

**Parent Discussion/Activity Guide
Module 5**

How Does Tribal Government Work?



Each parent guide is designed to engage the parent and student in a meaningful discussion regarding the topic of each Module. We encourage parents to read the synopsis of the module with their child, watch the video, discuss vocabulary words, answer the discussion questions, do the suggested activities together and explore the resources.

Brief program synopsis of module:

This learning module, “*How Does Tribal Government Work?*” outlines the relationships between Tribal, State and the Federal Government. It also points out the relationship between the two tribes and how their governmental structure is unique.

Module 5 – “How Does Tribal Government Work?”

<http://windriveredu.org> or <http://wyomingpbs.org/learningmedia>

“*How Does Tribal Government Work?*” tab at top of site

Vocabulary Words introduced in “How Does Tribal Government Work?” and 8th Grade Lesson Plans:

(* vocabulary words have more than one definition used)

Administration
Joint Tribal Council
Business Council
Sovereign
Federal

Government
Bureau of Indian Affairs
*Negotiate**
Democracy
Treaties

*Boundaries lines**
Jurisdiction
Compromise
Sovereignty
General Council



Discussion Questions

- #1. Why is the Wind River Reservation unique in its governmental system? Discuss the differences from the State and Federal government structure.
- #2. How many Tribal representatives sit on a business council? Discuss the roles of each of the business councils.
- #3. Why is oil and gas proceeds important to the Wind River Reservation?
- #4. How does the Wind River Reservation help the local and state economy?

Suggested Activities

- #1. Watch– “*How Does Tribal Government Work?*” - <http://windriveredu.org> or <http://wyomingpbs.org/learningmedia>
- #2. Discuss vocabulary words with your child. From viewing the module, ask you student what each word means. Answers provided at end of this guide.
- #3. Compare and contrast how Tribal government is different from the State Government operations or that of the United States government?
- #4. Diagram the branches of government at the federal level, then diagram the branches of government on the Wind River Reservation.

Resources to Investigate

<http://windriveredu.org> or <http://wyomingpbs.org/learningmedia>
“*How Does Tribal Government Work?*”

Eastern Shoshone Tribe of Wyoming

<http://easternshoshone.org>

Northern Arapaho Tribe of Wyoming

<http://northernarapaho.com>

<http://northernarapaho.com/history>

Wind River Reservation – Google Map

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Wind+River+Reservation>

External Resources

- [*Arapaho Politics, 1851-1978*, by Loretta Fowler, University of Nebraska PressPages 74 – 75, 170 – 171, 186 – 187.](#)
- [“Government of the Wind River Reservation” from *Wyoming Blue Book* Volume 4, 1991, with updates, Wyoming State Archives](#)



Vocabulary Words – definitions:

Administration – the process or activity of running a business, organization, etc.

Boundaries lines – something (such as a river, a fence, or an imaginary line) that shows where an area ends and another area begins.

* a point or limit that indicates where two things become different.

Bureau of Indian Affairs – is an agency of the federal government of the United States within the U.S. Department of the Interior. The BIA's responsibilities include providing health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Business Council – is the elected body of officials charged with responsibility for managing the government and related affairs of the tribal nation.

Compromise – an agreement or a settlement of a dispute that is reached by each side making concessions.

Democracy – a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.

Federal – relating to or denoting the central government of the U.S.

General Council – is the meeting of enrolled tribal members, who make decisions regarding general operations of tribal business matters.

Government – the governing body of a nation, state, or community.

Joint Tribal Council – is the elected body of officials charged with responsibility for managing the government and of the tribal nation. As in the case of the Wind River Reservation, this Joint Tribal Council consists of members from each tribal business council (Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho)

Jurisdiction – the official power to make legal decisions and judgments.

Negotiate – obtain or bring about by discussion.

* find a way over or through (an obstacle or difficult path).

Sovereign – possessing supreme or ultimate power.

Sovereignty – the authority of a state to govern itself or another state – a self-governing state.

Treaties – formal agreements between two or more states in reference to peace, alliance, commerce, or other international relations.



Tribal Court – means a court which confront issues of self-determination and sovereignty, while at the same time providing reliable and equitable adjudication in the many and diverse matters that come before them.

Tribal Courts Systems – means the entire judicial branch, and employees thereof, of an Indian Tribe, including, but not limited to, traditional methods and fora for dispute resolution, trial courts, appellate courts, including inter-tribal appellate courts.

Tribal Government – Tribal governments are an important and unique member of the family of American governments. The US Constitution recognizes that tribal nations are sovereign governments, just like Canada or California.