

Alabama: Our Beautiful Home

A photograph of the Alabama State Capitol building, a large white neoclassical structure with a prominent dome and a portico supported by columns. The building is set against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. Lush green trees are visible on both sides of the building, and a well-manicured lawn with some flowers is in the foreground.

Chapter 15: Alabama's Government STUDY PRESENTATION



Section 1: The Levels of Government
Section 2: Making it Work
Section 3: Symbols of Alabama

Section 1: The Levels of Government

- Essential Question: How is government organized in Alabama?



Section 1: The Levels of Government

- What terms do I need to know?
 - bill
 - veto
 - criminal court
 - trial
 - jury
 - civil court
 - county seat
 - municipal



Introduction

➤ There are four levels of government.

Federal Government

- Capitol: Washington, DC



State Government

- Capitol: Montgomery, AL



County Government

- County Seat



City Government



Federal Government – Washington, D.C.

- The offices of the United States (or federal) government are in Washington, D.C.
- Power of government is divided into three branches.
- The president leads the executive branch.
- The Supreme Court leads the judicial branch.
- Congress leads the legislative branch. Alabama has two senators and seven representatives.



State Government – Montgomery

- The state government of Alabama has three branches like the federal government.
- Offices of the state government are in the capitol building.
- The executive branch is led by the governor.
- The judicial branch is led by the Alabama Supreme Court.
- The legislative branch has a legislature divided into senators and representatives.



Executive Branch

- The governor is the elected leader of the executive branch of Alabama government.
- He signs bills into law.
- Governors serve terms of four years and can be elected a maximum of twice in a row.
- The secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer and others make sure laws are carried out.



Legislative Branch

- The legislative branch has elected leaders called legislators.
- Senators (Senate) and representatives (House of Representative) are elected from different districts in Alabama.
- To make a law, a **bill** is introduced. If passed by the House and Senate, the governor can sign it into law or **veto** it.



Judicial Branch

- The judicial branch is made of the state courts of Alabama.
- A person charged with a crime goes to **criminal court**.
- A **trial** may be heard by a **jury** who will study and decide a case.
- A **civil court** rules on disputes between people.
- The Supreme Court is the highest court, but there are many different kinds of courts that each serve a special purpose.



County Government

- Alabama has 67 counties, each with a courthouse for county business. The town where the courthouse is located is the **county seat**.
- Government business is handled here such as buying a car tag or registering to vote.
- Trials can be held in a courthouse, and sometimes a sheriff has offices there.



Fayette County courthouse



Municipal Government

- Cities and towns are **municipal** governments. A mayor and city council may run a city.
- They usually work in a city hall.
- A city hall may also have police offices and courtrooms.

Daphne, Alabama City Hall



Section 2: Making it Work

- Essential Question: How do governments pay for services?



Section 2: Making it Work

- What terms do I need to know?
 - revenue
 - assessment



People and Services

- The different governments collect money from citizens to provide services.
- Good roads, clean water, and quality schools are paid for by citizens' taxes.
- Government employees help keep people in Alabama safe, healthy, and educated. They also keep records, guard prisons, run airports, and more!



Revenue

- **Revenue** (money) is needed to run state and local governments. This money comes from taxes.
- Sales tax is paid when you buy goods from a store.
- Workers have part of their pay taken as income tax.
- Property tax is paid by property owners based on the value (**assessment**) of the property.
- Taxes paid to the federal government pay for the military, roads, and some costs of schooling.



Section 3: Symbols of Alabama

- Essential Question: What do Alabama's symbols say about our state?



Section 3: Symbols of Alabama

- What terms do I need to know?
 - motto
 - maritime



Spoken Symbols

- A **motto** is a spoken symbol. Ours is *jura nostra defendere* (We dare defend our rights).
- Another spoken symbol is the official state song "Alabama" by Julia Tutwiler.
- Two unofficial state songs are "Sweet Home Alabama" and "Stars Fell on Alabama."



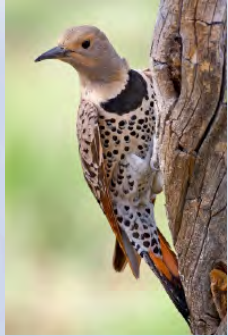
Visual Symbols

- A symbol we can see is the state flag. It was adopted in 1895. The state flag flies below the national flag on a flag pole.
- The Alabama coat of arms has a shield showing five governments that have ruled Alabama.
- Two eagles symbolize courage. The ship and the rivers show the importance of Alabama as a **maritime** state.



Living Things as Symbols

Many living things are symbols of our state. Some of them are shown below.



Bird	Yellowhammer
Tree	Southern Longleaf Pine
Flower	Camellia
State Fossil	<i>Basilosaurus cetoides</i> (whale)
Fish	Fighting tarpon; largemouth bass





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