

Popular Sovereignty

(People Rule) The Constitution creates a government where the people hold all the power which they exercise through their elected leaders. If the people don't like their leaders, they can get rid of them through elections.

Federalism

Power of the government is shared between the state and national levels. That's why we have a capital in Lansing & Washington DC. (Note: Local governments like the City of Fraser are part of the state government)

Separation of Powers

The awesome powers our government has have been divided up in to 3 branches (Legislative, Executive & Judicial) This idea came from a guy named Montesquieu.

Checks & Balances

Each of the 3 branches of government has powers over the other branches. For example, if a federal judge dies, the president gets to pick (nominate) his/her replacement. The Senate though must approve this pick. There are many examples like this.

Judicial Review

The process of our courts reviewing laws to determine if they are "constitutional" or not. Started with the case "Marbury vs Madison". We talk about Texas vs. Johnson when trying to show how this works.

Limited Government

The government ONLY has the power given to it by the US Constitution. For example, the Bill of Rights (the 1st 10 amendments to the USC) tells the government what they can't do.
