Across Two Countries

Compare citizenship rights, opportunities, and privileges in the United States and United Kingdom.

SS24.CWI.8a "Compare the individual rights, opportunities, and privileges of United States citizens to those of citizens of other countries."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two similarities between the citizens, and circle three differences in their rights, opportunities, or privileges.

Maya and Leo Compare Notes

1. Imagine two classmates posting criticism of a government decision: Maya is a U.S. citizen, and Leo is a U.K. citizen. Both have a right to express political opinions, but their legal protections are not identical. In the United States, the First Amendment generally prevents the government from punishing people for criticizing its policies. In the United Kingdom, freedom of expression is protected by law, but certain threatening or abusive speech intended to stir up hatred can be punished. U.S. law also limits some speech, such as true threats. Neither classmate can assume that every statement is protected simply because it concerns politics.

2. When they turn 18, Maya and Leo can both take part in national elections if they meet registration requirements. In U.S. presidential elections, eligible U.S. citizens vote in their states for a slate of electors, who formally choose the president. Only U.S. citizens can vote in those elections. In a U.K. general election, eligible U.K. citizens vote for a member of Parliament in their constituency; the prime minister is not chosen by a separate nationwide public vote. The two citizens have a voice in national government, but they vote for different offices through different systems.

3. Now suppose Leo wants to move to the United States and Maya wants to move to the United Kingdom. Citizenship lets each person live and work in their own country, but it does not automatically grant that privilege in the other country. Each would need to check immigration rules before taking a job abroad. Health care presents another difference in opportunity: the United Kingdom's National Health Service generally provides care without charges at the point of use to people ordinarily resident there, not to every U.K. citizen wherever they live. The United States has no equivalent nationwide coverage for all residents; insurance and public program eligibility vary.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How are Maya's and Leo's rights to express political opinions similar, and how do the limits on speech differ?

2. How can Maya and Leo each take part in a national election, and what is different about the offices they vote for?

3. Compare where Maya and Leo may live and work based on citizenship alone. What changes if they move to each other's country?

4. How does access to health care differ between the two countries, and why would Leo's U.K. citizenship alone not guarantee him NHS care?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence note to Leo about moving to the United States. Compare one right he has in both countries and two differences involving voting or health care, then name two things he should check before moving.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two similarities between the citizens, and circle three differences in their rights, opportunities, or privileges. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How are Maya's and Leo's rights to express political opinions similar, and how do the limits on speech differ?	**Both can express political opinions. U.S. law generally protects criticism of government, though it does not protect true threats; U.K. law can punish certain threatening or abusive speech intended to stir up hatred.**
2	How can Maya and Leo each take part in a national election, and what is different about the offices they vote for?	**Eligible U.S. citizens vote for presidential electors, who formally choose the president. Eligible U.K. citizens vote for a member of Parliament, not directly for a prime minister.**
3	Compare where Maya and Leo may live and work based on citizenship alone. What changes if they move to each other's country?	**Each may live and work in their own country. Neither person's citizenship automatically grants permission to live and work in the other's country.**
4	How does access to health care differ between the two countries, and why would Leo's U.K. citizenship alone not guarantee him NHS care?	**The NHS generally provides care without charges at the point of use to people ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom. The United States has no equivalent coverage for all residents. NHS access depends on residence, not U.K. citizenship alone.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

You can express political opinions in both the United Kingdom and the United States, although speech laws differ. In the United Kingdom, eligible citizens elect members of Parliament, while only U.S. citizens vote in U.S. presidential elections. The NHS generally serves ordinary residents without charges at the point of use, but the United States has no equivalent coverage for all residents. Before moving, check which U.S. immigration rules would allow you to work. Also check what health insurance or public coverage you might qualify for.

Accept accurate comparisons that distinguish citizenship from residence and immigration status. Students need not name a specific visa or health insurance plan.