Two Ways to Lead

Compare leadership and family ties before European contact

SS24.6.1 "Describe major Indigenous societies in North America prior to European contact. 1a Compare the political and social structures of Southeastern Woodland Indigenous peoples and those of another region of North America."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about leaders, circle details about families or kin groups, and write 1 beside a detail in each society that shows one way they were alike.

A Plaza and a Longhouse

1 Imagine visiting two North American communities before European contact. In a Southeastern Woodland town near the rivers of what is now Georgia, you might see a high earthen mound beside a public plaza. Far to the northeast, you might see several longhouses surrounded by fields. These places belonged to different Indigenous societies, not to one single culture. The Southeastern example in this reading is a Mississippian town like Etowah. The northeastern example is a Haudenosaunee community. Both organized work and made decisions, but their leaders and family ties worked differently.

2 In many Mississippian towns of the Southeastern Woodlands, a chief led a chiefdom, a community that might include smaller nearby towns. Chiefs often gained their position through family ties. They helped direct public work, such as building mounds, and oversaw the sharing of stored food or valuable goods. People gathered at a central plaza for ceremonies and other events. Families grew crops, including corn, and belonged to larger kin groups. A chief's duties depended on the town, so no single town's rules describe every Southeastern people.

3 Haudenosaunee communities in the Northeast were organized into nations joined in a confederacy. Each nation had its own leaders, while council leaders from the nations met to settle shared concerns by discussion and agreement. Within each nation, people belonged to clans traced through their mothers. Clan mothers chose male council leaders and could remove them if they failed to serve the people. Several related families could share a longhouse. Unlike a Mississippian chiefdom centered on a chief, this confederacy joined nations while keeping their local communities and clan ties.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did leadership in a Mississippian chiefdom differ from leadership in the Haudenosaunee confederacy?

2. How did family ties affect who became a leader in each society?

3. What does the passage show about how families belonged to larger groups in each society?

4. How did each society bring people together for matters beyond one family or town?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine each society needs a new shared gathering place. In three sentences, predict how people in each society might organize the work or decisions, then compare how family ties could affect leadership. Make clear that your ideas about the new place are predictions based on the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Two Ways to Lead

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details about leaders, circle details about families or kin groups, and write 1 beside a detail in each society that shows one way they were alike. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did leadership in a Mississippian chiefdom differ from leadership in the Haudenosaunee confederacy?	**A chief led a Mississippian chiefdom. In the Haudenosaunee confederacy, council leaders from different nations met to settle shared concerns.**
2	How did family ties affect who became a leader in each society?	**Mississippian chiefs often gained their positions through family ties. Haudenosaunee clan mothers chose male council leaders and could remove them.**
3	What does the passage show about how families belonged to larger groups in each society?	**Mississippian families belonged to larger kin groups. Haudenosaunee people belonged to clans traced through their mothers, and related families could share a longhouse.**
4	How did each society bring people together for matters beyond one family or town?	**Mississippian chiefs could direct public work in a chiefdom that included nearby towns. Haudenosaunee council leaders from different nations met about shared concerns.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A Mississippian chief might direct the work of building a new gathering place because chiefs helped lead public projects. Haudenosaunee council leaders might discuss the plan together because leaders from the nations met about shared concerns. Family ties could shape these plans differently: a Mississippian chief often gained a position through family, while Haudenosaunee clan mothers chose council leaders.

Accept predictions about the new gathering place that follow from the passage without claiming the event actually happened. Students should distinguish a chief's role from decisions made by council leaders and accurately compare the role of family ties.