Voices in Government

Compare how public values shape decisions.

6.P.2.1.A "Compare and analyze civic virtues and democratic principles in historic and global settings, explaining how they influence political institutions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline actions that show civic virtues, circle ideas about who should have a voice, and box rules or features of government shaped by those ideas.

Two Ways to Make Decisions

1 In ancient Athens, public decisions could begin with a speaker standing before the Assembly. Male citizens listened, argued, and voted on matters such as laws and war. Decisions followed the majority of votes. Taking part in debate showed civic responsibility, a virtue that kept the Assembly active. The principle that citizens should have a voice shaped this institution: citizens voted rather than leaving decisions to one ruler. Yet Athenian citizenship had strict limits. Women, enslaved people, and foreign residents could not vote in the Assembly.

2 Across the ocean, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy joined several Native nations in northeastern North America. Its council brought together chiefs from member nations to discuss shared concerns. Leaders worked toward consensus, a decision all could accept, instead of ending discussion with a simple majority vote. Patient listening and respect helped that process work. Clan mothers selected chiefs and could remove those who failed to serve their people. This gave leaders a reason to listen beyond the council meeting. Haudenosaunee governments continue today, though their practices have changed over time.

3 Both systems needed people to take public duties seriously, but they gave participation different forms. In Athens, speaking and voting in a large Assembly made open debate important for male citizens. In the Haudenosaunee council, listening across nations helped chiefs seek agreement rather than count winning votes. Each institution reflected an idea about whose voices mattered and how a decision should be made. Neither example means every person had the same role. Studying who could take part shows how democratic principles can shape government while still leaving limits on participation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the idea that citizens should have a voice shape the Athenian Assembly? What was one limit on that idea?

2. Compare how civic responsibility in Athens and patient listening in the Confederacy helped each governing body work.

3. How did clan mothers' power to remove chiefs affect the way chiefs led? How was this role different from voting in Athens?

4. If the Haudenosaunee council used Athens's majority-vote rule, what would change about its way of making decisions? Explain using both examples.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a new town needs a way to make shared decisions. In four or five sentences, propose a governing body, name one civic virtue and one democratic principle it will rely on, explain how each shapes a rule, and compare your body with one in the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Voices in Government

GRADE 6 · 6.P.2.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline actions that show civic virtues, circle ideas about who should have a voice, and box rules or features of government shaped by those ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the idea that citizens should have a voice shape the Athenian Assembly? What was one limit on that idea?	**Male citizens debated and voted in the Assembly instead of leaving decisions to one ruler. Women, enslaved people, and foreign residents could not vote.**
2	Compare how civic responsibility in Athens and patient listening in the Confederacy helped each governing body work.	**Civic responsibility led Athenian citizens to take part in Assembly debates. Patient listening helped Haudenosaunee chiefs work toward consensus.**
3	How did clan mothers' power to remove chiefs affect the way chiefs led? How was this role different from voting in Athens?	**Chiefs had a reason to listen and serve their people because clan mothers could remove them. In Athens, male citizens voted on public decisions in the Assembly.**
4	If the Haudenosaunee council used Athens's majority-vote rule, what would change about its way of making decisions? Explain using both examples.	**The council could end discussion when most chiefs agreed, as the Athenian Assembly did with votes. It would no longer need to work toward a decision all could accept.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My new town will have a council with one elected member from each neighborhood. Respectful listening will guide members, so each person must let others finish before speaking. Equal voice will shape elections, so every adult resident may vote for a representative. Unlike Athens, where women and foreign residents could not vote, our town will let every adult resident vote. The council will try to reach agreement before taking a vote.

Accept other passage-supported explanations that connect a virtue or principle to how an institution works. For Part 3, look for a proposed rule shaped by each named value and an accurate comparison.