

# Governmental Responsibilities: Community, Tribal, State, Federal

## Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies  
Grade Level: Grade 4  
Suggested Duration: Three-four class periods (50-minute)

Context: This lesson plan would work well when studying about Montana State Government.

## Stage 1 Desired Results

### Established Goals

(1) The civics and government content standards for fourth grade are that each student will:  
(c) describe how rules, laws, and policies are implemented by local, state, national, and tribal governments;  
(d) define sovereignty for tribes in Montana.

### Understandings

- Under the American legal system, Indian tribes have sovereign powers.
- These powers are separate and independent from the federal, state, city, and county governments.
- The extent and breadth of tribal sovereignty is not the same for each tribe. (EU 7)

### Essential Questions

- What is sovereignty?
- How does tribal sovereignty compare with federal and state governments?
- In what ways do sovereign tribal nations affect people in Montana?

### Learning Targets

- I can demonstrate knowledge of why Montana Indian tribes are considered nations and have their own governments.
- I can recognize local and tribal governments and leaders at these levels.
- I can compare and contrast the major responsibilities of the federal government and Montana tribal governments.

### Students will know...

- a definition for sovereignty.
- how tribal sovereignty compares with Montana government.



Indian Education for All Unit

[opi.mt.gov](http://opi.mt.gov)

Montana Office of Public Instruction

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks

1. Students will complete a Venn diagram, comparing and contrasting their city or county government and one Montana tribal government (see worksheet at the end of lesson plan). Note: If your school is located on/near a Montana reservation consider having students research another tribal government in addition to their own.
2. Students will discuss and share their Venn diagram with the class.

## Stage 3 Learning Plan

### Learning Activities

Discuss the four levels of government that exist in our country. Inform students the United States has the four different levels. Some general roles of these four are listed below. As you discuss these roles, assist the students in completing the attached Venn diagram and highlighting the differences and similarities tribal governments have with other governments.

- Federal Government
  - ✓ Elect government officials (President, Senators, Representatives)
  - ✓ Collect taxes on income
  - ✓ Collect taxes on some sales (i.e., gasoline)
  - ✓ Enact and enforce laws
  - ✓ Regulate interstate commerce
  - ✓ Secure waterways and international borders
  - ✓ Raise and maintain the national military
  - ✓ Establish and maintain a national court system
  - ✓ Federal police (FBI, DEA, ATF)
  - ✓ Develop and enact economic and business policies
  - ✓ Provide money to states, counties, and cities for special projects and economic support
  - ✓ Maintain national forests, parks, and other lands
- State Government
  - ✓ Elect government officials (Governor, State Senators and Representatives, Judges, Statewide Officials)
  - ✓ Collect taxes on income (applies to some states and not others)
  - ✓ Collect taxes on all sales items (applies to some states and not others)
  - ✓ Enact and enforce laws
  - ✓ Build and maintain major highways (includes plowing snow)
  - ✓ State Police (usually Highway Patrol)
  - ✓ Establish and maintain a state court system
  - ✓ Regulate in-state commerce
  - ✓ Maintain state forests and lands

- City/County Government
  - ✓ Elect government officials (County Commissioners, Mayors, Judges, Sheriffs, Police Chiefs)
  - ✓ Collect taxes on some sales items (i.e., restaurants and lodging)
  - ✓ Collect taxes on home and property values
  - ✓ Road and street maintenance (includes plowing snow)
  - ✓ Garbage services
  - ✓ Water and sewer system building and maintenance
  - ✓ Local building and construction laws and regulation
  - ✓ Establish and maintain a local court system
  - ✓ County and city police
  - ✓ Maintain county and city parks
  - ✓ Enact local business laws and ordinances
- Tribal Government
  - ✓ Elect tribal leaders and officials (Tribal Councils, Tribal Business Chairs, Tribal Judges). These must be an enrolled member of the tribe. Tribal government structures may vary significantly from tribe to tribe.
  - ✓ Enact and enforce tribal laws (In general, tribal governments have the authority to make, apply, and enforce rules and laws for their reservations. They operate differently from place to place, however.)
  - ✓ Collect taxes on sales, property, and businesses
  - ✓ Establish and maintain tribal courts
  - ✓ Tribal police
  - ✓ Enter into agreements with state and local governments
  - ✓ Make laws/codes to provide for the health, welfare, and education of their members
  - ✓ Maintain tribal lands and properties
  - ✓ Ensure tribal cultural integrity, including language, is preserved
  - ✓ Provide services that support the general health and well-being of tribal members

At the conclusion of the governmental levels and roles discussion, reinforce the following points:

- Indian people from Montana tribes are citizens of their tribes/nations, the state of Montana, and the United States.
- Tribal sovereignty is the nation-to-nation or government-to-government relationship between the US government and tribes, and this relationship was established by more than 600 treaties ratified by the US Congress and repeatedly reaffirmed by the Supreme Court and various Executive Orders.
- Share the following three videos (in order), discussing tribal sovereignty. During the video you may wish to pause the video and model how to take notes of important points discussed.
  1. What is Indian Sovereignty? - Ray Cross
  2. What is Tribal Sovereignty?
  3. BESE Explains Tribal Sovereignty. (Note: During the BESE video, it was stated there were currently 573 tribes in the United States. In 2019 Montana's Little Shell received federal recognition and became the 574th federally recognized tribal nation)

After viewing the videos, ask the students to define sovereignty in their own words. Clarify any misperceptions or misunderstandings students may have about sovereignty.

Students will work with a partner. Together they will explore each of the tribal websites listed below and write down the name of the tribal chair/president for each reservation and one department run by the tribal government. (Please note the Chippewa Cree Tribes website does not have this information and is not listed.)

As a possible extension, your class might contact a member of your city or county government as well as a member of a Montana tribal government to come and talk to students about their governmental duties and responsibilities. After the speaker has finished, have students, in small groups, record important points of the speaker's presentation. (These will be used later as they do research on a tribal government.) Students will use large pieces of butcher paper to record this information. These will be hung around the room.

If a speaker from a tribal government can present, have students record important points as with the member of local government. If no tribal speaker is available, research on the Internet can be done on tribal government.

## Resources

### OPI IEFA documents

[Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#) - Essential Understanding # 1 has demographic information for each tribal nation.

[Montana Indians: Their History and Location](#). This publication has background information about each tribal government and a hard copy should be in your school library.

### Montana tribal websites and newspapers

(Although we have listed the official website for each tribe, there are many more websites available with accurate tribal specific information but be sure to work with students to review the website to determine authenticity of the information.)

#### [Blackfeet Nation](#)

[Glacier Reporter](#)

#### [Crow Tribe](#)

#### [Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes](#)

[Char-Koosta News](#)

#### [Fort Belknap Tribes](#)

[Fort Peck Tribes](#). Assiniboine, Sioux

[Fort Peck Journal Facebook Page](#).

#### [Little Shell Tribe](#)

#### [Northern Cheyenne Tribe](#)

### Other Newspapers

[Indian Country Today](#)

[Indianz.com](#)

### Videos

[BESE Explains: Tribal Sovereignty](#)

[What is Indian Sovereignty? – Ray Cross](#)

[What is Tribal Sovereignty – Washington Tribes](#)

### **Websites**

[The Res We Live On](#)

[Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education](#)

[Montana Official State Travel Site](#)

This website has general information about each tribal nation: Blackfeet, Crow, Flathead, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Little Shell, Northern Cheyenne, Rocky Boy. There is information on location, economy, and points of interest for each tribe.

# VENN DIAGRAM

