Two Roads, Two Governments

Compare who plans, funds, and coordinates road repairs.

SS24.USG.13a "Compare specific functions, organizations, and purposes of local and state governments."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the county's responsibilities, circle the state's responsibilities, and number two places where their work connects. Use your marks to compare what each government does and why they must coordinate.

After the Storm

1. A severe storm leaves two crossings unusable in Cedar County: a county road over a creek and a bridge on a state highway. Drivers need safe routes, but the two repairs do not belong to one government. The county government handles needs within its boundaries, including roads under county control. Its elected commission sets county spending priorities and can approve money for county road repairs. A county public works department inspects the damaged crossing, plans a repair, and posts a closure. The county may use local tax revenue for the work, subject to its budget.

2. The state highway bridge serves a wider network, so the state department of transportation, not county public works, inspects it and plans its repair. The state legislature makes laws and adopts a state budget that can fund highway work. The governor oversees executive agencies, including the transportation department, as they carry out those laws and spend appropriated funds. State highway funding can include state fuel taxes and federal aid. Unlike the county commission, which decides how to spend county funds on county roads, the legislature makes statewide funding decisions. Both levels must follow laws governing contracts and safety.

3. Neither government can solve the travel problem alone. County public works may direct drivers away from the creek crossing, while the state transportation department announces a separate highway detour. If both routes carry displaced traffic, staff from the two agencies can compare closure schedules and choose signs that do not send drivers toward another blocked road. Both governments aim to protect public safety and restore travel, but their responsibilities differ in geographic reach and in which roads they maintain. County officials answer to county residents for local spending; state officials must weigh needs across many counties.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does each government's area of responsibility explain which damaged crossing it repairs?

2. Compare the role of an elected body and a road agency at each level of government.

3. How could funding for the county road repair differ from funding for the state highway repair?

4. Why should the county and state road agencies coordinate their detours even though they maintain different roads?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 80 to 110 word advisory note for residents after another storm damages a county road and a state highway near a hospital. Compare which agency handles each road, which elected body can fund each repair, and how the agencies could coordinate detours to preserve hospital access.

ANSWER KEY

Two Roads, Two Governments

GRADE 12 · SS24.USG.13a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the county's responsibilities, circle the state's responsibilities, and number two places where their work connects. Use your marks to compare what each government does and why they must coordinate. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does each government's area of responsibility explain which damaged crossing it repairs?	**The county handles the road under county control within its boundaries. The state handles the highway bridge, which is part of a wider network.**
2	Compare the role of an elected body and a road agency at each level of government.	**The county commission sets county spending priorities, while county public works inspects and plans the county road repair. The state legislature adopts a budget that can fund highway work, while the transportation department inspects and plans the highway repair.**
3	How could funding for the county road repair differ from funding for the state highway repair?	**The county may use local tax revenue approved through its budget. State highway funding can include state fuel taxes and federal aid through a state budget.**
4	Why should the county and state road agencies coordinate their detours even though they maintain different roads?	**Traffic displaced by either closure may use the other route. Coordinating schedules and signs helps keep drivers from being sent toward another blocked road.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Residents need a clear route to the hospital while crews inspect both damaged roads. County public works should close and assess the county road, and the county commission can approve county funds for its repair. The state department of transportation should inspect the state highway and plan its repair using funds provided through the state budget adopted by the legislature. Because a detour around one closure could lead to the other, both agencies should share closure schedules and coordinate signs. Their common goal is safe travel, but each government is responsible for a different road network.

Accept equivalent names for the road agencies and elected bodies. In the advisory note, look for distinct county and state roles, a funding decision at each level, and a feasible coordination step that protects hospital access.