Storm Supply Choices

Compare how economic systems respond when a city needs food.

9-12.EC.6 "Compare and contrast the characteristics of different economic systems and economic philosophies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline who controls resources or makes decisions in each system. Write 1 beside a possible benefit and 2 beside a possible limitation of each system so you can compare their trade-offs.

Who Gets Food After the Storm?

1. When a severe snowstorm cuts off a city, residents still need food. Who decides which stores open, what food costs, and who receives it? An economic system organizes decisions about resources, production, and distribution. In a market system, private businesses respond to buyers and compete for sales. A grocer might pay drivers more to make difficult deliveries, then raise prices to cover costs. The philosophy of capitalism favors private ownership and the possibility of profit. Competition may speed deliveries, but higher prices can put food beyond the reach of families with little money.

2. In a command system, government planners make major decisions about production and distribution. During the same storm, a public agency could direct trucks to neighborhoods and set household food limits. Central direction may get supplies to isolated areas even when serving them is not profitable. Yet planners might miss changing needs on particular streets, leaving some stores with too much and others with too little. Socialism is a philosophy that favors social or public ownership of major resources and aims to distribute benefits more broadly. Socialist goals can be pursued through democratic policies, not only through a command system.

3. Most countries use mixed systems, combining market decisions with government action. In the storm, private grocers might choose their stock and prices while the city buys meals for shelters and pays for deliveries to people who cannot travel. This approach keeps some business flexibility and adds a way to serve residents whom the market may overlook. It also requires public money and decisions about who qualifies for help. A mixed system can reflect capitalist support for private enterprise alongside socialist support for shared responsibility. Its exact balance depends on laws and public choices, not on a single fixed formula.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Compare who makes food-delivery decisions in a market system and a command system. How might that difference affect deliveries during the storm?

2. How does the mixed system address a problem the market system might leave unsolved? Name one cost or challenge of the mixed approach.

3. Compare the ownership favored by capitalism and socialism. How might each philosophy shape a goal for the storm response?

4. Both the command and mixed systems could get food to people who might otherwise be missed. Compare how each system would do it.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A heat wave leaves some residents unable to afford a cool place to stay. In 4 to 5 sentences, propose a plan using features of two economic systems from the passage, compare what each feature contributes, and explain one trade-off of your plan.

ANSWER KEY

Storm Supply Choices

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.EC.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline who controls resources or makes decisions in each system. Write 1 beside a possible benefit and 2 beside a possible limitation of each system so you can compare their trade-offs. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare who makes food-delivery decisions in a market system and a command system. How might that difference affect deliveries during the storm?	**Private businesses make market decisions and may pay drivers more to deliver quickly. Government planners direct deliveries in a command system and may send supplies to isolated areas even when doing so is not profitable.**
2	How does the mixed system address a problem the market system might leave unsolved? Name one cost or challenge of the mixed approach.	**The city can buy meals for shelters and pay for deliveries to people the market may overlook. This requires public money and decisions about who qualifies.**
3	Compare the ownership favored by capitalism and socialism. How might each philosophy shape a goal for the storm response?	**Capitalism favors private ownership and the possibility of profit, which may encourage grocers to make sales. Socialism favors social or public ownership of major resources and broader distribution of benefits, which may encourage serving residents regardless of profit.**
4	Both the command and mixed systems could get food to people who might otherwise be missed. Compare how each system would do it.	**In a command system, government planners could direct trucks to isolated neighborhoods. In a mixed system, private grocers make business decisions while the city pays for deliveries to people who cannot travel.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Private businesses could compete to offer cooling services at different prices, as they might in a market system. The city could operate free cooling centers and pay for rides to them, adding government action as it would in a mixed system. Competition could give customers choices, while public services would reach residents who cannot afford a cooling service. The plan would require public money, and some people might still live too far from a cooling center.

Accept other comparisons supported by the passage. For the open task, look for two identifiable system features, a distinct contribution from each, and a plausible trade-off.