

Name: _____

Date: _____

Social Studies

What is Government?

Read the passage carefully. Answer the questions which follow.



An **organization** is a group of people who join together to get something done. Each of us belongs to an organization that is important in our country- for example, school, church, or club. An organization might involve people in the local community or the whole country. Government is an organization to which all Bahamians contribute.

Every organization has rules by which its members must abide. These rules are agreed to by members. Some members are elected to serve as officers, or run the organization. Example of officers: **president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer**

Why do we need a government?

Like all other organizations, government grows from the need of the communities that makes up our country.

(1) The need to get things done

(2) The need to have rules and laws to live by.

Local government is organized at a local level while national government is responsible for the running of the nation.

Getting things done

Some jobs are more easily done by small groups of people. Each area of government is the responsibility of a special department called a **ministry**. For example, government may be involved in the transportation of goods and people from place to place in a country. The government provides the leadership and the money to look at the country's transportation needs and decide when and where to build roads and docks. The government hires people to build and repair them. Governments are also responsible for building hospitals and schools.

Keeping Order

Most governments make sure that people have rights and freedoms. People living together in groups or communities need rules so that they know what they can do (by right) and cannot do (by law). It is the government that decides on the rules that the people must obey. These rules are called laws. If everyone follows these rules, no one need to be afraid for their property or life- there will be order in the community. Hence the expression: law and order. When someone disobeys a rule, he or she takes away the rights of another person, and there is disorder.

However, people cannot spend all their time making rules and making sure they are kept. The community elects leaders to do this, and they form the government of the country.

Another responsibility of government is to make sure that everyone receives justice and are treated equally. Different forms of government have different ways of administering justice, and some are harsher than others. When a law is broken in our country, the **facts**- called **evidence**- are examined before a judge in a court of law. The evidence proves that the offender is guilty, he or she must be punished.



1. An _____ is a group of people who work together to get something done.
2. Some members of an organization include president, vice-president, treasurer and _____.
3. We need a government to get things done and to have rules and _____ to live by.
4. Each area of government is the responsibility of a special department called a _____.
5. Governments build r_____, d_____, s_____, and h_____.
6. Most governments make sure that people have _____ and _____. People living together in groups or communities need rules so that they know what they can do (by right) and cannot do (by law).

