Who Decides Here?

Explore how governments work together while keeping different powers.

4.SS.1.8 "Examine the meaning of tribal sovereignty and its relationship at the tribal, local, state, and federal levels of government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that explains tribal sovereignty. Then circle one action by each of the four levels of government to show how their roles differ.

A River Cleanup

1. On a spring morning, families gather beside a river near tribal land. The tribal council plans a cleanup along the riverbank on tribal land. Tribal sovereignty means a tribal nation has the power to govern itself. Its government can make many decisions for its people and lands. This power does not come from a nearby town or the state. Tribal nations had governments long before the United States existed.

2. At the cleanup, the tribal council sets rules for using its riverbank and asks volunteers to protect plants there. A nearby town agrees to collect trash from a town road that leads to the river. The two governments talk because water and litter cross their borders. The town cannot simply make the tribal council's decisions, and the council does not run the town road.

3. The state government helps check water quality across the state and may share test results with the tribe. The federal government works with federally recognized tribes as governments. It must follow federal laws and honor treaties when they exist. Tribal, local, state, and federal governments may cooperate, but each has different powers and duties. Working together does not erase tribal sovereignty.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What does tribal sovereignty mean? How does the council show it at the cleanup?

2. Why do the tribal council and the town talk, even though each makes its own decisions?

3. How can the state work with the tribe on water quality without taking over the council's role?

4. How is the federal government's relationship with federally recognized tribes different from the town's work with the tribe in this cleanup?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new walking path starts on tribal land and ends at a town park. Write four sentences explaining one decision the tribal government makes, one the town makes, and how the state and federal governments could work with the tribe without taking over its decisions.

ANSWER KEY

Who Decides Here?

GRADE 4 · 4.SS.1.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that explains tribal sovereignty. Then circle one action by each of the four levels of government to show how their roles differ. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does tribal sovereignty mean? How does the council show it at the cleanup?	**It means a tribal nation has the power to govern itself. The council sets rules for using its riverbank.**
2	Why do the tribal council and the town talk, even though each makes its own decisions?	**Water and litter cross their borders, so decisions by either government can affect the river area.**
3	How can the state work with the tribe on water quality without taking over the council's role?	**The state can share water test results with the tribe, while the council still sets rules for its riverbank.**
4	How is the federal government's relationship with federally recognized tribes different from the town's work with the tribe in this cleanup?	**The federal government works with federally recognized tribes as governments and must follow federal laws and honor treaties when they exist. The town works with the tribe on a shared concern and collects trash from its own road.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The tribal council could set rules for the part of the path on tribal land. The town could decide how to care for the part in its park. The state could share water test results with the tribe if the path reaches the river. The federal government could follow laws and any relevant treaties as it works with the tribe, while respecting the tribe's decisions.

Accept other reasonable ways the governments could cooperate if the response preserves the tribal government's power to make its own decisions. Students should not suggest that every tribe has a treaty.