

Shared Power, Three Levels

Read how federalism divides responsibilities across government.

7.5a "The Constitution outlined a federalist system of government that shares powers between the federal, state, and local governments."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each power or responsibility of the federal government, circle each power of a state government, and number each local responsibility. These marks will help you track how federalism shares power.

Who Handles What?

- ① Federal action must rest on constitutional authority, even when a problem crosses state borders. The Constitution gives Congress listed, or enumerated, powers. These include collecting federal taxes, coining money, regulating trade with other nations and among states, and providing for national defense. A federal law can set one rule for the whole country when it is within a constitutional power. For example, the federal government manages immigration rules because decisions about entering the nation affect the United States as a whole.
- ② The Tenth Amendment explains an important part of federalism. Powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, and not prohibited to the states, are reserved to the states or the people. Using these reserved powers, a state may set rules for public schools, issue drivers' licenses, and organize elections. States also create many laws about health, safety, and property. Each state can respond to needs within its borders, as long as its laws do not conflict with the U.S. Constitution or valid federal laws.
- ③ Local governments, such as counties, cities, towns, and villages, get their authority from state governments. Their work is close to daily life. A city might collect trash, maintain local streets, operate parks, or provide police and fire services. A county may run local records or public health programs. State laws set the limits of local power, so a city cannot make a rule that breaks a state law. Federalism therefore connects three levels of government, with each level handling responsibilities suited to its reach.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Name two enumerated powers of Congress from the passage.

2 According to the Tenth Amendment language in the passage, when is a power reserved to the states or the people?

3 Where do local governments get their authority, and what limits a city's power?

4 Why does the passage give immigration rules to the federal government but drivers' licenses to state governments?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write exactly four sentences about a new community issue. Give one appropriate responsibility to the federal government, one to the state government, and one to the local government, then explain one limit that a lower level must follow.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each power or responsibility of the federal government, circle each power of a state government, and number each local responsibility. These marks will help you track how federalism shares power. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two enumerated powers of Congress from the passage.	Any two: collecting federal taxes, coining money, regulating trade with other nations and among states, or providing for national defense.
2	According to the Tenth Amendment language in the passage, when is a power reserved to the states or the people?	When the power is not delegated to the United States by the Constitution and is not prohibited to the states.
3	Where do local governments get their authority, and what limits a city's power?	Local governments get authority from state governments. A city cannot make a rule that breaks a state law.
4	Why does the passage give immigration rules to the federal government but drivers' licenses to state governments?	Immigration affects the United States as a whole, while issuing drivers' licenses is a reserved state power that addresses needs within a state's borders.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

To improve road safety near a school, the city can add crosswalk signs and maintain the street. The state can set rules for driver licenses and school transportation. The federal government can regulate safety standards for cars sold across state lines. The city plan must follow state law.

Accept reasonable examples that correctly assign a national or interstate responsibility to the federal government, a reserved power to the state, and a daily community service to local government. The final sentence should state that local governments must follow state law, or that state laws cannot conflict with the U.S. Constitution or valid federal laws.