



GRADE 1 LOUISIANA SOCIAL STUDIES

Flags of Louisiana
and the USA

How Our State Government Works



Voting for representatives



Louisiana Senate chamber



Supreme Court of Louisiana



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How Our State Government Works



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How Our State Government Works

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The Three Branches of Government



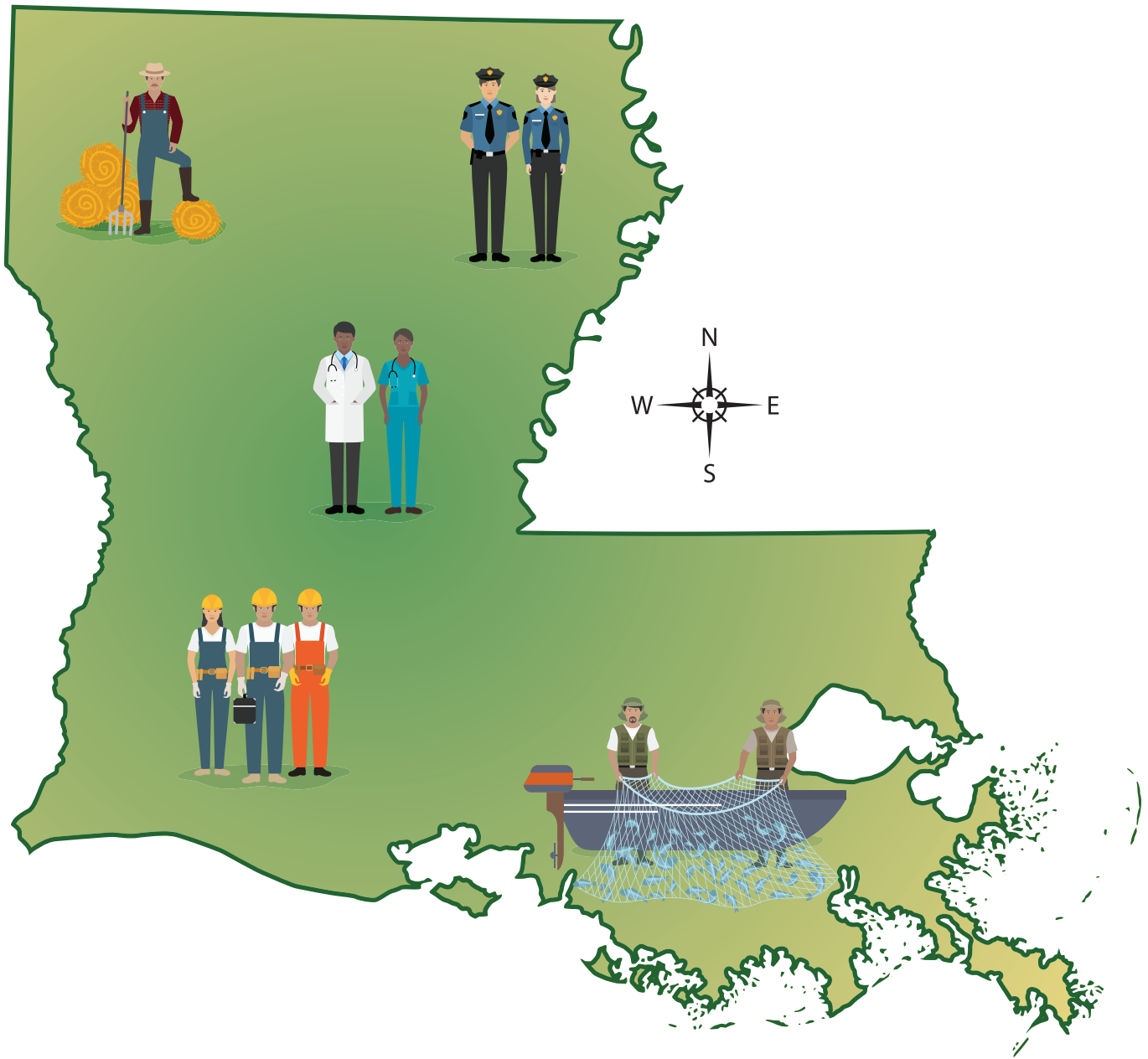
Our country is run by a national government. A government is a group of people who make rules and decisions to help people live together peacefully. The state of Louisiana has its own government, too. This state government works to help people living all over Louisiana.

The Louisiana State Capitol in Baton Rouge is where many decisions are made. You can take a tour of the building to learn more about the government.



This building is the tallest state capitol building in the United States. It has thirty-four floors and is 450 feet (137 m) high!

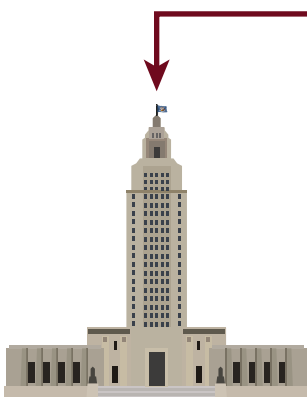
The Louisiana state government is made up of many people. Some work in the state capitol, but many others work in locations all over the state. They need to work together to look after people's health, education, public safety, and more.



Just like the government of the United States, Louisiana's government has three parts, or branches. These branches are called legislative, executive, and judicial. Each branch has its own special role to play in the state government. These roles are outlined in the Louisiana Constitution. The branches work together like a team, making sure everything is fair and works well in Louisiana. Government is a big and important job, and it takes many people working together to keep Louisiana a wonderful place to live.



Louisiana government



Legislative branch



Executive branch



Judicial branch

The legislative branch is the part of the government that makes laws. It is made up of two groups of lawmakers: the Senate and the House of Representatives. In the legislative branch, lawmakers act as leaders. They work to make laws that give people across the state the help they need. Both groups meet in the capitol building.



The Senate and House of Representatives are made up of people from different parts of the Louisiana. The Senate is the smaller group, and the House of Representatives is the larger group.

The lawmakers in the Senate and the House of Representatives are chosen by people living in Louisiana. People vote for the candidate they want to work in the legislative branch. They choose people they think will make laws that will help their community and state.



The executive branch makes sure rules and laws are followed. When people in the legislative branch agree on a new law, it is sent to the executive branch. The governor is in charge of this branch. They sign a new law to make it official.



The governor has many other jobs, too. There are many people who work in the executive branch with the governor to make choices to help people in Louisiana.

The judicial branch is the third branch of Louisiana's state government. This branch works to make sure that the state's laws are fair.



The Supreme Court of Louisiana is in New Orleans. The Supreme Court is the highest court and final judge in the state. This means it has the final say in deciding what laws mean and whether they follow the state's constitution. There are many other courthouses in parishes around the state.



The work of the three branches of our state government is very important. The rules and laws they make help protect us. Some of these laws are like those in many other states. For example, all states have laws about driving safely.





But our state government has also created laws that are special to Louisiana. For example, there are laws protecting wetlands and the plants and animals that live there.

Louisiana also has laws that help the state run smoothly. For example, there are laws in Louisiana about when people can vote. There are also laws that tell people how to start a new business. Other laws prevent people from doing certain things, like stealing from others.



Then




U.S. Government in 1781

Congress



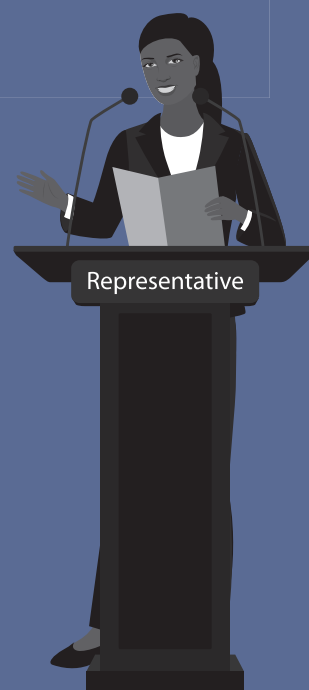
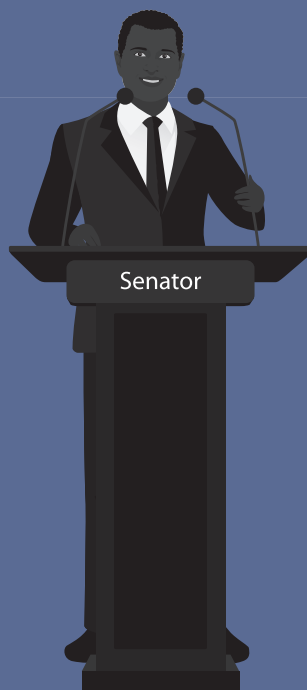
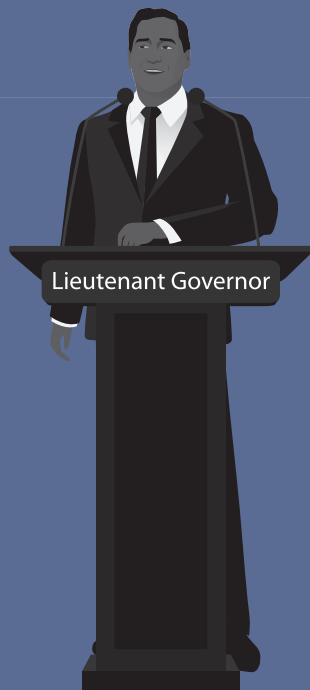
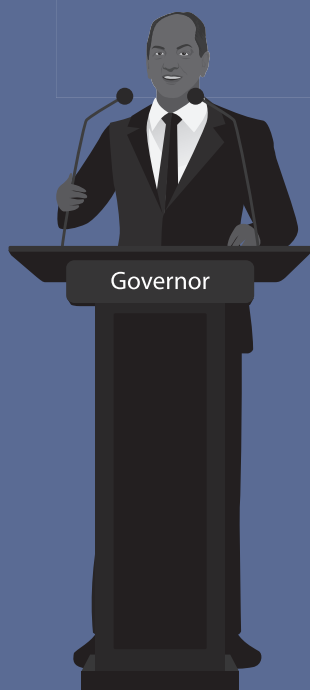
Now

U.S. Government since 1788

Executive Branch	Legislative Branch (Congress)		Judicial Branch
 The White House	Senate	House of Representatives	 The Supreme Court
	 United States Capitol Building		

Leaders in Louisiana's Government

Leaders are important in our community. Let's learn about the different leaders in Louisiana's government!



When a person wants to be a leader in Louisiana's government, they often run for office. That means they ask people to vote for them for a job in government.



Voters choose leaders they believe will help make our community better. Voters also choose leaders who understand their needs. Voting is the way people participate in their government and help shape the future of their community and state.

The governor is the state's main leader. One of their primary jobs is to make sure that all the laws of the state are being followed. This means that the governor has to work closely with lots of different people—like police officers, teachers, and many other leaders in the government—to keep things running smoothly.



As you learned in Chapter 1, the governor signs laws to make them official. But the governor has many other jobs, too. For example, when a hurricane or other big natural event is coming, the governor takes actions or makes decisions about what to do to make sure people are safe and prepared.



The governor often suggests ideas for new laws and rules that they think will help the people of Louisiana. As the leader of the executive branch, the governor also guides all the people who work in that branch.

The lieutenant governor is another leader in the executive branch. This person acts as the governor's main helper. If the governor cannot do their job for any reason, the lieutenant governor steps in. It is important for the lieutenant governor to know about all the things the governor does so they can be ready if needed.



The lieutenant governor also has some special jobs of their own. For example, they are responsible for getting people to visit Louisiana. They also look after state parks.

There are many other leaders in state government whose work has an effect on people's lives. For example, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry works hard to make sure that forests, soil, and water are protected and that food is safe to eat.





Other leaders are in charge of the many state museums in Louisiana. You may have visited some of these museums, like the Capitol Park Museum in Baton Rouge. Making sure that museums preserve Louisiana culture and history is an important government role.



Other state leaders work all across Louisiana to make sure that the roads we ride on are safe and the water we drink and play in is clean. They also help people find jobs and medical services they might need.



Judges are leaders in the judicial branch. They often work in courts. They help solve problems related to laws.



Judges use their knowledge of the law to help make decisions, from settling small disagreements between neighbors to big problems. They listen carefully to all sides before making a decision. Just like your teachers, they try hard to make sure everyone is treated fairly.



The Louisiana Senate Chamber has beautifully decorated walls and columns with features that came from Germany and France. The floor is made of an Italian tile. Inside the chamber there are thirty-nine desks, one for each Senate district. On the ceiling are sixty-four hexagonal tiles, one for each parish. Inside this beautiful chamber, important decisions are made.





The people who lead Louisiana's state government are responsible for many important changes and improvements in our lives. Their work helps people all across the state. Other leaders, like those in our town or city, parish, and country, help the people in those regions. These leaders give their time and effort to make our communities safe and healthy.

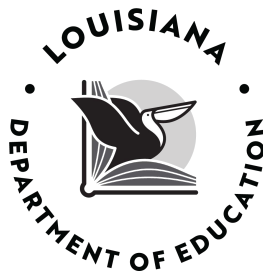


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