Questioning the Rules

How counterculture groups challenged American society

9-12.US2.32 "Examine the various ways the counterculture critiqued United States society."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three actions people took to challenge accepted ways of living. Number each action, then circle the belief about society that it questioned.

More Than a Protest

1 In the late 1960s, a young person might leave a crowded city for a rural commune. Some counterculture groups shared food and work rather than chasing salaries and new products. Their choice criticized a society that treated buying things as proof of success. Concerts and homemade newspapers also offered ways to gather outside commercial routines. Not everyone joined a commune, but these experiments asked whether people could build communities around cooperation instead of consumption.

2 At antiwar rallies, some young Americans burned draft cards or carried signs against the Vietnam War. They argued that officials demanded obedience while sending people to fight a war they considered unjust. Protest songs questioned claims that military force made the country safer. These actions challenged trust in government authority, not just one policy. Many Americans disagreed with the protests, and some counterculture participants opposed the war without supporting every protest tactic.

3 Women in and around the counterculture also questioned who got to make decisions. Some rejected the expectation that women should marry, raise children, and leave leadership to men. They sought more freedom in work, relationships, and public life. Yet women sometimes found that men in counterculture groups still expected them to cook or take notes. By pointing out this contradiction, they criticized both mainstream gender rules and unequal treatment inside movements that claimed to value freedom.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did life in a commune challenge one measure of success?

2. What belief about government did antiwar protests question?

3. How did some women criticize both mainstream society and counterculture groups?

4. How were the critiques in the first and second paragraphs different?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new counterculture group responding to a social expectation today. In three sentences, name the expectation, describe a specific action the group could take, and explain how that action uses one kind of critique from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Questioning the Rules

HIGH SCHOOL · 9-12.US2.32

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three actions people took to challenge accepted ways of living. Number each action, then circle the belief about society that it questioned. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did life in a commune challenge one measure of success?	**Sharing food and work challenged the idea that buying products or earning a high salary proved success.**
2	What belief about government did antiwar protests question?	**They questioned whether people should obey officials and trust claims that military force made the country safer.**
3	How did some women criticize both mainstream society and counterculture groups?	**They challenged traditional roles for women and the unequal work and decision-making within counterculture groups.**
4	How were the critiques in the first and second paragraphs different?	**The first challenged consumerism as a measure of success; the second challenged the Vietnam War and trust in government authority.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Today, people may feel pressure to replace a working phone when a newer model appears. A group could hold free repair meetups and share used devices. This action challenges the idea that buying the newest product proves success, applying the counterculture's critique of consumerism to a current habit.

Accept other passage-supported comparisons and explanations. For Part 3, look for a present-day expectation, a specific action, and a clear link to one critique in the passage.