

CHAPTER 5

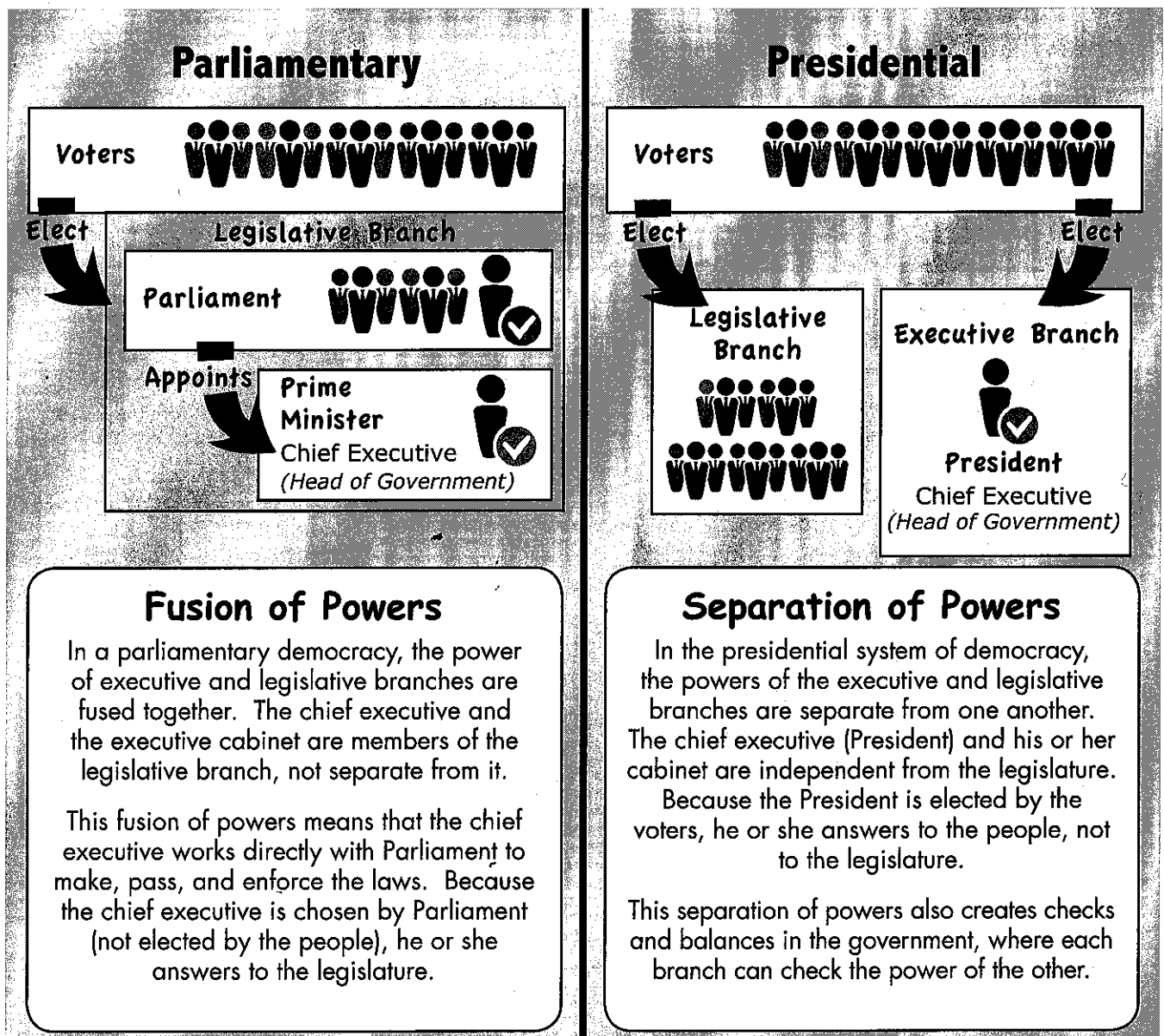
Correlates with SS7CG1b; SS7CG3b;
SS7CG4b

PARLIAMENTARY & PRESIDENTIAL DEMOCRACIES

Two Systems of Democracy

There are many democratic governments around the world, but not all democracies are alike. The two most common systems of democracy are **presidential democracy** and **parliamentary democracy**. Major differences include how leaders are elected and the relationship between the legislative and the executive branches.

Compare the two predominant systems of democracy.





Assess Your Understanding

L6-8RH4

Determine whether each statement describes a parliamentary or a presidential democracy. Check both boxes if the statement is true for both.

Parliamentary / Presidential

Citizens elect the chief executive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizens elect members of the legislature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The chief executive is typically called "President."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The chief executive is appointed by the legislature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The chief executive is typically called "Prime Minister."	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The executive and legislative branches are "fused" together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The executive and legislative branches are separate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizens have many rights and freedoms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This government includes a system of checks and balances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizens elect officials to represent them in government.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Express Your Opinion

L6-8RH1; L6-8RH4;
L6-8RH6

Both parliamentary and presidential systems have strengths and weaknesses. Read the examples for each system. Then answer the question.

Parliamentary Democracy (Fused Powers)	Presidential Democracy (Separation of Powers)
<p>Strength Because the chief executive is a member of the legislature, he or she works directly with the legislature to pass and enforce laws. This system makes it easier for the government to work swiftly to resolve important issues.</p>	<p>Strength The executive and legislative branches are separate, leading to a system of checks and balances. This system ensures neither branch oversteps its authority and becomes too powerful.</p>
<p>Weakness The fusion of powers means there are fewer checks and balances in government. It is possible for the Prime Minister and the Parliament to overstep their authority.</p>	<p>Weakness The system of checks and balances can make passing and enforcing laws a very SLOW process, especially when the President and Congress disagree. Important issues are often left unresolved.</p>

Based on these strengths and weaknesses, which system do you think is better? Explain why.
