Who Calls the Shots?

Leadership choices at a community festival

S.6.6 "Describe leadership styles (authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire) and the benefits and drawbacks of each."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB In each paragraph, underline how decisions are made, circle one benefit, and write D beside one drawback. Use your marks to compare the three styles.

Three Teams, Three Ways to Lead

1. At a neighborhood arts festival, a sudden downpour sends visitors toward the indoor hall. The site manager uses an **authoritarian** style: she decides where volunteers will stand and tells each person exactly what to do. No vote is taken. Her quick directions keep the crowded doorway clear and help everyone get inside safely. Yet two volunteers know that a second entrance is open, and the manager does not pause to hear them. Her plan creates a long line that might have been avoided. This style can help when time is short, but it may overlook useful knowledge from the group.

2. Later, the festival committee must choose which performances to move into the hall. Its chair uses a **democratic** style. She asks performers and volunteers for ideas, then has committee members vote after a short discussion. Members support the schedule because they helped shape it, and a volunteer points out that the youngest dancers need an earlier time slot. However, the discussion takes longer than a single leader's decision. Two performers leave before the vote, so their concerns are not heard. Shared decisions can draw on more perspectives, but voting does not guarantee that every voice is included.

3. Meanwhile, the mural team has a different task: designing signs for the rescheduled shows. Its coordinator takes a **laissez-faire** approach. She supplies paint and a deadline but lets artists decide how to organize their work and what each sign will look like. Experienced artists try bold ideas without waiting for approval, and the signs have a lively variety. Still, nobody checks whether the lettering can be read from a distance. Some signs must be repainted just before the doors open. Giving members freedom can spark creativity, but limited guidance can leave important details unchecked.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the site manager and the committee chair differ in the way they made decisions?

2. What was one benefit and one drawback of the manager's authoritarian style during the downpour?

3. What was one benefit and one drawback of the chair's democratic style when setting the schedule?

4. How did the coordinator use a laissez-faire style, and what was one benefit and one drawback?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A student group is planning a winter clothing swap. Choose two leadership styles for different moments in the project. In 5 to 6 sentences, explain how decisions would be made and give one benefit and one drawback of each style in this setting.

ANSWER KEY

Who Calls the Shots?

HIGH SCHOOL · S.6.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

In each paragraph, underline how decisions are made, circle one benefit, and write D beside one drawback. Use your marks to compare the three styles. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the site manager and the committee chair differ in the way they made decisions?	**The site manager made decisions herself and gave directions. The chair gathered ideas and had committee members vote.**
2	What was one benefit and one drawback of the manager's authoritarian style during the downpour?	**Quick directions kept the doorway clear and helped visitors get inside. The manager did not hear about the second entrance, so a long line formed.**
3	What was one benefit and one drawback of the chair's democratic style when setting the schedule?	**The discussion brought out the youngest dancers' need for an earlier slot. It took longer than one person's decision, and two performers left before the vote.**
4	How did the coordinator use a laissez-faire style, and what was one benefit and one drawback?	**She provided supplies and a deadline but let the artists organize their work and design the signs. They tried bold ideas, but some lettering was hard to read and had to be repainted.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before a winter clothing swap, a democratic leader could ask volunteers to suggest collection sites and vote on the best one. A volunteer might identify a spot near a bus stop, making drop-offs easier for more families. However, debate about the sites could postpone the collection announcement. For sorting the donated clothes, the leader could use a laissez-faire style and let experienced volunteers set up their own stations. Their independence might help them organize sizes in a way that fits the space. Without a shared plan, though, two stations might label the same coat with different sizes.

Accept other passage-supported benefits and drawbacks in Part 2. For Part 3, look for two distinct styles, a clear decision-making process for each, and a plausible benefit and drawback tied to the clothing swap.