Rome in Government

Trace Roman ideas in modern civic decisions.

6.C.3 "Explain how the elements and foundations of Roman representative democracy are present in modern systems of government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three Roman government practices and circle a modern U.S. practice that connects to each one. Write matching numbers beside each pair to show the connections.

From the Roman Square to Congress

1. Imagine a crowded square in the Roman Republic. Citizens gather to vote on who will hold public office. Roman citizens elected officials, including two consuls who led the government and armies for one year. Voters did not simply choose a king to rule for life. Today, voters in the United States elect members of Congress to represent them and make national laws. Both systems use elections to give some public power to chosen officials. Yet a Roman consul and a modern member of Congress did not have the same job.

2. After an election, Roman officials did not make every choice alone. The Roman Senate debated public matters and advised officials. Many senators had already held office, and people did not elect someone directly to a Senate seat. Today, members of the U.S. Congress debate proposals before voting on laws. This resembles Rome's practice of discussing public decisions in a council, but Congress can pass laws, while the Roman Senate's main role was to give advice. The two bodies were not identical, even though both helped shape government decisions.

3. Romans also built ways to stop a decision. Citizens called plebeians elected tribunes, who could veto certain actions by other officials to protect plebeians. In the United States, a president can veto a bill passed by Congress, although Congress can override that veto with enough votes. These veto powers are not the same, but both can slow or block government action. There is another major difference: Roman women and enslaved people could not vote, while U.S. law protects the voting rights of adult citizens regardless of gender.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What idea do elections for Roman consuls and elections for U.S. members of Congress share?

2. How are the Roman Senate and U.S. Congress alike, and what is one difference in their roles?

3. How does a Roman tribune's veto connect to a U.S. president's veto?

4. How does the difference in who could vote affect whose voices elections could represent?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your town is deciding whether to build a skate park. In four sentences, explain who could vote for the decision-makers, how those officials would debate and check a decision, two links to Roman government, and one important difference from Rome.

ANSWER KEY

Rome in Government

GRADE 6 · 6.C.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three Roman government practices and circle a modern U.S. practice that connects to each one. Write matching numbers beside each pair to show the connections. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What idea do elections for Roman consuls and elections for U.S. members of Congress share?	**Voters choose officials to exercise public power, rather than leaving all power to a ruler chosen for life.**
2	How are the Roman Senate and U.S. Congress alike, and what is one difference in their roles?	**Both debate public matters. Congress can pass laws, while the Roman Senate's main role was to advise officials.**
3	How does a Roman tribune's veto connect to a U.S. president's veto?	**Both can slow or block government action, although tribunes vetoed certain official actions and the president vetoes bills passed by Congress.**
4	How does the difference in who could vote affect whose voices elections could represent?	**Roman elections excluded women and enslaved people. U.S. law protects adult citizens' voting rights regardless of gender, so those voters can have a voice in elections.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In my town, adult residents would elect council members to decide whether to build a skate park. Like Romans choosing officials, voters would choose people to act for the community. Council members would debate the park plan, as Roman senators debated public matters, and a mayor could veto the plan so the council would have to reconsider it. Unlike in Rome, women would have the same right to vote as men.

Accept other accurate connections among elections, public debate, and vetoes. Responses should distinguish a modern practice from its Roman counterpart rather than claim the two governments worked exactly alike.