Chapter 11

Governing Alabama
Lesson 1
What Is Government?

- We have a democratic form of government. A democracy is a government that is run by the people.
- The United States is also a republic. A republic is a government in which the citizens elect representatives.
- We elect leaders to three levels of government: national, state, and local.
National Government

- Meets in Washington, D.C.
- It includes the President, Supreme Court, and Congress.
- Alabamians elect 9 members of Congress.
- Other people are appointed, or chosen, to serve in the national government.
- President Roosevelt appointed Hugo Black of Clay County to the Supreme Court.
- Condeleeza Rice of Birmingham was appointed by President Bush to be the national security advisor.
National Government

Executive Branch
President Obama

Judicial Branch
Supreme Court

“The Executive Branch: Our Federal Government” video segment
National Government

Legislative Branch
House of Representatives

Legislative Branch
Senate

“Government Organization and Leadership” Video

http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=351A7669-69CC-4926-BE02-321DAE83DBAD&blnFromSearch=1&productcode=US
Alabama’s government has three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

Each branch has different and separate powers.

No one branch can become too powerful or make unfair decisions.
Alabama’s Executive Branch

- The executive branch carries out Alabama’s laws and is headed by the governor.
- Other people in the executive branch include the lieutenant governor, the commissioner of agriculture and industries, the secretary of state, and the treasurer.
- All of these people are elected by Alabamians and serve four year terms.
- Lurleen Wallace, wife of George Wallace, became the first female governor of Alabama.
Alabama’s Executive Branch

Governor Bob Riley
Lt. Governor Jim Folsom Jr.
Secretary of State Beth Chapman
Alabama’s Legislative Branch

- The legislative branch makes state laws, raises money, and decides how the money will be spent.
- The House of Representatives and Senate are the two groups that make up the state legislature.
- Alabama has 35 state senators, and 105 state representatives.
- Each member of the House of Representatives represents about 40,000 people.
- The legislators have 4 year terms. There are no limits to the number of terms.
Alabama’s Judicial Branch

- The judicial branch is Alabama’s court system.
- Alabama elects justices and judges.
- You have to be 18 and licensed to practice law in Alabama to be a judge.
- Alabama has three levels of courts. Circuit courts decide if people have broken the law. The Court of Appeals listens to cases in which one side thinks an error has been made.
- The Alabama Supreme Court decides whether laws agree with the state constitution.
Alabama’s Judicial System
There are many judges in Alabama in all of the courts.
There are 9 Supreme Court Judges.

Chief Justice Sue Bell Cobb

“The Supreme Court” video segment
http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=1FD0D6DB-B10E-4003-A5E7-7F1954DC6A45&blnFromSearch=1&productcode=US
Famous Judges

- District Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr. ruled that many laws in Alabama were unfair to African Americans.
- Oscar W. Adams was the first African American to serve on the state Supreme Court.
- Hugo Black supported the Bill of Rights in his rulings.
Lesson 2
County Government

- Local government is the government of a city, town, or country.
- Each county in Alabama has its own government.
- A commission, or group of people appointed or elected, runs each county’s government. These people are called commissioners.
- Other elected members of county government include the sheriff, the tax collector, and board of education members.
City Government

- Alabama’s towns and cities have their own governments.
- In most towns, a mayor is elected to lead the city.
- In a few cities, such as Auburn and Dothan, a city manager is appointed to lead the city government.
- The mayor works with the city council. The city council members helps make decisions about the city.

Sonny Penhale
Mayor of Helena
State and Local Services

- Taxes help to pay for many services. People pay state and federal taxes. There is even a tax on things that you buy. The money helps to pay for schools, universities, police, prisons, roads, and parks.

- City governments help the state government carry out its job at the local level. City governments provide the police department, fire department, parks, libraries, and transportation such as buses.

“Taxes: How They Help the Government” video segment
What Taxes Help Pay For
Rights and Responsibilities

- Our Constitution gives us the rights of freedom of speech, the press, and religion.
- Citizens have many responsibilities, or duties, to keep these rights. Voting, obeying the laws, and serving on juries are important responsibilities.

“America at Its Best: What It Means to Be an American Citizen” video

Lesson 3
Managing Our Resources

- It is the government’s job to help keep our air clean.
- Since the Clean Air Act was passed in 1070, Alabamians have worked together to keep our air clean.
- Birmingham once had problems with air pollution. Pollution is something that dirties the air, soil, or water.
- Alabama’s state parks are protected by the government.

“Pollution” video segment
http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=D66D38DF-5B75-4402-9BBC-06DF4BEC2F64&blnFromSearch=1&productcode=US
Growth in Alabama

- Alabama’s population, or the total number of people living in a place, is increasing. Many people are moving from rural areas to urban areas.

- There are not as many people working in forestry, farming, and fishing. Manufacturing jobs and technology jobs are seeing more people.

- Our natural resources such as land, air, and water are affected as cities grow. Many cities have pollution because of factories. Some farms have poor soil because of bad farming practices. With more people living here, Alabama has more garbage. This causes concerns with water pollution.
Transportation Changes

- Alabama’s government has prepared for the population growth.
- Many airports have been built.
- There is nearly 100,000 miles of highways in Alabama.
- Alabama’s Port of Mobile imports and exports many products. Many people are hired to work at the port.
- Many Alabamians have jobs building and maintaining our transportation system.
Communication Changes

- The internet allows us to communicate faster than ever before. We can receive information on our computers about world events as they happen.

- Cell phones and satellites have improved communication. Satellites receive signals from cell towers, and satellite dishes receive signals from satellites.

“The Internet” video segment

“Cell Phone” video segment
http://player.discoveryeducation.com/index.cfm?guidAssetId=01B96C87-B441-419C-8CF8-E81D22C75AD3&blnFromSearch=1&productcode=US