Who Makes the Call?

How governments share power during a flood

SS24.6.15 "Explain how the system of federalism in the United States divides power between national and state governments as well as between state and local governments..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two national government powers or actions, circle two state government powers or actions, and number two local government actions 1 and 2. Use your marks to see how the three levels share responsibility.

After the Flood

1 When heavy rain floods a town, people need help from more than one government. Federalism divides power between the national government and state governments. The U.S. Constitution gives the national government certain powers, including regulating trade between states. Powers not given to the national government, and not denied to states, are kept by the states or the people. A state can set many safety rules and manage its emergency response. This division keeps one national office from making every decision for every community.

2 After the flood, the national government may provide disaster aid under federal law and help repair a damaged interstate highway. The state may decide how to organize rescue teams and when to close state roads. A county may open a shelter, while a town may clear its streets. Counties and towns are local governments whose powers come from the state. The state can set limits on what they do. The national and state governments can also work on the same problem, but each has its own role.

3 Why split these jobs? Floods do not stop at state borders, so national help can bring people and supplies together. Yet one national plan may miss a region's needs, such as which roads flood most often. State leaders can adjust plans for their state's conditions, and local leaders know which buildings can serve as shelters. Sharing power can limit a powerful national government while giving regions a say. It does not mean states can ignore valid national laws. When a state law conflicts with a constitutional federal law, the federal law controls.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. After the flood, how could the national government help, and what could the state decide for itself?

2. How do the state and local governments divide work after the flood? Explain where local governments get their powers.

3. How does this division of power allow national help without giving the national government every flood decision?

4. Why might a state adjust its flood plan for its region, but still have to follow a constitutional federal law?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A disease spreads across several states. In four or five sentences, propose one helpful role each for the national, state, and local governments, then explain how your plan allows national help without giving the national government every decision.

ANSWER KEY

Who Makes the Call?

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.15

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two national government powers or actions, circle two state government powers or actions, and number two local government actions 1 and 2. Use your marks to see how the three levels share responsibility. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	After the flood, how could the national government help, and what could the state decide for itself?	**The national government could provide disaster aid or help repair an interstate highway. The state could organize rescue teams or decide when to close state roads.**
2	How do the state and local governments divide work after the flood? Explain where local governments get their powers.	**The state may organize rescue teams and close state roads, while a county may open a shelter and a town may clear streets. Local governments get their powers from the state.**
3	How does this division of power allow national help without giving the national government every flood decision?	**The national government can provide aid, while states and local governments make decisions about rescue teams, roads, shelters, and streets.**
4	Why might a state adjust its flood plan for its region, but still have to follow a constitutional federal law?	**A state can plan for its own conditions, such as roads that flood often. If its law conflicts with a constitutional federal law, the federal law controls.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The national government could share research and send supplies to states that need them. Each state could set health rules that fit its communities. Local governments could help run clinics using powers given to them by their states. This plan provides national help while leaving many decisions about local needs to states and their communities.

Accept other reasonable roles that respect the division between national and state power and the state's authority over local governments. Part 3 should explain both the value of national help and the value of decisions made closer to communities.