Who Holds Power?

Compare three ways governments divide authority.

SS24.6.10a "Compare and contrast the division of power among levels of government in unitary, federal, and confederate styles of governance."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the level or levels that hold governing power in each system, and circle a phrase that shows what another level can or cannot do. Then number the systems from most national power (1) to least (3).

Three Storm Plans

(1) When a fierce storm threatens the coast of fictional Bayland, leaders must decide who can order evacuations and pay for shelters. Bayland has a unitary government. Its national government holds the main governing power. It may let town councils choose shelter sites, but it can change or take back that authority. Town councils carry out national rules and report what they need. Because major decisions come from the national level, a town cannot keep an evacuation rule that conflicts with a national one.

(2) Across the water, fictional Ridgeport has a federal government. Its constitution divides power between the national government and state governments. The national government directs the coast guard and can send help across state borders. Each state has its own powers, such as running public schools and organizing local emergency crews. During a storm, both levels may act within their powers. Unlike Bayland's towns, Ridgeport's states do not hold their powers only because national leaders allow it. The constitution protects the states' share of governing power.

(3) In fictional Island League, several independent states form a confederation to handle a few shared needs. Each state keeps most governing power and decides its own storm rules. The states agree that a shared council can coordinate warnings between islands. The council depends on the states for cooperation and has only the powers they give it. Unlike Ridgeport's national government, it cannot direct every state's emergency crews. All three systems can use local leaders, but they differ in where governing power begins and how much power a shared government holds.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How is a Bayland town's authority different from a Ridgeport state's authority?

2. How do Ridgeport's national government and Island League's shared council differ in what they can do during a storm?

3. Which level holds the main governing power in Bayland, and which holds most governing power in Island League?

4. Put Bayland, Ridgeport, and Island League in order from most national power to least. Give one passage detail that supports each place in your order.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A wildfire threatens three mountain communities. Write three sentences, one for each government style, explaining who could direct local fire crews and why.

ANSWER KEY

Who Holds Power?

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.10a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the level or levels that hold governing power in each system, and circle a phrase that shows what another level can or cannot do. Then number the systems from most national power (1) to least (3). Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How is a Bayland town's authority different from a Ridgeport state's authority?	**Bayland's national government can take back authority it gives a town. Ridgeport's states have powers protected by the constitution.**
2	How do Ridgeport's national government and Island League's shared council differ in what they can do during a storm?	**Ridgeport's national government can direct the coast guard and send help across state borders. Island League's council can coordinate warnings but cannot direct every state's emergency crews.**
3	Which level holds the main governing power in Bayland, and which holds most governing power in Island League?	**Bayland's national government holds the main power. Island League's member states keep most power.**
4	Put Bayland, Ridgeport, and Island League in order from most national power to least. Give one passage detail that supports each place in your order.	**Bayland comes first because its national government holds the main power. Ridgeport comes next because its constitution divides power between national and state governments. Island League comes last because its member states keep most power.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In a unitary system, national leaders could direct local fire crews or let towns do it under national rules. In a federal system, states could organize their local fire crews using powers protected by the constitution. In a confederation, each member state could direct its fire crews, while a shared council would need the states' cooperation to coordinate help.

Accept different wording that correctly distinguishes delegated local authority, constitutionally divided power, and power retained by confederation members. For Part 3, accept a federal response that describes action by both levels within their assigned powers.