Who Gets Followed?

Institutions, authority, and community decisions

SS24.S.8 "Explain the purpose of social systems and institutions, including governments, houses of worship, schools, and voluntary associations..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the four kinds of institutions in the passage, underline each source of a leader's authority, and circle one phrase about accepted authority and one about threats. Use your marks to compare why people follow leaders.

After the River Rises

1 After a river floods, a town needs more than one group to recover. Its government sets safety rules and assigns public crews to clear blocked roads. A school shares reliable updates with families and keeps students learning when buildings reopen. A house of worship offers meeting space and organizes meals for neighbors, whether or not they belong to that faith. A voluntary association, such as a neighborhood cleanup club, brings people together by choice to collect supplies. These institutions organize shared work and meet needs that individuals might struggle to handle alone.

2 During recovery, different leaders may claim authority for different reasons. Residents follow an elected mayor's evacuation order because the mayor holds an office with powers set by law. Max Weber called authority grounded in formal rules and offices rational-legal. A longtime ceremonial leader might guide a yearly rebuilding ritual because community custom gives that role standing. Weber called this traditional authority. A persuasive teen organizer might attract volunteers through an inspiring vision and personal appeal. Weber called this charismatic authority. These types describe why followers recognize a leader's right to lead, not whether every decision the leader makes is wise.

3 Authority is legitimate when people generally accept a leader's right to direct them, even if they dislike a particular decision. The mayor can enforce a lawful evacuation rule, and residents may comply because they recognize the office and its rules. By contrast, a self-appointed patrol chief might demand cleanup work by threatening to destroy people's property if they refuse. People may obey out of fear without believing that chief has any right to command them. This is coercive power, based on threats rather than accepted authority. A leader with legitimate authority could also use coercion. The ideas describe different aspects of power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. During the flood recovery, how do the school and the voluntary association meet different needs?

2. One leader gains followers through a persuasive speech. Another is followed because community custom gives their role standing. Identify each Weber type and compare the sources of their authority.

3. Why is the mayor's authority rational-legal rather than charismatic? Explain what gives the mayor the right to issue an evacuation order.

4. Compare why residents might follow the mayor's order and the patrol chief's demand. Can a leader have legitimate authority and also use coercion?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a community problem unrelated to flooding. In four sentences, explain how one institution meets a need, describe two leaders with different Weber types of authority, and show whether people follow one leader through accepted authority or a threat.

Who Gets Followed?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number the four kinds of institutions in the passage, underline each source of a leader's authority, and circle one phrase about accepted authority and one about threats. Use your marks to compare why people follow leaders. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	During the flood recovery, how do the school and the voluntary association meet different needs?	**The school shares updates and keeps students learning. The voluntary association brings people together by choice to collect supplies.**
2	One leader gains followers through a persuasive speech. Another is followed because community custom gives their role standing. Identify each Weber type and compare the sources of their authority.	**The persuasive leader has charismatic authority based on personal appeal. The leader whose role is recognized by custom has traditional authority.**
3	Why is the mayor's authority rational-legal rather than charismatic? Explain what gives the mayor the right to issue an evacuation order.	**The mayor holds an office with powers set by law. That authority comes from formal rules, not the mayor's personal appeal.**
4	Compare why residents might follow the mayor's order and the patrol chief's demand. Can a leader have legitimate authority and also use coercion?	**Residents may accept the mayor's legal right to issue an order. They may obey the patrol chief only because they fear a threat. Yes, a leader with legitimate authority can also use coercion.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During a heat wave, a voluntary association opens a cooling room at a community center so neighbors can escape dangerous temperatures. Its founder wins volunteers with a persuasive vision and personal appeal, a source of charismatic authority. The city emergency manager sets public cooling hours under a law that grants that office decision-making power, an example of rational-legal authority. Neighbors follow the manager's rules because they accept that legal role, not because the manager threatens them.

For the open task, accept any plausible institution and two distinct Weber types when the response correctly identifies each source of authority. Students should distinguish acceptance of a leader's right to direct others from compliance caused by a threat.