Who Joins Whom?

Read how choice and comparison shape group membership.

S.6.8 "Define different types of groups (involuntary, voluntary, coercive, reference)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that defines each of the four group types, then circle one example of each type so you can connect each definition to a situation.

Groups After the Flood

1. When a river floods the edge of a town, people respond through different groups. Some groups exist before anyone makes a decision about joining them. An **involuntary group** is one a person belongs to without choosing membership. For example, Nadia belongs to her birth family even though she did not choose her relatives. Other groups form when people decide to take part. A **voluntary group** is one people choose to join and can generally leave. Nadia signs up for a neighborhood cleanup team after the flood. Both groups matter to her, but choice separates the two types.

2. Not every group a person did not choose is simply an assigned connection. A **coercive group** is one people are compelled to join or remain in through force, threats, or an authority's power. In Nadia's town, people serving sentences in a correctional facility cannot choose to leave. They form a coercive group because legal authority restricts their freedom, not merely because they share a trait. Nadia also did not choose her birth family, but no one placed her there as a punishment or holds her there under guard. To classify a group, ask why a person belongs and whether departure is restricted.

3. A **reference group** is a group someone uses as a standard for judging behavior, goals, or identity, whether or not that person belongs to it. Nadia watches a trained search-and-rescue team and compares its careful planning with her cleanup team's work. She is not a rescue team member, but the team guides how she thinks a group should prepare. A group can fit more than one label depending on the question being asked: rescue workers may have chosen to join, making their team voluntary for them, while it serves as a reference group for Nadia. Ask who chooses membership and who uses the group as a model.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why is Nadia's birth family an involuntary group rather than a voluntary group?

2. What makes Nadia's neighborhood cleanup team a voluntary group?

3. Why are the people serving sentences in the correctional facility a coercive group rather than simply an involuntary group?

4. How can the search-and-rescue team be voluntary for its members but a reference group for Nadia?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Invent a student with connections to two groups not mentioned in the passage. In 3 to 4 sentences, give an example of each group, name its type, and explain why it fits; at least one must be a reference group.

Who Joins Whom?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that defines each of the four group types, then circle one example of each type so you can connect each definition to a situation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why is Nadia's birth family an involuntary group rather than a voluntary group?	**Nadia did not choose her relatives or decide to join her birth family.**
2	What makes Nadia's neighborhood cleanup team a voluntary group?	**Nadia chose to sign up for the team, and members can generally leave a voluntary group.**
3	Why are the people serving sentences in the correctional facility a coercive group rather than simply an involuntary group?	**Legal authority requires them to remain there, so they cannot choose to leave.**
4	How can the search-and-rescue team be voluntary for its members but a reference group for Nadia?	**Its members may have chosen to join. Nadia does not belong to the team, but she uses its planning as a standard for judging her cleanup team's work.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Maya chooses to join the school debate club and can leave, so it is a voluntary group. She follows a national chess team and compares her practice habits with its members' habits, so it is a reference group. Maya does not have to belong to the chess team to use it as a model.

Accept different examples when the explanation correctly identifies what determines membership or how a group serves as a standard for comparison. A reference group may also be a group the student belongs to.