

Three Levels, Real Duties

Compare legal duties across local, state, and federal government.

SS.8.CG.2.2 "Compare the legal obligations of citizens at the local, state, and national levels."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each legal obligation in the passage. In the margin, write L beside local duties, S beside state duties, and N beside national duties so you can compare who sets each duty.

Rules at Three Levels

- ① In the United States, governments at three levels make laws for different needs. A city or county may require residents to follow local rules, such as parking limits, trash rules, or building codes. These rules help manage shared spaces and services. At the state level, people must follow state traffic laws and other statewide laws. A driver who ignores a city parking rule may face a local fine, while a driver who breaks a state speed law may face a state penalty.
- ② Federal law creates obligations that reach across the nation. For example, people who meet federal filing requirements must file federal income tax returns and pay taxes owed. Citizens and certain immigrants who are men ages 18 through 25 must register with Selective Service. Federal courts can summon eligible citizens for jury duty. A person must respond to a jury summons, although a court may excuse that person. These duties are national because Congress and federal courts, rather than a city or state, set or enforce them.
- ③ Some obligations can appear at more than one level. Everyone must obey applicable laws, but the government that made a rule usually enforces it. A state court may summon a qualified citizen for a state jury, while a federal court may summon a qualified citizen for a federal jury. A city may collect a property tax from property owners if local law authorizes it. Voting, attending a meeting, or volunteering can strengthen a community, but these actions are usually civic responsibilities, not legal requirements.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does a city parking rule differ from a state speed law in both level of government and possible penalty?

2 Name two federal legal obligations from the passage. State who must complete each one.

3 Compare state jury duty with federal jury duty. Who can summon the citizen in each case?

4 Why are voting, attending a meeting, and volunteering different from the legal duties in the passage?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine you are advising a new resident. Write exactly four sentences: one sentence each about a local, state, and national legal obligation, then one sentence that explains how a civic responsibility differs from those legal obligations.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each legal obligation in the passage. In the margin, write L beside local duties, S beside state duties, and N beside national duties so you can compare who sets each duty. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does a city parking rule differ from a state speed law in both level of government and possible penalty?	A city parking rule is a local rule and may bring a local fine. A state speed law is a state rule and may bring a state penalty.
2	Name two federal legal obligations from the passage. State who must complete each one.	People who meet federal filing requirements must file federal income tax returns and pay taxes owed. Male citizens and certain male immigrants ages 18 through 25 must register with Selective Service.
3	Compare state jury duty with federal jury duty. Who can summon the citizen in each case?	A state court can summon a qualified citizen for a state jury. A federal court can summon a qualified citizen for a federal jury.
4	Why are voting, attending a meeting, and volunteering different from the legal duties in the passage?	They are usually civic responsibilities that strengthen a community, not legal requirements.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At the local level, a resident must follow city trash rules because the city can enforce them. At the state level, a driver must obey state speed laws. At the national level, a man who is a U.S. citizen and is 18 through 25 must register with Selective Service under federal law. Voting is a civic responsibility because it is usually not a legal requirement.

Accept other accurate passage-based examples at the correct level, including local property tax for property owners when authorized by local law and federal income tax duties for people who meet filing requirements. For the open response, check that all three government levels are correctly matched to legal obligations and that the final sentence distinguishes civic responsibility from legal duty.