

# Direct v/s Representative Democracy



Created by Karen McDavid, Midland Academy, 2012

Greek government was based on a democracy.  
What is a democracy?

A democracy is a system of government where the people of a country have power.

As the Greek population became larger, villages grew into city-states.

A city-state was a city and all the farm land surrounding it.

The two largest city-states were Athens and Sparta.





Each city-state was independent of each other and had its own government.





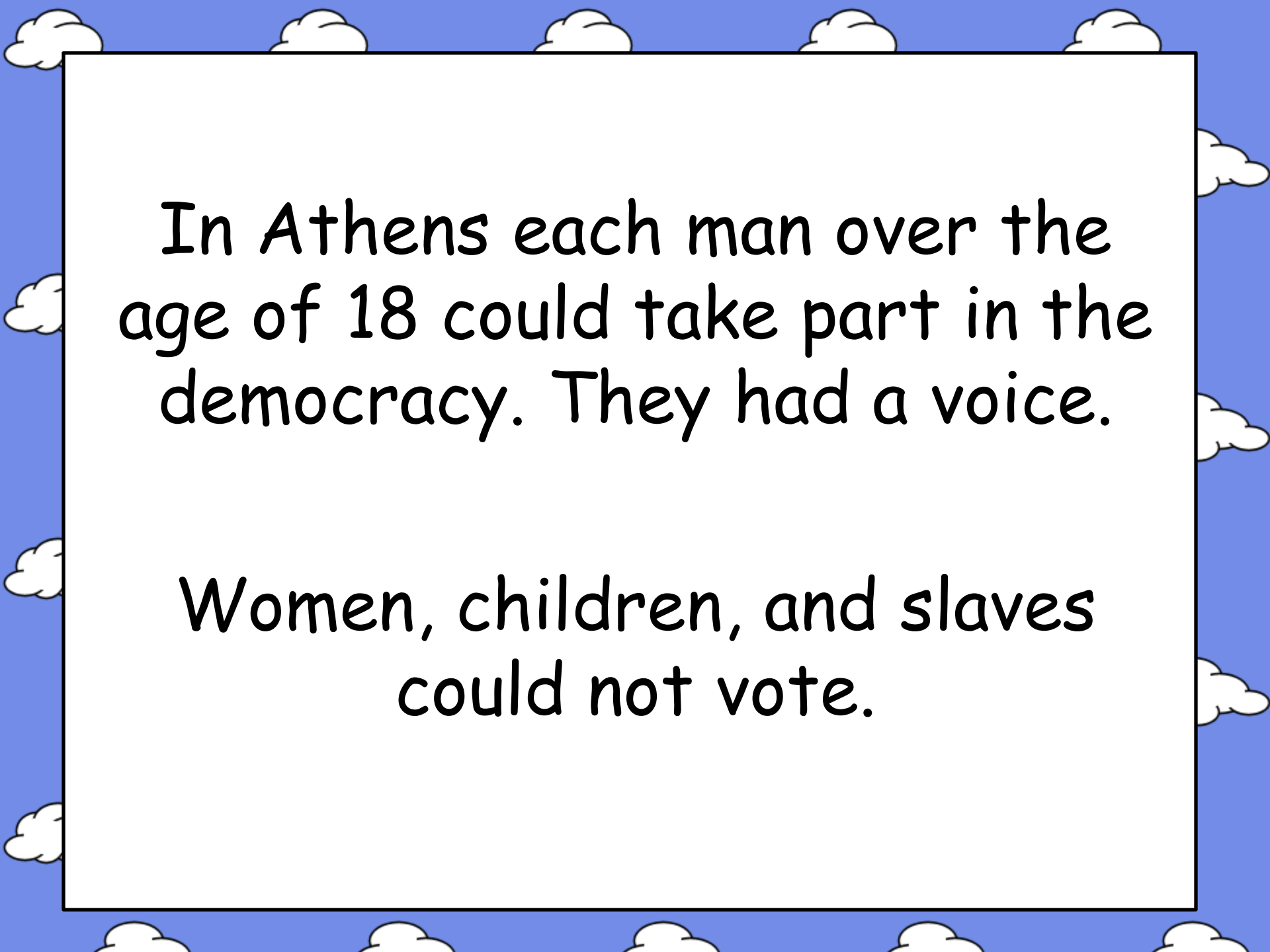
# Direct Democracy



In 500 B.C. Athens became the world's first democracy.

What is a democracy?

A democracy is a system of government where the people (the citizens) of a country have the power and make the decisions.



In Athens each man over the age of 18 could take part in the democracy. They had a voice.

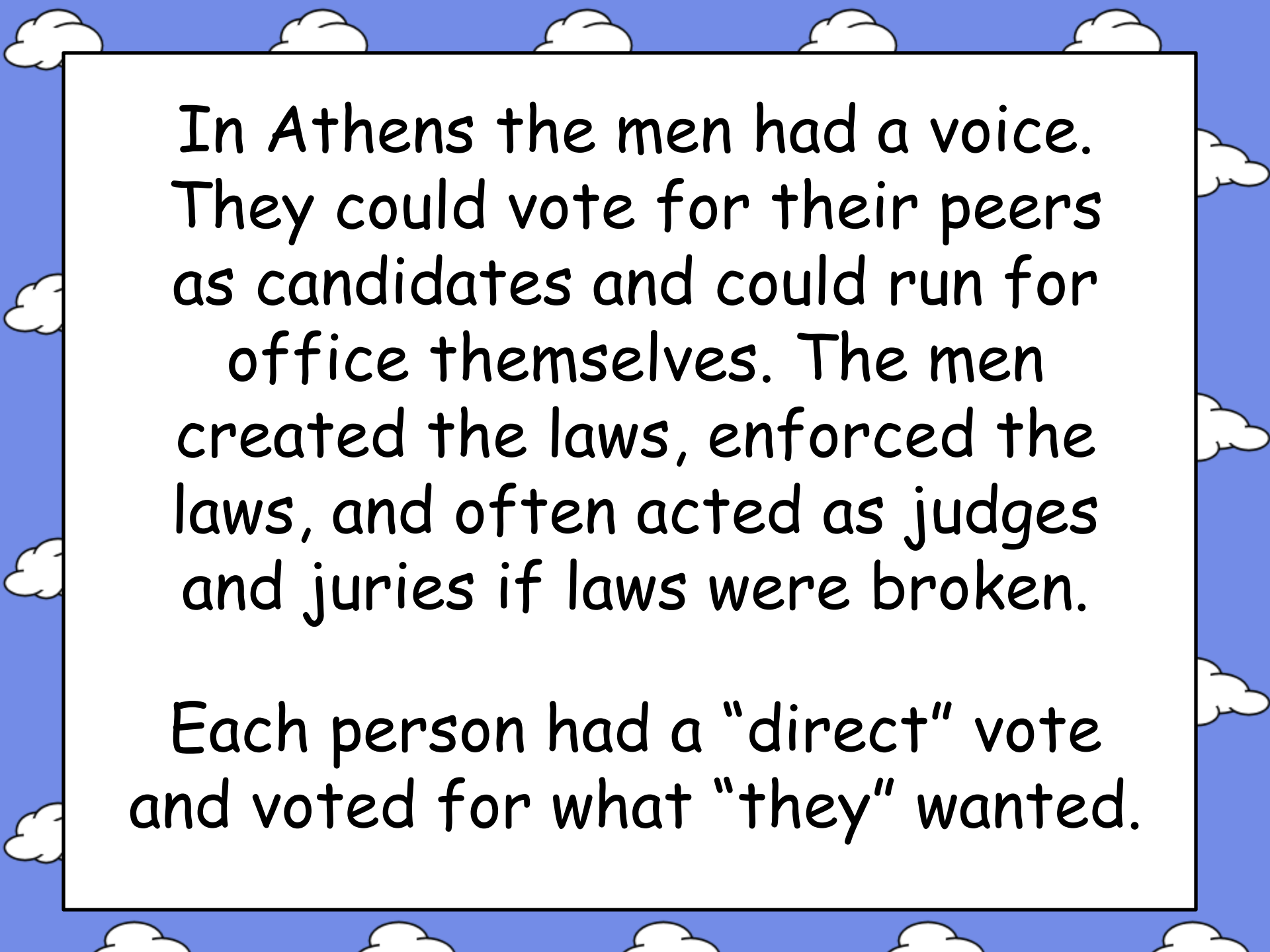
Women, children, and slaves could not vote.



This form of democracy is called direct democracy.

What is Direct Democracy?

Direct Democracy is a government in which people vote directly to make their own rules and laws.



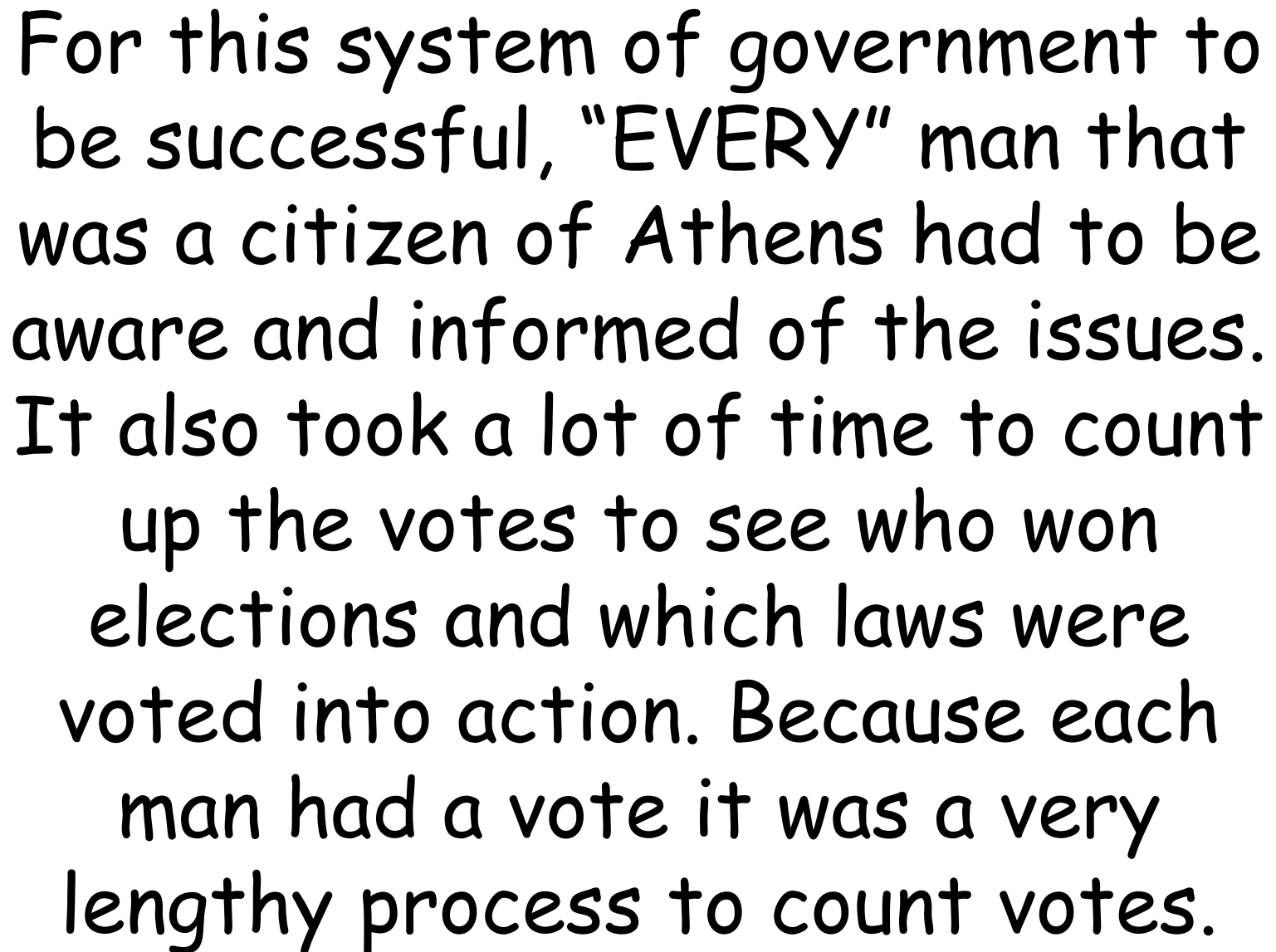
In Athens the men had a voice. They could vote for their peers as candidates and could run for office themselves. The men created the laws, enforced the laws, and often acted as judges and juries if laws were broken.

Each person had a "direct" vote and voted for what "they" wanted.

When voting for an election, the person with the most votes won.

When dealing with an issue, like a new law, the issue with the most votes won.





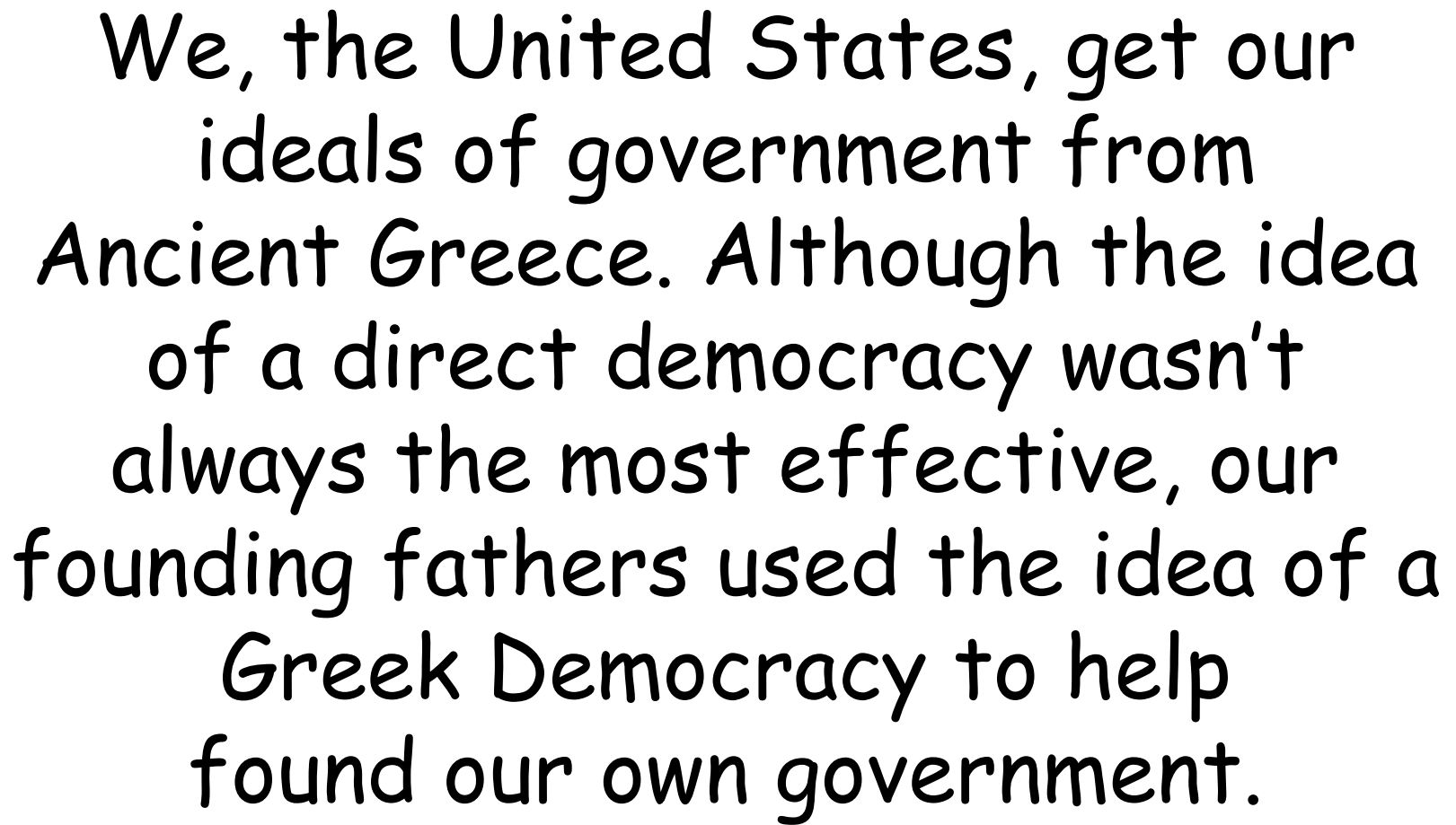
For this system of government to be successful, "EVERY" man that was a citizen of Athens had to be aware and informed of the issues. It also took a lot of time to count up the votes to see who won elections and which laws were voted into action. Because each man had a vote it was a very lengthy process to count votes.



# Representative Democracy







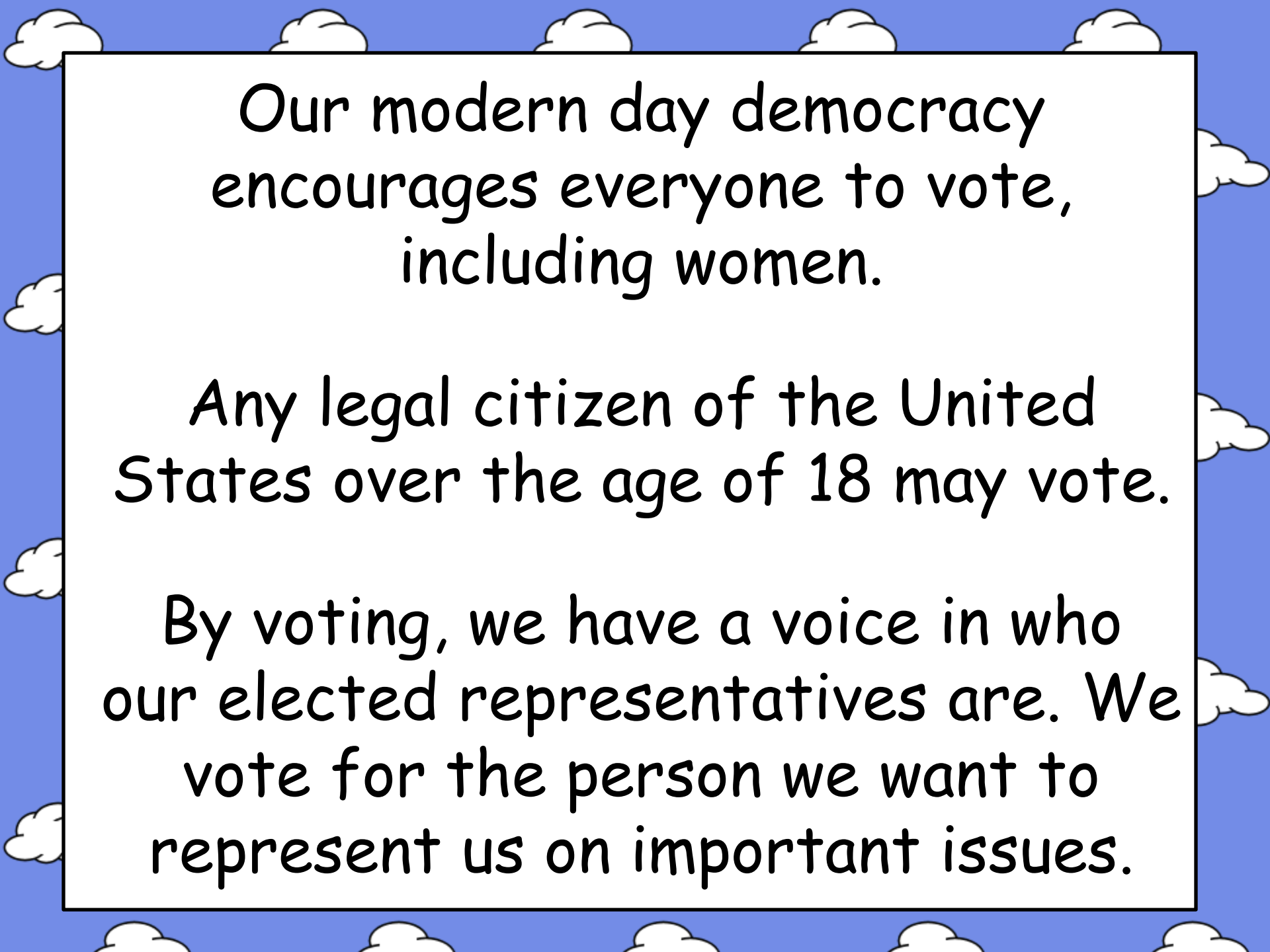
We, the United States, get our ideals of government from Ancient Greece. Although the idea of a direct democracy wasn't always the most effective, our founding fathers used the idea of a Greek Democracy to help found our own government.

However, our founding fathers tweaked it just a bit.

The United States system of government is based on a Representative Democracy?

Representative Democracy

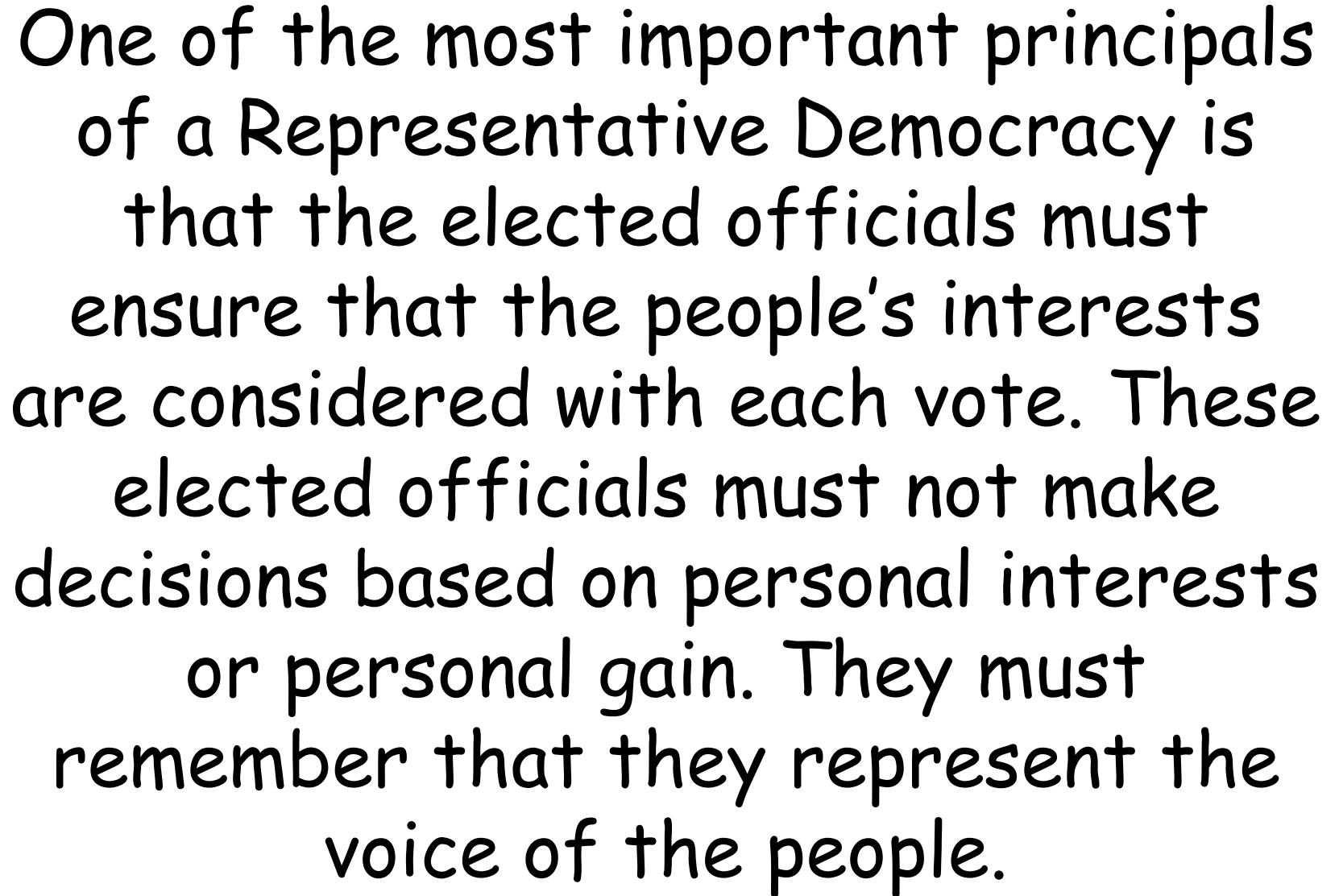
is a government in which the people elect officials to represent us. The officials then vote on important issues on our behalf.



Our modern day democracy encourages everyone to vote, including women.

Any legal citizen of the United States over the age of 18 may vote.

By voting, we have a voice in who our elected representatives are. We vote for the person we want to represent us on important issues.



One of the most important principals of a Representative Democracy is that the elected officials must ensure that the people's interests are considered with each vote. These elected officials must not make decisions based on personal interests or personal gain. They must remember that they represent the voice of the people.

If we had a direct democracy it would take way too much time to count votes since our population exceeds 300 million people.

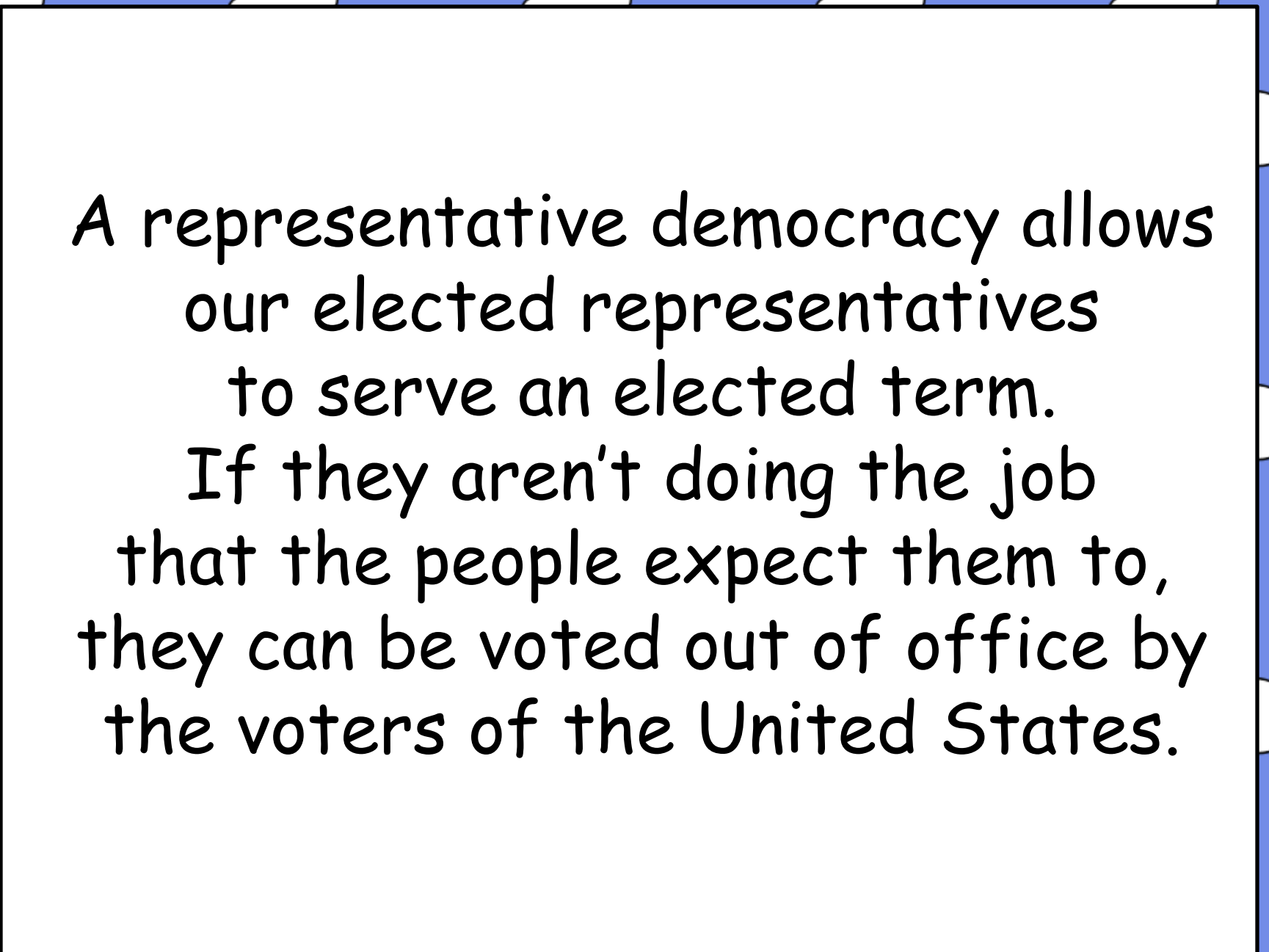
So, we have elected officials:

**100 Senators** (2 per state)

**335 Congress People**

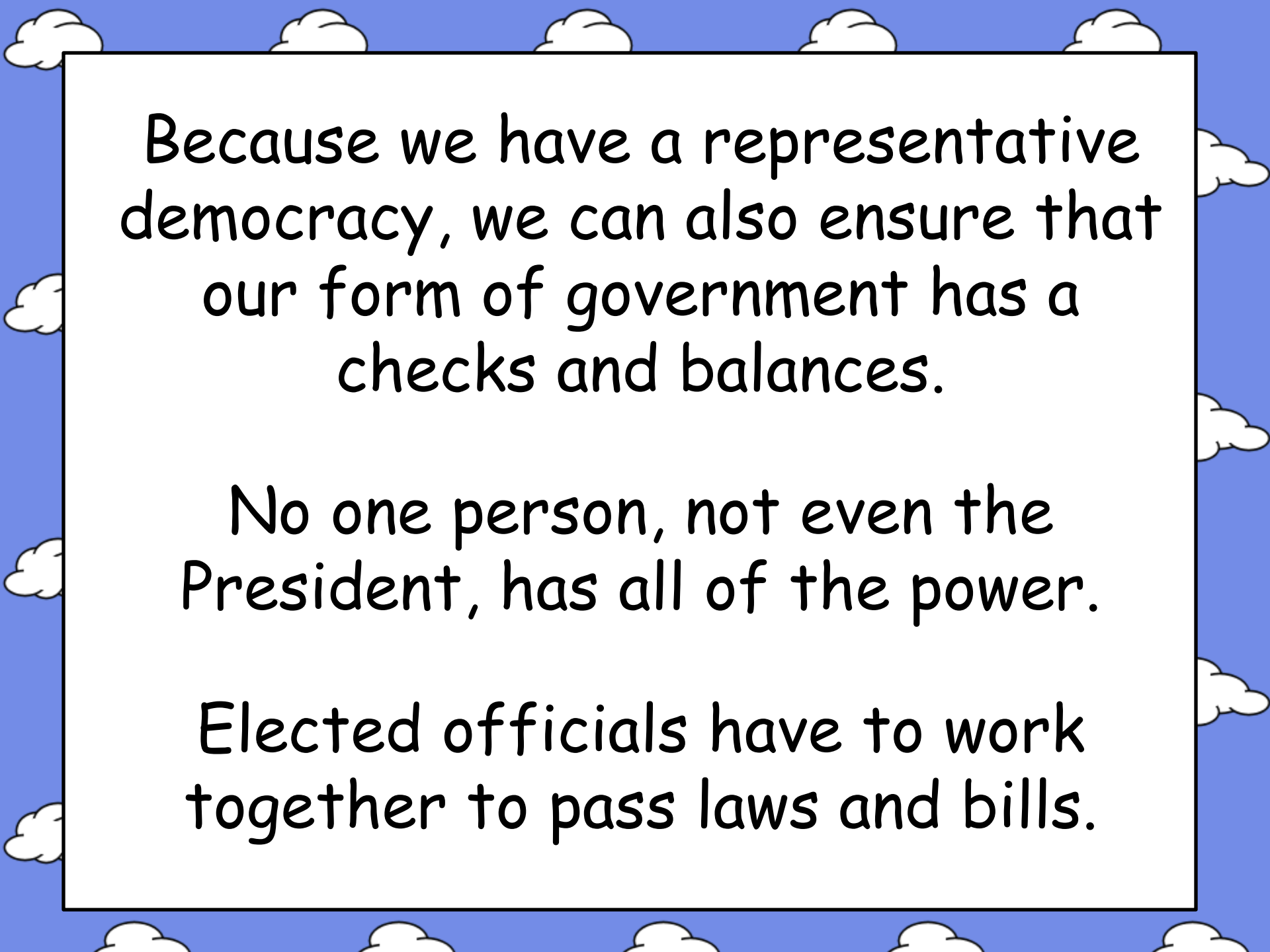
(represented by each state's population)





A representative democracy allows our elected representatives to serve an elected term.

If they aren't doing the job that the people expect them to, they can be voted out of office by the voters of the United States.



Because we have a representative democracy, we can also ensure that our form of government has a checks and balances.

No one person, not even the President, has all of the power.

Elected officials have to work together to pass laws and bills.

Explain the difference between a direct democracy and a representative government.

Representative  
Democracy

Direct  
Democracy

