

SECTION II

THE ORIGINS OF NATIONALISM: THE STATE, THE NATION AND THE NATION-STATE

Nationalism and nationalistic movements are rooted in the concept of the "nation-state," an entity that exists as often in imagination as it does in reality. In order to understand nationalism, it is important to distinguish between the "nation" and the "state," and to understand how these two constructs became linked. Complicating the matter is the fact that there are various shades of meaning given to the term "nation." At times, these differences in meanings have important implications for how the people of a country conceive of themselves and their state.

In this section, students begin to explore the relationship between nations and states through study of changes in the concepts of sovereignty and political legitimacy that occurred during and after the Enlightenment. The idea that sovereignty resides in and legitimacy derives from "the people" provided the basis for eventually arguing that every nation has a right to its own state.

In **What is a "State?" - Understanding the Concept of Sovereignty**, students learn to distinguish states from sub-state forms of political organization by examining the relative sovereignty of the U.S. federal government to that of the various "states" that make up the republic.

In **From God-Kings to Democracy - Evolving Ideas of Governmental Legitimacy**, students read about changing belief systems regarding the origins of political legitimacy, and consider the bases upon which different kinds of governments claim legitimacy today. By analyzing their expression in the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, students apply their understanding of the modern concepts of sovereignty and legitimacy as developed during the Enlightenment.

In **What is a "Nation?" - Sorting Out Meanings**, students consider the question, *who are "the people?"* and analyze primary source materials that illustrate two different ways of thinking about a "nation," one based on cultural traditions, the other on political liberties.

ACTIVITY #4**What Is A "State?"****Understanding the Concept of Sovereignty**

Nationalism as it exists in the world today is intimately linked to that political entity called "the state." We often use the term "nation-state" as though "nation" and "state" are one and the same thing. Yet many of the nationalistic conflicts occurring in the world today result precisely because the state and the nation are not congruent. Understanding the concept of sovereignty as intrinsic to the definition of a state will assist students in distinguishing the concepts of "the state" and "the nation."

Objectives:

1. Students will understand the concept of political sovereignty as integral to the definition of the state.
2. Students will distinguish between "states" and other forms of political organization.

When to Use: In conjunction with or following a review of the Enlightenment and its effects on democratic revolutions in England, United States, France and Latin America.

Time Required: 20 minutes

Materials: Student Handout 4-#1 ("The State"); butcher paper

Procedure: Special note to teachers: While at first glance these concepts seem difficult for students, field-test teachers found that their students were able to grasp the concepts easily.

1. In general discussion, ask students what a "state" is. Write their answers on the board and lead them to a definition that is consistent with that on Student Handout 4-#1.

Then help them distinguish between "state" and other political entities by asking which of the following is a state: Paris, Spain, Europe, Morocco, Ensenada, Baghdad, Israel, Africa, U.S.A. To help the class understand the answers for these, you may wish to add the definition of "sovereignty," also given on Student Handout 4-#1.

2. Distribute Student Handout 4-#1. Ask students to work in pairs to read and answer the questions. Then debrief answers with the class, including the question in the middle of the reading that is italicized.

Optional procedure: Distribute Student Handout 4-#1. Read it aloud with the class, pausing for students to answer the italicized question. Proceed with the reading, and have students work in pairs to answer the three questions. Debrief with the whole class.

Possible answers to questions:

italicized question: "as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES they have full Power"

1. make treaties with foreign countries, coin money, declare war, raise a national army, regulate interstate trade, etc.
2. make state laws, set standards for the schools, levy taxes within the state, determine punishments when state laws are broken, etc.; anything not specifically forbidden by the federal Constitution.
3. historic origins; tradition.

3. Review the concept of **sovereignty** by asking for recent examples in international affairs of threatened sovereignty. You might remind students of Iraq's claim to Kuwait, August 2, 1990; Saddam Hussein's resistance to U.N. demands by claiming infringement of Iraq's sovereignty. Another recent example was the break up of the USSR, when the central Soviet government lost its sovereignty, and the various republics gained their independence, becoming sovereign states. Thus, for example, Ukraine now has the right to have its own army and navy, coin its own money, etc., and independently make all other decisions affecting its government without control from Russia.

4. End the activity by asking each student to explain the difference between a "state" and other forms of political organization in a Learning Log quick-write. You may give a specific question, "Explain why Spain is considered a state but Barcelona is not." Ask a few volunteers to read their responses aloud, or read aloud two or three correct responses that you observed as they were being written.

THE STATE

state: an area that has a sovereign government. There is no higher power that can make rules for that place. A state has the final power to make rules for people living in the region it controls. In other words, a state is a legal unit controlling a certain territory within which ultimate political power and authority reside in (belong to) a sovereign central government.

sovereign/sovereignty: highest power; final power; having supreme power and authority.

The **state** is a very old form of political organization. The ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, Mexico, and South America were all organized into "states." So were the ancient kingdoms of Ghana and Mali. In fact, wherever an independent kingdom existed, we can say that a "state" also existed.

Is there a difference between this meaning of the word "state" and the meaning of the 50 United "States" of America? Yes! It is important not to confuse the meaning of the word "state" as a centralized, independent and **sovereign** form of political organization with the way we use the word to refer to California, New York, Alabama, etc. California is not a "state" as political scientists use the term. If not, then why is this word used? The answer lies in our country's history:

For a brief period of time following the Declaration of Independence, each of the original thirteen colonies was an independent, **sovereign** state. Thus, the Declaration of Independence says,

"...as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they (the 13 colonies) have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do."

Which phrases in that quotation show that no other government had authority to make rules over the original 13 "states?"

When the thirteen colonies decided to join together under the laws of a common Constitution as the "United States of America," they gave up their **sovereignty**. The U.S. Constitution gives individual states within the country the authority (a legal right) to act in certain areas of government, but these so-called "states" are not **sovereign**. The federal government keeps the final authority and power to make sure that laws passed by the states are in keeping with the Constitution. Our federal government, on the other hand, is a **sovereign** state. No other political body has control over it.

Think about it:

1. What are some things that the Federal government can do that individual states cannot do?
2. What are some of the things that governments of individual states such as California *can* do?
3. Why do you think that the 50 "states" such as California, Nevada, etc. keep calling themselves "states" if they are not **sovereign**?

ACTIVITY #5

From God-Kings to Democracy - Evolving Ideas of Governmental Legitimacy

The modern concept of the nation-state could not have emerged without the prior acceptance of two fundamental, closely related ideas: first, the idea that ultimate sovereignty resides in the people; and second, that governmental legitimacy emanates from the consent of the governed. In Part I of this activity, students explore changes in conceptions of governmental legitimacy over time, and consider the bases upon which different kinds of governments claim legitimacy today. In Part II, students apply their understanding of modern conceptions of sovereignty and legitimacy by analyzing their expression in excerpts from the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand the concept of political legitimacy.
2. Students will be familiar with how belief systems regarding the bases of governmental legitimacy have changed over time.
3. Students will understand that modern concepts of political legitimacy and state sovereignty are related to Enlightenment ideas concerning the relationship between government and the governed.
4. Students will identify the expression of these modern concepts in the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

When to Use: In conjunction with or following a review of the Enlightenment and its effects on democratic revolutions in England, United States, France and Latin America.

Time Required: 45 minutes for Part I; 25 minutes for Part II. The activity is sequenced in two distinct parts.

PART I

Materials: Student Handout 5-#1 ("Changing Ideas..."), butcher paper or blank overhead projector transparency.

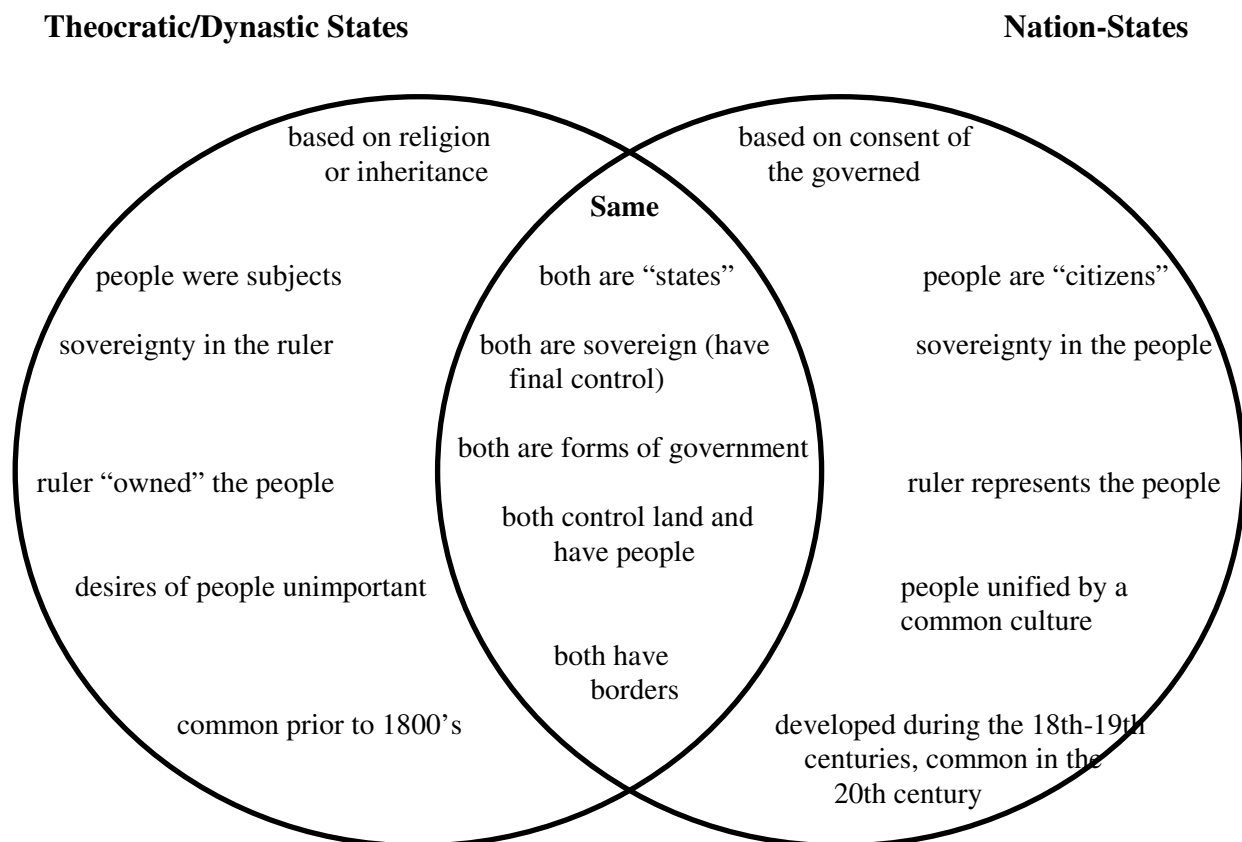
Procedure:

1. Explain to students that they will read about how different kinds of governments have developed over time. Distribute Student Handout 5-#1.

Instruct students to read the handout and then, in pairs, prepare a Venn Diagram comparing similarities and differences between Theocratic/Dynastic States and the Modern Nation-State. You may need to demonstrate a Venn Diagram. Compare two familiar things, for example, Football vs. Baseball using a Venn Diagram drawing on the board.

Alternative for Step 1: Divide the class evenly down the middle. Assign Student Handout 5-#1 as homework. Half of the class is to prepare a list of the similarities between Theocratic/Dynastic States and Modern Nation-States. The other half is to prepare a list of the differences between the two. They should come to class the next day with their lists prepared. On the next day, pair students with opposite lists, and have them work together to prepare the Venn Diagram.

2. Debrief the reading and student work by drawing a Venn Diagram on the board, butcher paper or overhead sheet, and writing in the responses that pairs of students give you. Emphasize the change in legitimacy, sovereignty and role of "the people" over time.



3. Make sure that students understand that **legitimacy** means that a government is accepted as proper and right. Today, most people around the world believe that only governments supported by their citizens are legitimate.

Ask students what are some different forms of governments that states have around the world. List country names with type of government on butcher paper or the board. Then, for two or three contrasting types, ask who holds power, how the leader got power, and what role general citizens have. This should be kept brief and simple. Examples:

dictatorships -- government controlled by one individual or a small group who stay in power by use of force; people may "vote" in "elections" but there is no choice of candidates; people must follow orders.

monarchy (king or queen) -- leader by inheritance; some countries limit the leader's power so citizens have a strong voice, others don't.

democracy -- the leader(s) is elected from a choice of candidates; people have a strong voice in government.

Point to several of the countries listed that are dictatorships, and ask students, "What kinds of claims might the leaders of these countries make if asked how they represent the will of the people?"

Ask students what problems were caused in the USSR by the lack of government legitimacy as we understand it today (i.e., representing the will of the people)? (When people began to gain a voice, the communist government fell.)

Ask students how they can tell that it is true that the United States fits the modern idea of legitimate government. They should list such Constitutional rights as free speech, free press, and open elections with a choice of candidates.

4. End this part of the activity by asking students for a Learning Log quick-write describing how the concept of legitimacy has changed over time.

PART II

Materials: Student Handout 5-#2 ("Power to the People"), instructions prepared on board but hidden, 6-8 feet of butcher paper/newsprint.

Procedure:

1. Write the following on the board, butcher paper, or overhead, but keep it hidden so the students will not be distracted as you prepare them for the assignment.

| Declaration Independence | Declaration Rights of Man | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | List the phrase or phrases that express the idea that sovereignty (final power and authority) resides in the people. |
| 3 | 4 | List the phrase or phrases that express the idea that a government's legitimacy is based on a contract with the people. |
| 5 | 6 | List the phrase or phrases that reject the idea that different people should have different political rights. |

2. Have students number off from 1 - 6, each person remembering his number by writing it on scratch paper. Ask them if they know when the modern idea that government should be based on a written contract between the people and the state was first attempted. Tell them that the U. S. Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man were the first state (or government) documents that expressed these ideas. Explain to them that they will analyze parts of the two documents to see how legitimacy, sovereignty and the rights of people are treated in each.

3. Show students the instructions posted on the board, explaining that each person is to find his number telling which document to study and then follow the directions to the right of his number. Tell students they will have 5 minutes to prepare their answers.

4. Distribute "Power to the People," Student Handout 5-#1. While students are working, post the butcher paper chart illustrated on the next page (without the answers).

5. After 5 minutes, have all students with like numbers assemble in groups to compare their answers and to agree upon ONE list of the best responses. (Example, all the "1's" meet by the door, all "2's" meet by the pencil sharpener, etc.) As each group finishes their compilation, an appointed recorder should write the group's list on butcher paper chart in front of the room. Again, allow 5 minutes to complete the task.

Note that the concepts of "legitimacy based on the will of the people," and "ultimate sovereignty residing in the people" may often seem to be expressed in similar or the same phrases. Your students may come up with slightly different or additional phrases for each column. Ask them to justify their choices; if they clearly understand the underlying concepts and can justify their choices, accept their answers as valid.

Conclusions: Conduct general discussion reviewing the changes that have occurred over time in forms of government, sovereignty, legitimacy, and the role of the people as subjects and citizens.

Have each student write a Learning Log entry to document their own understanding of these changes.

| | <u>Declaration Independence</u> | <u>Declaration Rights of Man</u> |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Sovereignty | <p><i>unalienable rights</i></p> <p><i>deriving their just powers from consent of the governed</i></p> | <p><i>natural, inalienable, and sacred rights</i></p> <p><i>men are born and remain free and equal</i></p> <p><i>source of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation; no group... may exercise authority not emanating expressly therefrom</i></p> |
| Legitimacy | <p><i>governments are instituted among men</i></p> <p><i>deriving their just powers from consent of the governed</i></p> | <p><i>representatives of the French people</i></p> <p><i>aim of every political association is the preservation of...rights</i></p> |
| Equal Rights | <p><i>all men are created equal</i></p> | <p><i>men are born and remain free and equal</i></p> <p><i>social distinctions may be based only upon general usefulness</i></p> |

CHANGING IDEAS OF GOVERNMENTAL LEGITIMACY

legitimate/legitimacy: legal; according to law; being lawful, conforming to (going along with) commonly recognized rules, principles, standards; proper and accepted as right.

sovereign/sovereignty: highest power; final power; having supreme power and authority.

theocracy/theocratic: government based on religious law.

Many kinds of states have existed over time and they have had lots of different kinds of government. These governments were considered **legitimate** for many different reasons. Governments could be considered proper and accepted as right on the basis of tradition, religious belief, royal inheritance, conquest, or agreements between rulers. In Europe, during the 19th Century, new ideas developed about the relationship between the state, its government and the people being ruled. These ideas were expressed in the concept called the "nation-state."

You will now read about changes that have taken place over time in people's ideas about government sovereignty and legitimacy.

I. God-kings, Theocracies and Royal Dynasties

In most pre-modern states, governments based their claims to **legitimacy** on religious authority, dynastic rule, or a combination of both. Dynastic rule meant that leadership was inherited by family members through many generations. Many civilizations were ruled by religious **theocracies**. Past civilizations such as Ancient Egypt, the Inca of Peru, or Imperial Japan, believed that their ruler (the Pharaoh, the Inca, or the Emperor) was born a god. In Hellenistic Greece (after Alexander the Great, about 200 B.C.) and in Ancient Rome, many emperors and kings were eventually thought of as being gods.

In other ancient civilizations, rulers were not believed to be gods, but a government's legitimacy was still based on religious belief. In Ancient China, Confucianism explained the proper relationship of a ruler to his subjects and the rights and responsibilities of each. In the Islamic Empire of the 12th and 13th centuries, kings ruled in accordance with *Sharia*, or religious law that is outlined in the Koran, the holy book of Islam. In Europe during the 17th century, King Louis XIV of France proclaimed "The Divine Right of Kings," arguing that God made kings **legitimate**, that they ruled by Divine Grace and were answerable to no one but God.

The territorial boundaries of the state which a king ruled were decided by birthright or inheritance, marriage ties or conquest. The wants, needs, or culture of people who lived in the state were not very important. The people were treated as "subjects," meaning that they were subject to satisfying the wants and needs of the ruler. The ruler had **sovereignty** over his "subjects" and "possessions," and his right to treat them as he wished was only rarely questioned. The ruler seemed to own the state. The close identification of a ruler with his state was best expressed by Louis XIV, who once proclaimed, "I *am* the state."

II. Government by consent of the people

Ideas about **sovereignty** and the basis of governmental **legitimacy** began to change in England and Europe during the Enlightenment of the 1700's. The ideas of political philosophers such as John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau helped bring the changes. For example, Locke believed that in order for a government to be legitimate, it should be based on a contract, or agreement, between the people and the ruler. Rousseau did not believe that the king was the state nor did he believe that people should be subject to the king's will. Instead, Rousseau believed that the people were the basis of the nation.

Over time, the idea developed that ultimate **sovereignty** rests in "the people," joined together through sharing a common territory, political ideas, language, history, culture or other factors. Governments should get their **legitimacy** from the consent of the governed. People were thought of as citizens, not as subjects.

The modern concept of the nation-state grew out of two very important ideas:

1. A government's **legitimacy** (legal power) comes from the consent of its citizens, the people being governed.
2. Ultimate **sovereignty** (final power) belongs to the people, not to the ruler.

Today, even the worst dictator tries to pretend that he has the support of his people and the best interests of his country at heart. What are some examples of this kind of dictator?

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Political thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who emphasized the concept of liberty were not concerned so much with *who* "the people" were, but with whether or not they had political freedom.

Below, you will find excerpts from the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man. Each document talks about sovereignty, legitimacy, and the role of "the people" in ways that were amazingly new to the world at the time they were written.

Analyze the document that is assigned to you according to the directions given by your teacher.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...

Declaration of Independence

The unanimous declaration of the thirteen united States of America, in Congress, July 4, 1776

The representatives of the French people, organized in National Assembly, considering that ignorance, forgetfulness, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole causes of public misfortunes and of the corruption of governments, have resolved to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, inalienable, and sacred rights of man...

- 1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights; social distinctions may be based only upon general usefulness.*
- 2. The aim of every political association is the preservation of the natural and inalienable rights of man; these rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.*
- 3. The source of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation; no group, no individual, may exercise authority not emanating expressly therefrom....*

Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen

Passed by the French National Assembly, August 27, 1789

ACTIVITY #6

What Is a "Nation?" - Sorting Out Meanings

Although the terms have become conceptually linked in everyday thinking through the popular usage of the term "nation-state," the two are not really the same. "Nation" as a conceptual entity refers to *a grouping of people* who, at a minimum, share a sense of common identity (usually associated with a particular territory or homeland) and a desire for political sovereignty. The "state," on the other hand, describes a *central, sovereign government* that controls a given territory. The two became linked together with the acceptance of the idea that governments ("states") should represent "the people."

At issue is the problem of conceptualizing or defining *who* the people are which a state can legitimately claim to represent. Through readings and the analysis of original source documents, students are introduced to two different ways of conceptualizing the people that make up a nation, one based on shared cultural traditions and ancestral ties, the other based on adherence to belief in political liberties and representative government.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand that there are two different ways of thinking about a "nation," one based on cultural traditions, the other on political liberties.
2. Students will analyze primary source materials that illustrate the two ways of thinking about a nation.
3. Students will understand that these two ways of defining a nation have implications in terms of inclusivity and exclusivity.
4. Students will apply their understandings through a hands-on activity illustrating the different meanings of "nation" represented in the primary source materials.

When to Use: Following study of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Can also be used in conjunction with the study of colonialism and its aftermath, particularly with reference to problems of nation-building in post-colonial areas of Africa and Asia.

Time Required: 35-45 minutes

Materials: Student Handouts 6-#1 ("Who Are *The People?*") and 6-#2 ("What Makes a Nation?"); optional shoe collection from Section I, Activity 2.

Procedure:

1. Review with the students the idea that the modern concept of the nation-state is based on two ideas:

1. A government's **legitimacy** (legal power) comes from the consent of its citizens, the people being governed.
2. Ultimate **sovereignty** (final power) belongs to the people, not to the ruler.

Ask students if these two ideas make sense to them. (This will provide a double check that they have understood the concepts, and is also an easy "set-up" for getting into this lesson - it is unlikely that any will disagree.)

Ask them, "How do you decide who "the people" are? Who should "the people" be that the government represents?" Allow a few answers and promote some controversy, e.g., If you live here? (What if you immigrated but never become a citizen?) If you were born here? (What if you never vote?) If you're born inside U.S. territory? (What about people who live in Guam?) How do you decide where the boundaries of the state should be, if it is supposed to represent "the people?"

Do not let the discussion go on very long here. Tell students the question of *who* "the people" are that give a government its legitimacy is not as easy to answer as it might seem. Different people have some very different ideas about this question. They will be reading about these different ideas.

2. Distribute Student Handout 6-#1 ("Who Are *The People*?") to each student. Have students read the handout, then answer the three questions working in pairs. Debrief answers through general discussion.

3. Distribute Student Handout 6-#2 ("What Makes a Nation?"). Students may work in pairs to read and answer the questions. Debrief answers with the entire class.

4. Check for understanding by asking the following questions:

- Which of the two ideas of a nation is more inclusive, that is, is capable of including more people? (based on liberty) Which is exclusive, or shuts some people out? (based on culture)
- Which type of nation do they think would have an easier time developing a sense of unity and common identity? (the one based on shared culture)

Activity #6

- Why might it be difficult for a nation based on the idea of a legal society dedicated to liberty to develop a strong sense of unity and common identity? (people may speak different languages, have different customs, etc.)
- What kinds of things might such a nation do to try to develop a sense of unity? (national anthems, flags, national holidays and other symbols that everyone can identify with; citizenship education, etc.; find or invent something that everyone has in common.)

Reinforcing Concepts:

Bring back some of your "shill shoes" from Activity #2. Ask one volunteer to arrange the shoes to illustrate the ideas expressed in Primary Source #1. Ask another volunteer to arrange the shoes to illustrate the ideas expressed in Primary Source #2. Have the volunteers present their arrangements to the class and ask the class to guess which arrangement fits which Primary Source. Students must cite parts of their sources to support their guesses.

These activities may lead to further discussion of how nations see themselves, examples in the modern world, and how various nations go about defining who "We, the people" are. It can also provide entry into a discussion of how our own concepts in the United States of who "the people" are have, and continue to change over time (original exclusion of women, blacks, Native Americans, etc.).

WHO ARE "THE PEOPLE?"

When kings ruled: Before the Enlightenment of the 1700's, the words "nation" and "state" meant pretty much the same thing. The boundaries of a state were decided by the extent of territory over which a king had control. His control may have come through birthright, conquest or marriage arrangements. It did not matter what language the people inside these boundaries spoke, what they called themselves, or what kinds of cultural traditions they followed. It also did not matter whether different groups of people inside the boundaries got along and respected each other because a ruler had a right to rule them if he controlled the territory they lived in. People were often seen as property of the king, subject to do his bidding.

Then things changed: By the end of the Enlightenment, the idea that people were simply subjects of the king began to change. Instead, many people began to believe that **sovereignty** rested with "the people." Increasingly, "the people" were thought of as "the nation," and a government was thought to be **legitimate** (legal) only if it represented "the people." These ideas led to many people protesting and carrying out wars of independence not only in the United States and France during the late 1700's, but also in Mexico and South America during the early 1800's.

The Big Question - Who Are "The People?" These new ideas gave rise to a big question: Who are "the people" that make up a "nation" that the government of a state has a legitimate right to rule? This question became very important during the early 1800's when Napoleon of France conquered much of Europe. People began to think of a **nation** as a group of people who believe they are united by some common bond. One common bond that sometimes made people feel as if they made up their own "nation" was speaking the same language. However, many of the people conquered by Napoleon did not speak French and did not feel that the French had any "natural" right to rule over them. At the same time, many small kingdoms needed to give up some **sovereignty** in order to join together into larger and stronger states so they could resist Napoleon's attacks.

Two ways of thinking about "the nation = the people" began to grow, both based in the beginning on similar ideas about government's **sovereignty** and **legitimacy**. At first, the two ideas seemed to work well together with no problems. But later, the ideas were taken to extremes and caused great conflicts.

The nation based on "liberty to the people": The first way of thinking about a nation was mostly concerned with the ideas of liberty and the rights of the people. Whoever the people were or whatever their culture might be, freedom was what mattered most. For example, Benjamin Franklin said, "Where liberty is, there is my country." This set of ideas defines "the nation" as a legal society of individuals who join together to form a government that protects their rights and their interests. The common bond that holds the people together in this case is their dedication to a government that protects liberty and human rights.

Who Are "The People?", cont.

The nation based on shared cultural traditions: The second way of thinking about a nation was more concerned with identifying the "natural" boundaries of a nation, and with describing the common cultural features that bind the people of a nation together. These included things like speaking the same language, sharing a common history, practicing the same customs, and having a common ancestry. Each nation was seen as naturally unique and separate from all others. A romantic idea of the nation developed, glorifying the nation as something almost spiritual with its own personality, its own special history, and a unique future mission. Many people began to believe that every different nation had a right to its own government.

In the real world, the two are often mixed together. Most countries in the world today do not fit neatly into one or the other of these two ideas. Countries based mostly on the concept of "liberty to the people," still strive to develop a sense of national identity that goes beyond dedication to political freedom. Countries based mostly on the idea of shared cultural traditions usually embrace the idea of liberty. However, which of these two ideas is emphasized as most important makes a very big difference in how the people of a nation think about themselves and who their government represents.

Think about it:

1. Which idea of a nation sets some cultural standards for people to meet in order to be part of the nation?
2. Which idea of a nation more easily accepts a mixture of different kinds of people as part of "the nation?"
3. Which type best fits the United States today? Support your answer.

WHAT MAKES A NATION?

Following are two short writings that represent ideas of what a nation is or should be. As you read them, remember the two ways to think about the idea that "the people are the nation:" the idea of the nation based on "liberty to the people," and the idea of the nation based on shared cultural traditions.

1.

"It is nature which educates families; the most natural state is, therefore, *one* nation, an extended family with one national character. This it keeps for ages and develops most naturally if the leaders come from the people and are wholly dedicated to it. For a nation is as natural a plant as a family, only with more branches. Nothing, therefore, is more manifestly contrary to the purpose of political government than the unnatural enlargement of states, the wild mixing of various races and nationalities under one scepter."

German philosopher Johann Herder (1744-1803)

2.

Nigeria we hail thee,
Our own dear native land,
Though tribe and tongue may differ,
In brotherhood we stand,
Nigerians all, and proud to serve
Our sovereign Motherland.

Our flag shall be a symbol
That truth and justice reign,
In peace or battle honour'd
And this we count as gain,
To hand on to our children
A banner without stain.

O God of all creation,
Grant this our one request,
Help us to build a nation
Where no man is oppressed,
And so with peace and plenty
Nigeria may be blessed.

Nigerian National Anthem,
adopted on Independence, October 1, 1960

What Makes a Nation?, cont.

Think about it:

1. Which words refer to, or describe "family" in each piece?
2. How is the idea of "family" treated differently in the two pieces?
3. Which idea of "nation" does each piece represent?
4. Do you think the authors of the two pieces would agree with each other about what makes a nation? What do you think they would disagree about most?