Who Helps When?

Federalism during a flood

SS24.6.15a "Summarize how federalism balances concerns regarding limiting a powerful national government, securing regional interests, and sharing power across the United States."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one way national and state governments share work, circle one limit on national power, and number two reasons states make their own choices. Use your marks to explain how federalism balances these needs.

When a River Crosses State Lines

1 After heavy rain, a river rises through several states. Who should help the towns along its banks? The United States uses federalism, a system that divides power between the national government and state governments. The Constitution gives the national government certain powers, including regulating trade between states. It leaves many other powers to the states. This division keeps one national government from making every decision. It also means that a problem crossing state borders can get a response that reaches beyond just one state.

2 Imagine the river floods roads in two neighboring states. National agencies can help coordinate information and provide disaster aid when federal assistance is approved. Each state can decide which state highways need repairs first and how to use its own emergency crews. Town officials may know which streets need help soonest, but local governments get their authority from their states. The states do not have identical roads, budgets, or flood risks. Letting states make many choices helps each region respond to its own needs.

3 Dividing power does not mean the governments must work alone. States can ask for national help, while national and state workers share information during a flood. At the same time, the national government cannot simply take over every state decision. The Constitution sets limits on its powers, and courts can settle disagreements about those limits. Federalism is a balance: national power can address problems that reach across states, state power protects regional choices, and both levels can play a part when people need help.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the division of powers help prevent the national government from making every decision?

2. Why might two flooded states make different choices about road repairs? Explain how federalism allows this.

3. How can national action help when a river floods two states without replacing state decisions?

4. In two sentences, summarize how the flood response can limit national power, protect regional needs, and share work.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A new insect is harming farms in several states. Write 4 to 5 sentences proposing how national and state governments could respond, and explain how your plan limits national power, fits different regions, and shares work.

Who Helps When?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way national and state governments share work, circle one limit on national power, and number two reasons states make their own choices. Use your marks to explain how federalism balances these needs. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the division of powers help prevent the national government from making every decision?	**The Constitution gives the national government certain powers and leaves many others to the states, so states keep authority over many decisions.**
2	Why might two flooded states make different choices about road repairs? Explain how federalism allows this.	**The states may have different roads, budgets, and flood risks. Federalism lets each state decide which state highways to repair first.**
3	How can national action help when a river floods two states without replacing state decisions?	**National agencies can coordinate information and provide approved disaster aid, while each state decides how to use its crews and which state highways need repairs first.**
4	In two sentences, summarize how the flood response can limit national power, protect regional needs, and share work.	**The national government can help with a flood affecting more than one state, but it cannot take over every state decision. States can choose responses that fit their needs while sharing information with national workers.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

An insect is damaging crops in several states, so national agencies could share research and help states track where it spreads. Each state could choose farm support that fits its crops and growing season. National officials should not decide every local farm response because the Constitution divides power between national and state governments. By sharing information while states choose many local actions, both levels can help without ignoring regional needs.

Accept other accurate examples of national coordination and state choices. The Part 3 response should address all three parts of the balance, not just name tasks for each government.