**Government**

Democratic government was a Greek idea. Democracy, or rule by the people, began in Athens. The practice of having citizens serve on juries also began in Greece.

Democratic government in the United States has roots in ancient Greece. There are a number of important differences, however, between American democracy and ancient Greek democracy. For example, in Athens, all citizens debated and voted on every issue. But in the United States, citizens elect representatives to speak for them and make laws. Another difference is that only native-born men could be citizens in Athens. But in the United States, all men and women born in this country are U.S. citizens, and people from other countries can become citizens, too.

Still, the basic **principles [principle: a strong belief on the right way to act]** of democracy were developed by the ancient Greeks. Athenians were proud that their government allowed citizens to control their own destiny. This idea remains the basis of democracy today.