Who Chose the Governor?

Compare how colonial governors gained office.

5.C.1.9.C "governors elected by freemen"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline who chose each colony's governor, then circle the words that tell how the choice was made. Number the colonies 1, 2, and 3 as you find them.

A Governor's Path to Office

1. Imagine a meeting in colonial Connecticut. A group of freemen gathers to choose a governor. Freemen were men who had been granted the right to vote in the colony. Under Connecticut's 1662 charter, these voters elected their governor instead of waiting for a king to choose one. The governor helped lead the colony, but his position came from the votes of freemen.

2. Rhode Island followed a similar path. Its 1663 charter let freemen elect the colony's governor. These elections gave some colonists a voice in their government. Yet the word *freemen* did not mean everyone. Women could not vote for governor, and many men, including enslaved men, lacked voting rights. The people who selected the governor were only a limited part of the colony's population.

3. By the late 1600s, Virginia was a royal colony. The king appointed its governor. Voters there did not elect him. This difference matters when comparing colonial governments. If freemen elected a governor, the choice began with eligible colonists. If the king appointed a governor, the choice began in England. Neither system gave every person an equal say, but the way each governor gained office was different.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Who chose Connecticut's governor under its 1662 charter, and how?

2. How did Rhode Island's governor gain office under its 1663 charter?

3. How did Virginia's governor gain office differently from Connecticut's governor?

4. Why would it be incorrect to say that everyone elected the governors of Connecticut and Rhode Island?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A new colony's charter says, "The freemen shall choose the governor each year." Write a three-sentence speech from a freeman explaining what he will do on election day, who cannot take part, and how the governor is chosen without a king's appointment.

ANSWER KEY

Who Chose the Governor?

GRADE 5 · 5.C.1.9.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline who chose each colony's governor, then circle the words that tell how the choice was made. Number the colonies 1, 2, and 3 as you find them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who chose Connecticut's governor under its 1662 charter, and how?	**Freemen elected Connecticut's governor by voting.**
2	How did Rhode Island's governor gain office under its 1663 charter?	**Freemen elected Rhode Island's governor.**
3	How did Virginia's governor gain office differently from Connecticut's governor?	**The king appointed Virginia's governor, while freemen elected Connecticut's governor.**
4	Why would it be incorrect to say that everyone elected the governors of Connecticut and Rhode Island?	**Only freemen could vote for governor. Women and many men, including enslaved men, lacked that right.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Today I will vote for the person I want to lead our colony as governor. Women and men who are not freemen cannot vote with me. The freemen's votes will choose our governor instead of the king appointing one.

Accept answers that distinguish election by freemen from appointment by a king. For Part 3, the speech should apply the new charter and make clear that freemen did not include every resident.