**Big Unit Question**:

To what extent should the government take responsibility for the well-being of its citizens?

**Another way to ask our question:**

How much should the government provide for people?

**Topic we will be studying**: The role of the government in peoples’ lives.

**What role does the government currently take?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Benefits – have a specific monetary value, benefit *some* people directly | Services – no specific monetary value, indirectly serve the whole public |
| * Welfare (TANF) * Food stamps (SNAP, WIC) * Medicaid (Mainecare) * Medicare * Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) * Social Security (retirement pension, disability, dependent care) * School lunch subsidies * Housing assistance (Section 8) | * Military, border security * Public education * Road construction and maintenance * Plowing * Police, law enforcement agencies * Fire department * Justice system (courts, prisons) * Postal service * Parks (National Parks, State Parks, local town parks) * Food and Drug Administration * Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife * Emergency management (FEMA) * Public health (some clinics, CDC) * Manage $ supply (Federal Reserve) |
| A third potential category could be considered government regulations. These are rules set by the gov’t that dictate how businesses must behave. They include:   * Minimum wage/overtime laws * Workplace safety laws * Building codes (like safe housing regulations) | |

**How many of the things on this list were part of the gov’t’s role when the U.S. was founded?**

Not many – just post office, national defense, justice system, $ supply

**How is all of this paid for?**

Taxes, deductions from paychecks (like for Social Security or Medicare), some fees for services (like the post office)