Who Decides?

Compare citizens' roles in choosing officials and making rules.

7.C.6.3.A "Describe the involvement of citizens in the selection of government officials and the lawmaking process in different systems of government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline how officials gain power in each community, and circle one way citizens can affect a dock rule. Number the communities from 1, where citizens vote on rules, to 3, where citizens cannot vote on rules or leaders.

Three Docks, Three Decisions

1. A storm has damaged the ferry dock on an imaginary island. Three communities need rules for using their docks while repairs are made. In Harbor City, a representative democracy, adult citizens elect council members in regular, competitive elections. A council member proposes a rule giving repair trucks first access to the dock. Residents may speak at a public meeting or write to council members. Council members debate and vote on the rule. Citizens do not vote on every dock rule, but they can choose different council members at the next election.

2. Across the bay, Cove Village uses direct democracy for its local decisions. Eligible citizens gather at a town meeting to elect a meeting leader and decide dock rules themselves. When someone suggests reserving the dock for fishing boats each morning, citizens can ask questions, propose changes, and vote on the final rule. The meeting leader keeps the discussion orderly but does not make the rule alone. A citizen who wants a different rule must persuade other voters, not just win over a council member. Village rules still must follow higher laws.

3. At Ridge Port, an authoritarian ruler holds power without a free election for the top office. The ruler appoints dock officials and issues a rule that only government boats may use the dock until repairs end. Residents cannot vote the ruler out or vote on the rule. They may send requests to officials, but officials decide whether to listen. One resident asks for a short opening for supply boats. Unlike the other communities, residents have no dependable way to make their choice decide who governs or what rule passes.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Harbor City citizens choose the people who vote on dock rules, and how else can citizens influence a rule?

2. In Cove Village, how do citizens choose a meeting leader and take part in making a dock rule?

3. Who selects Ridge Port's dock officials, and what can residents do if they want a rule changed?

4. Which community gives citizens the most direct vote on dock rules? Explain how its process differs from Harbor City's.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine each community is deciding whether park lights must turn off at 9 p.m. Choose two communities and write five sentences: for each one, explain how citizens help choose officials and how they could affect the park-light rule, then compare their power over the rule.

ANSWER KEY

Who Decides?

GRADE 7 · 7.C.6.3.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline how officials gain power in each community, and circle one way citizens can affect a dock rule. Number the communities from 1, where citizens vote on rules, to 3, where citizens cannot vote on rules or leaders. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do Harbor City citizens choose the people who vote on dock rules, and how else can citizens influence a rule?	**Citizens elect council members. They can speak at a public meeting or write to council members.**
2	In Cove Village, how do citizens choose a meeting leader and take part in making a dock rule?	**Eligible citizens elect the meeting leader at a town meeting. They can ask questions, propose changes, and vote on the rule.**
3	Who selects Ridge Port's dock officials, and what can residents do if they want a rule changed?	**The ruler appoints dock officials. Residents can send requests, but officials decide whether to listen.**
4	Which community gives citizens the most direct vote on dock rules? Explain how its process differs from Harbor City's.	**Cove Village. Its citizens vote on rules themselves, while Harbor City citizens elect council members who vote on rules.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In Harbor City, voters could elect council members who support turning the park lights off at 9 p.m. Residents could speak at a meeting before the council votes on that rule. In Cove Village, voters could elect a meeting leader who will run the discussion. Citizens could suggest a different closing time and vote on the final rule themselves. Cove Village gives citizens a more direct vote on the park-light rule than Harbor City does.

Accept any two communities if the response accurately explains both official selection and citizen involvement in making the rule. Comparisons should distinguish voting on a rule from influencing officials who decide it.