

Liberty by Design

How constitutional rules protect rights and representation.

SS.7.CG.3.1 "Analyze the advantages of the United States' constitutional republic over other forms of government in safeguarding liberty, freedom, and a representative government."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three features of the U.S. constitutional republic that protect liberty or representation, then circle nearby words that show how each feature limits government power.

Rules, Rights, and Representation

- ① In the United States, people do not vote on every law themselves. Instead, eligible voters choose representatives, such as members of Congress, to make laws. This system is called a constitutional republic. The Constitution is the nation's highest law. It creates government offices, divides power among branches, and limits what government may do. Representatives must follow the Constitution, even when a majority wants a different result. This structure combines popular control with rules that protect individual rights.
- ② Consider a country ruled by one leader who can make laws without elections or legal limits. People may have little peaceful way to replace that leader or challenge unfair decisions. In a constitutional republic, regular elections give citizens a way to choose new representatives. Courts can review whether laws and government actions follow the Constitution. Congress, the president, and the courts have separate powers, so no one part of government is supposed to control everything.
- ③ Constitutional limits can safeguard liberty, the freedom to act and speak within the law. For example, the Bill of Rights protects freedoms such as speech, religion, and peaceful assembly. A representative cannot legally erase these protections simply because many voters disagree with a small group. Citizens can also petition leaders, speak at public meetings, vote, and use courts to defend rights. These protections are not perfect in practice, but the constitutional system provides peaceful tools for correcting government actions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How do regular elections give people an advantage over people living under one leader without elections?

2 Why must representatives follow the Constitution even when a majority wants a different result?

3 How do separate powers for Congress, the president, and the courts help safeguard liberty?

4 Choose one freedom protected by the Bill of Rights in the passage. Explain how that protection helps a person challenge government actions peacefully.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine Congress passes a law banning peaceful public meetings. Write exactly four sentences explaining two constitutional tools citizens could use to challenge the law and why this is an advantage over rule by one leader without legal limits.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three features of the U.S. constitutional republic that protect liberty or representation, then circle nearby words that show how each feature limits government power. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do regular elections give people an advantage over people living under one leader without elections?	Regular elections let citizens choose new representatives and peacefully replace leaders.
2	Why must representatives follow the Constitution even when a majority wants a different result?	The Constitution is the highest law and limits government power to protect individual rights, including the rights of smaller groups.
3	How do separate powers for Congress, the president, and the courts help safeguard liberty?	Separate powers help prevent one part of government from controlling everything.
4	Choose one freedom protected by the Bill of Rights in the passage. Explain how that protection helps a person challenge government actions peacefully.	Answers may name speech, religion, or peaceful assembly and explain that the freedom lets people express views, gather peacefully, or defend rights without violence.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If Congress passed a law banning peaceful meetings, citizens could petition their representatives and speak at public meetings. They could also challenge the law in court because peaceful assembly is protected by the Bill of Rights. Courts can review whether the law follows the Constitution. In a country ruled by one leader without legal limits, people might have no peaceful way to challenge the ban.

Accept responses that accurately explain at least two tools, such as petitioning leaders, voting in elections, speaking publicly, or using courts. The comparison must show that constitutional limits and peaceful ways to challenge power are advantages over rule by one unchecked leader.