

Where Rules Begin

Trace laws to the people and institutions that create them.

SS.7.CG.3.10 "Identify sources and types of law."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each named type of law, then circle each government body that creates or interprets it.

Many Paths to Law

- ① Law can come from several sources. The United States Constitution and state constitutions set basic rules for government and protect rights. Legislatures make statutes, which are written laws. Statutes passed by Congress generally apply nationwide, while statutes passed by a state legislature generally apply statewide. A city or county government can pass an ordinance, a local law that applies within its own community. For example, a town may set rules for noise, parking, or pet licenses.
- ② When courts decide disputes, judges write opinions that explain how a law applies. These court decisions, often called case law, can guide later cases. A decision from a higher court usually must be followed by lower courts in the same court system. Courts may interpret constitutional language or statutes when deciding a case. For example, a court might decide whether a school rule violates a constitutional right. Its opinion can guide future judges facing a similar dispute.
- ③ Government agencies also create administrative regulations, sometimes called rules. A legislature gives an agency authority to carry out a statute. The agency then writes detailed regulations, such as safety requirements for workplaces or standards for clean drinking water. Regulations must fit the Constitution and the statute that authorized them. If a person challenges a regulation, a court can review it. Knowing the source helps you tell whether a rule is constitutional law, statutory law, case law, administrative law, or a local ordinance.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Compare where a federal statute, a state statute, and a city ordinance generally apply.

2 What source creates case law, and how can a higher court decision affect lower courts?

3 How does an administrative regulation begin, and what must it fit?

4 A county adopts a rule requiring pet licenses. What type of law is this, and where does it apply?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a local issue not named in the passage. Write three sentences that propose a local ordinance, name the government body that could create it, and explain where the ordinance would apply.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each named type of law, then circle each government body that creates or interprets it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare where a federal statute, a state statute, and a city ordinance generally apply.	A federal statute generally applies nationwide. A state statute generally applies statewide. A city ordinance applies within that city or local community.
2	What source creates case law, and how can a higher court decision affect lower courts?	Courts create case law through their decisions and opinions. Lower courts in the same court system usually must follow a higher court's decision.
3	How does an administrative regulation begin, and what must it fit?	A legislature gives an agency authority to carry out a statute, and the agency writes a regulation. The regulation must fit the Constitution and the authorizing statute.
4	A county adopts a rule requiring pet licenses. What type of law is this, and where does it apply?	It is a local ordinance. It applies within that county or local community.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A city council could pass an ordinance requiring trash bins at public parks. The city council is the local government body that could create this ordinance. The rule would apply within the city.

Accept any reasonable local issue and ordinance if the student correctly identifies a city or county government as the source and explains that the rule applies locally. The response should include three sentences and avoid treating a state or federal law as an ordinance.