

Choosing National Leaders

Compare how citizens take part in selecting leaders in three European countries.

SS6CG3.a "Explain citizen participation in autocratic and democratic governments. [i.e., role of citizens in choosing the leaders of the United Kingdom (parliamentary democracy), Germany (parliamentary democracy)..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one sentence in each paragraph that explains how citizens help choose leaders. Then circle two phrases in paragraph 3 that show why participation can be limited.

Three Ways Citizens Participate

- ① In the United Kingdom, citizens age 18 and older vote in elections for members of Parliament, called MPs. Each voter chooses a candidate to represent a local area in the House of Commons. Citizens do not vote directly for the prime minister. Usually, the leader of the party that can win support from most MPs becomes prime minister. The monarch formally appoints that leader. By electing MPs, citizens influence which party leads the government.
- ② Germany also has a parliamentary democracy, but its steps are different. Citizens age 18 and older vote for representatives in their districts to the Bundestag, Germany's national parliament. After an election, members of the Bundestag elect the chancellor, who leads the federal government. Citizens do not directly choose the chancellor. Political parties may need to work together to gain enough support in the Bundestag. Therefore, voters influence the choice of chancellor by choosing parties and representatives.
- ③ Russia has a presidential system, and citizens vote directly for the president. The president is both head of state and a powerful leader of the government. In a democratic election, citizens need real choices, independent information, and a fair chance to support or criticize candidates. Russia's government has restricted opposition candidates, independent media, and protests. These limits reduce meaningful citizen participation and make it hard for voters to choose among competing leaders freely. Voting takes place, but the political system is widely described as autocratic.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How do citizens in the United Kingdom influence who becomes prime minister, even though they do not vote directly for that office?

2 What are the two steps that lead to the choice of Germany's chancellor?

3 How do citizens choose Russia's president?

4 Name two restrictions in Russia that can reduce meaningful citizen participation. Explain how the restrictions can affect voters' choices.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly three sentences for a classmate comparing citizen participation in the United Kingdom, Germany, and Russia. Explain how citizens influence or choose leaders in each country, and include one limit on participation in Russia.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one sentence in each paragraph that explains how citizens help choose leaders. Then circle two phrases in paragraph 3 that show why participation can be limited. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do citizens in the United Kingdom influence who becomes prime minister, even though they do not vote directly for that office?	Citizens elect MPs. The leader of the party that wins support from most MPs usually becomes prime minister.
2	What are the two steps that lead to the choice of Germany's chancellor?	Citizens elect representatives to the Bundestag. Then Bundestag members elect the chancellor.
3	How do citizens choose Russia's president?	Citizens vote directly for the president.
4	Name two restrictions in Russia that can reduce meaningful citizen participation. Explain how the restrictions can affect voters' choices.	Answers may name restrictions on opposition candidates, independent media, or protests. These restrictions can limit candidates, information, criticism, and voters' ability to choose freely.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In the United Kingdom, I would vote for an MP because MPs help determine which party leader becomes prime minister. In Germany, I would vote for Bundestag representatives, who elect the chancellor. In Russia, voters directly elect the president, but restrictions on opponents and media can limit free choices.

Accept equivalent descriptions of indirect selection in the United Kingdom and Germany, as long as students identify MPs or Bundestag members as the elected representatives. For Russia, students should distinguish direct presidential voting from limits on free, meaningful participation.