Who Decides?

Trace government powers through a school safety decision.

USG.3.2 "Explain the constitutional principles of federalism, separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, and republican government. Provide examples of these principles in the governments of the United States and Indiana."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one example of federalism and one of republican government, circle an example of separation of powers, and write 1 and 2 beside two different checks on power.

A Safer Trip to School

1. Imagine a busy crossing outside an Indiana high school. Students want safer roads, but no single government makes every decision. Under federalism, the U.S. government and state governments have different powers. Congress can fund national highway safety programs, while Indiana can pass statewide traffic laws, including rules for drivers who approach stopped school buses. Indiana towns may also set rules for local streets under state law. Republican government means voters choose representatives to make public decisions on their behalf. Hoosiers elect members of the Indiana General Assembly, and voters across the nation elect members of Congress.

2. Suppose residents ask lawmakers to change a school bus safety rule. Separation of powers assigns lawmaking, enforcement, and interpretation to different branches. In the federal government, Congress writes laws, the president leads the executive branch that carries them out, and federal courts interpret laws in cases. Indiana uses the same basic design at the state level: its General Assembly makes laws, its governor leads the executive branch, and its courts decide cases. The governor cannot simply announce a new statewide traffic law. A bill must pass the General Assembly before it can become law through the constitutional process.

3. Sharing duties does not mean that branches work without limits. Checks and balances let each branch restrain another. If Indiana's governor vetoes a school bus safety bill, the General Assembly can still enact it by overriding the veto with a majority of the elected members in each chamber. At the national level, a president can veto a bill from Congress, but a two-thirds vote in each chamber can override that veto. Courts provide another check: they can rule that a law violates a constitution. These limits matter because even elected officials must follow constitutional rules when making decisions that affect daily life.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Congress and Indiana show federalism when they address road safety?

2. How do elections make both Congress and the Indiana General Assembly examples of republican government?

3. How is lawmaking, enforcement, and interpretation divided among branches in both the U.S. and Indiana governments?

4. How can lawmakers check a veto in Indiana and at the national level? What is different about the votes required?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A proposal would require Indiana public schools to test their drinking water each year. In four to five sentences, explain how the proposal could involve federalism, republican government, separation of powers, and checks and balances, including one action by a U.S. institution and one by an Indiana institution.

Who Decides?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one example of federalism and one of republican government, circle an example of separation of powers, and write 1 and 2 beside two different checks on power. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do Congress and Indiana show federalism when they address road safety?	**Congress can fund national highway safety programs, while Indiana can pass statewide traffic laws.**
2	How do elections make both Congress and the Indiana General Assembly examples of republican government?	**Voters elect members of both bodies to make public decisions on their behalf.**
3	How is lawmaking, enforcement, and interpretation divided among branches in both the U.S. and Indiana governments?	**Congress and the Indiana General Assembly make laws. The president and Indiana governor lead the executive branches that carry them out. Federal and Indiana courts interpret laws in cases.**
4	How can lawmakers check a veto in Indiana and at the national level? What is different about the votes required?	**Both legislatures can override a veto. Indiana requires a majority of the elected members in each chamber; Congress requires a two-thirds vote in each chamber.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Federalism lets Congress fund school drinking water improvements while Indiana decides whether to require annual tests. Hoosiers could elect state lawmakers who support the proposal, an example of republican government. Under separation of powers, the Indiana General Assembly could pass a testing law, and the governor's executive agencies could carry it out. The governor could veto the bill, a check on the legislature. The General Assembly could override the veto with a majority of the elected members in each chamber, another check.

Accept other constitutionally accurate actions if the response explains all four principles and names an action by both a U.S. institution and an Indiana institution.