

Big Idea Card

Big Ideas of Lesson 7, Unit 1

- Tyranny is the arbitrary or random use of power. The Framers designed our system of government to protect the people from the tyranny they had experienced under British rule.
- In creating the Constitution, the Framers wanted to ensure that “We the People” would be the ultimate source of all power and authority in the United States.
- The Framers used several mechanisms or structures to protect the people from tyranny:
 - Representative Government: People, through the election process, have a voice in deciding which individuals will represent their interests in governmental matters.
 - Separation of Powers: Powers delegated to the federal government are separated among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government to ensure that no one branch would become too powerful.
 - Checks and Balances: Each branch also has the power to limit the actions of the other branches.
- Through the constitutional mechanisms of separation of powers and checks and balances, the Framers tried to safeguard against the concentration of power.
- Through the constitutional mechanism of representative government/republicanism, “We the People” have the power through elections to replace our governmental officials when we believe they do not act in our best interests.