Topic 4   Political Symbols of Germany

Lesson 2   What are the four basic principles of German Federal Government?

Lesson Objective   The student will identify examples of the four principles in the Basic Law.

Materials and Resources

- Transparency 22   "Four Principles of the Basic Law"
- Worksheet 17   "Four Principles of the Basic Law"
- Teacher Resource 8   "Excerpts from the Basic Law"

Strategies

One of the first requirements in establishing a new government in the Federal Republic of Germany following the Nazi dictatorship (1933–1945) was to rebuild a society in which the power of the state would be limited and the rights of the individual citizen guaranteed. The fundamental principles which determined the basis for government in the Federal Republic of Germany are "democracy," "rule by law," "social welfarism" and "federalism."

Place students into groups of four and put **Transparency 22 "Four Principles of the Basic Law"** on the overhead projector. This transparency defines each of the four fundamental principles. Assign one student in each group a different principle to learn and teach to the other group members. To check for understanding, randomly call on different students to summarize each principle and give an example from United States government. Then, hand out one copy of **Worksheet 17 "Four Principles of the Basic Law"** to each group and assign each group member a role that will insure task completion and group cooperation (e.g., recorder, checker, summarizer or encourager). Stress to the class that an important part of the activity is for each student to be able to explain the reasoning for matching a particular principle with an excerpt from the Basic Law.

Teacher Resource 8 "Excerpts from the Basic Law" provides more information about the Basic Law. The class may want to request a complete copy of the Basic Law from the German Information Center as a reference guide.