INTRODUCTION

What is Government?

Every country has a government. The government makes and carries out a country's laws. Government is so important that it is one of the first things people develop when they form communities.

In the 1600s, an English philosopher named Thomas Hobbes explained that people need government. He said life without government would be "poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Without government, people would have no rules to follow.

It might seem like fun to have no rules. In a place with no rules, you could do whatever you wanted to do whenever you wanted to do it. Imagine what would happen, though, if people could do whatever they wanted. For example, if there was no law about littering, people could throw their garbage anywhere. Soon, your town would have garbage everywhere, and it would not be a very nice place to live.

When large groups of people live together, they need to follow some rules. This is where government comes in. By making rules that people must follow, a government helps to make its citizens' lives safer. For example, police officers and firefighters protect the people in their communities. The military protects the country from attacks by other countries.

A government provides many services for its citizens. For example, the government builds roads. It inspects food and medicine to make sure they are safe. The government also delivers mail, builds schools, and does many other helpful things.

By reading this student text, you will learn about different kinds of governments. You will find out how governments developed over time. You will discover many interesting things about the government of the United States and how it works.