then the elected members choose the Prime Minister.

# Role of the Citizen

- Citizens must be 18 to vote, but voting is not required by law.
- As a democracy, its citizens must participate in voting and elections:
  - They elect members of Knesset.
- Elections are held in Israel every four years.

# Voting in Israel



# Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Unitary System – Absolute Monarchy



# Background Info.

- Saudi Arabia is the largest country on the Arabian Peninsula and it has the most influence in the region.
- It is one of the few absolute monarchies left in the world today.
  - Members of the al-Saud family have ruled Saudi Arabia since 1932.
- Most government officials are relatives of the king.
  - The king may ask members of his family, Islamic scholars, and tribal leaders for advice on decisions.

# Unitary System

- Saudi Arabia has a unitary system, which means that the national (central) government has all of the power.
  - The provinces are under central government control.
- There are thirteen provinces in Saudi Arabia: Al Bahah, Al Hudud ash Shamaliyah (Northern Border), Al Jawf, Al Madinah (Medina), Al Qasim, Ar Riyad (Riyadh), Ash Sharqiyah 'Asir, Ha'il, Jizan, Makkah (Mecca), Najran, & Tabuk.

# Oligarchy

- Saudi Arabia is one of the few absolute monarchies left in the world today.
- The king and his advisors, many of whom are his family members or influential business and religious leaders in the country, make all the laws.
  - Conservative religious leaders also have a great deal of influence in decisions made by the monarchy.
- There is no written constitution; however, the Qur'an acts as the constitution.
  - Saudi Arabia is governed on the basis of Islamic law (Shari'a).

# Leadership

- Saudi Arabia is ruled by a hereditary monarchy, which means the government is led by a king who comes from a family that has ruled the country for several generations.
  - The King of Saudi Arabia has been a member of the al-Saud family since the 1930s.
- The people of Saudi Arabia do not choose the king.
  - When a king dies, the Saudi family announces who the next king will be from among their male family members.

# Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud



King of Saudi Arabia

# Heir Apparent Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Salud



Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia

# Legislature

- Saudi Arabia's legislature is called the Consultative Council.
- It can propose legislation to the king, but has no legal powers itself.
  - There are 150 members and a chairman that is chosen by the king to serve 4-year terms.
- The king chooses two-thirds of the members of the Council, while men in the country vote for the remaining one-third of the members.
  - The Council mostly consists of members of the royal family.

# Consultative Assembly of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh





# Role of the Citizen

- In 2004, the Saudi government began allowing men who are 21 and older to vote for half of their local officials.
  - Men also vote for one-third of the members of the legislature.
  - There are no political parties in Saudi Arabia.
- What about the women??



# Islamic Republic of Iran

Theocratic Republic

# Background Info.

- In 1979, the Islamic (or Iranian) Revolution, overthrew the monarchy that had ruled Iran for centuries.
  - The Shah (king), who had been the monarch, had made Iran into a modern, less religious society.
- Ayatollah Khomeini, who became Iran's new leader, set up a religious dictatorship based on Islamic principles.

# Unitary System

- Iran has a unitary system, which means that the national (central) government has all of the power.
  - The provinces are under central government control.
- There are thirty-one provinces in Saudi Arabia.

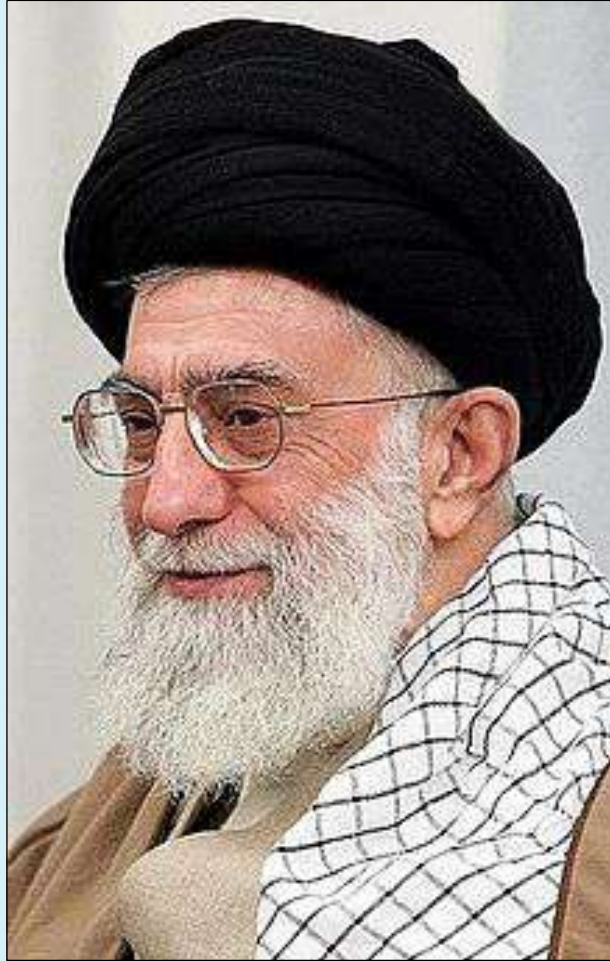
# Theocratic Republic

- Iran has a unique political system that combines elements of a parliamentary democracy with a theocracy.
- The people vote for members of a group called the General Assembly, who then elects the head of state of Iran, the Supreme Leader.
- The Supreme Leader is always an ayatollah, or recognized religious authority, who follows the Islamic principles of Shari' a law.

# Leadership

1. **Supreme Leader (Ayatollah):** head of state and highest ranking political and religious authority in Iran; appointed for life
2. **President:** the highest authority *after* the Supreme Leader (his/her power is limited by the Supreme Leader)

# His Eminence Ayatollah Ali Khamenei



Supreme Leader

# Hassan Rouhani



President



# How Leaders Are Chosen

- **Supreme Leader:** elected by the Assembly of Experts (88 elected people who are also charged with supervising the leader's activities)
- **President:** elected by the Iranian people and serves a 4-year term

# Legislature

- Iran's legislature is unicameral and is called the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran (Parliament).
- There are 290 members and they are elected by the people for 4-year terms.
- Parliament drafts legislation, ratifies treaties, and approves the national budget.

# Islamic Consultative Assembly in Tehran, Iran



# Islamic Consultative Assembly in Tehran, Iran



# Role of the Citizen

- Citizens must be 18 to vote, but voting is not required by law.
- As a democracy, its citizens must participate in voting and elections:
  - They elect the 290 members of the Consultative Assembly.
- Elections for the president are held every four years.
- Election for the Assembly of Experts are held every six years.

# Voting in Iran

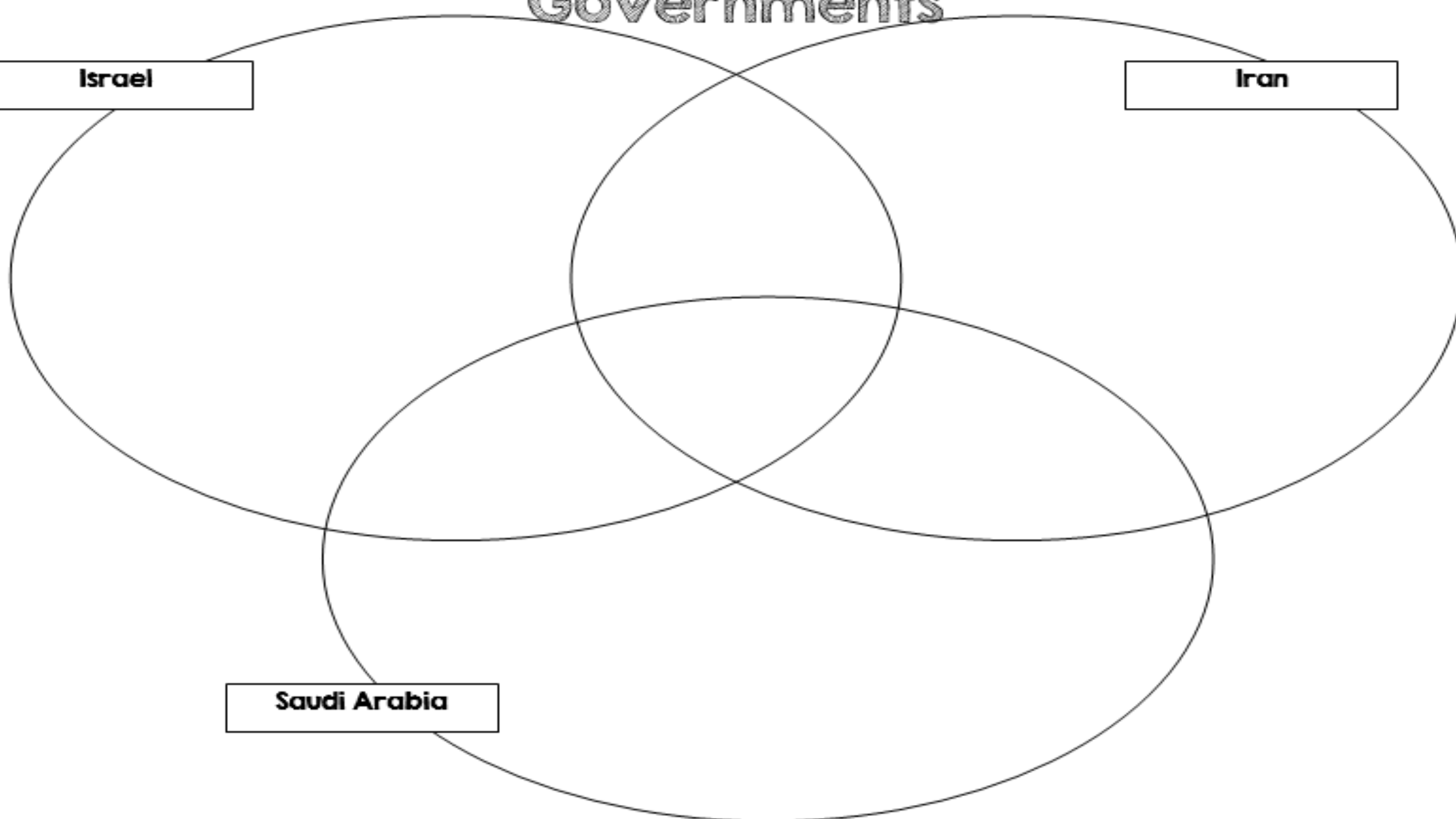


# Compare and Contrast Southwest Asian Governments

**Israel**

**Iran**

**Saudi Arabia**



# Southwest Asian Governments: Comprehension Check

## State of Israel

1. What is the main religion in Israel? How is that different from the rest of Southwest Asia?
2. What type of citizen participation (autocracy, oligarchy, or democracy) does Israel have?
3. How is power distributed in Israel's government (unitary, confederation, federal)?
4. Who is the head of government (most power)? How is he chosen?
5. Who can vote in Israel?

## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

6. What type of citizen participation (autocracy, oligarchy, or democracy) does Saudi Arabia have?
7. How is power distributed in Saudi Arabia's government (unitary, confederation, federal)?
8. How long has the al-Saud family ruled Saudi Arabia?
9. Who is the head of government?
10. What type of law does Saudi Arabia follow?
11. What is Saudi Arabia's legislature called? How are members elected?
12. Who can vote in Saudi Arabia? Who do they vote for?
13. Who cannot vote in Saudi Arabia?

## Islamic Republic of Iran

14. What happened in 1979?
15. What type of citizen participation (autocracy, oligarchy, or democracy) does Iran have?
16. How is power distributed in Iran's government (unitary, confederation, federal)?
17. What is Shar'i'a law based on?
18. Who is the head of government in Iran? How is he chosen?
19. Who can vote in Iran?



# Southwest Asian Governments: Comprehension Check - **KEY**

## State of Israel

1. Judaism—rest practices Islam
2. Democracy (Parliamentary)
3. Unitary
4. Prime Minister—chosen by members of Knesset; elected by the people
5. 18 and older

## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

6. oligarchy
7. unitary
8. Since 1932
9. King
10. Islamic Law (Shari'a)
11. Consultative Council, 2/3rds picked by King; 1/3<sup>rd</sup> voted by men
12. Men, 21 and older –1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Consultative Council
13. women

## Islamic Republic of Iran

14. Overthrew shah & became Islamic dictatorship
15. Mix between theocracy and parliamentary democracy (Theocratic Republic)
16. unitary
17. Islam
18. Supreme Leader; chosen by Assembly of Experts
19. 18 and older

# Southwest Asia's Governments: Report Cards

**Your Task:** Everyone loves getting their report card grades, right?? Well, this time you get to be the teacher and assign the grades! Look over your notes for the countries that we are studying.

- Give each country a grade (A, B, C, D, or U) based on its government.
- Write a comment to justify the grade that was given.
- Make a prediction about the standard of living (way of life) in each country based on what you know about the government.

<b>Country</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Prediction</b>
<b>Israel</b>			
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>			
<b>Iran</b>			

## Ticket Out the Door

Today I learned...

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## Ticket Out the Door

I still need clarification on...

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