Who Holds Power?

Sort government systems by who controls their leaders.

7.C.6 "Analyze systems of government by examining their source of authority, principles, structures, and processes. Compare the source of authority and power of representative governments (republic..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

People choose officials in meaningful elections. Those officials must answer to voters and follow limits on their power.

In Costa Rica, adults choose among rival candidates for president and the legislature.

AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT

A ruler or small group holds power without meaningful voter control. An election does not change this if voters cannot remove those leaders from power.

In 2021, Myanmar's military seized control and removed elected civilian leaders.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle VOTERS or LEADERS for each case, then pick two numbered cases and explain which clue helped you decide.

1.	1. People choose a lawmaking assembly in regular, competitive elections and can vote its members out.	VOTERS LEADERS
2.	2. A monarch performs ceremonies, while elected lawmakers decide national policy and can be voted out.	VOTERS LEADERS
3.	3. A ruler bans opposing political parties and makes laws by decree.	VOTERS LEADERS
4.	4. A hereditary monarch has final say over laws, even when advisers disagree.	VOTERS LEADERS
5.	5. One party chooses every candidate on the ballot and prevents rival parties from competing for national power.	VOTERS LEADERS
6.	6. People elect officials who must obey a written constitution, and voters can replace them.	VOTERS LEADERS
7.	7. A small unelected council picks its own replacements and makes all national laws.	VOTERS LEADERS
8.	8. Voters elect lawmakers who select a prime minister, and opposition parties can compete in the next election.	VOTERS LEADERS

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new government example for VOTERS and one for LEADERS; show who holds power in each.

VOTERS _____

LEADERS _____

CHALLENGE

A country holds elections, but an unelected council can reject any winner and overturn every law. Which category fits, and why are elections alone not enough to decide?

ANSWER KEY

Who Holds Power?

GRADE 7 · 7.C.6

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	1. People choose a lawmaking assembly in regular, competitive elections and can vote its members out.	**VOTERS**	Voters choose lawmakers and can replace them.
2	2. A monarch performs ceremonies, while elected lawmakers decide national policy and can be voted out.	**VOTERS**	Elected lawmakers, not the monarch, hold governing power and answer to voters.
3	3. A ruler bans opposing political parties and makes laws by decree.	**LEADERS**	The ruler blocks political competition and makes laws without voter control.
4	4. A hereditary monarch has final say over laws, even when advisers disagree.	**LEADERS**	The monarch inherits power and can overrule advisers.
5	5. One party chooses every candidate on the ballot and prevents rival parties from competing for national power.	**LEADERS**	Voters cannot choose a competing party to take power.
6	6. People elect officials who must obey a written constitution, and voters can replace them.	**VOTERS**	Officials are chosen by voters, face limits, and can be removed through elections.
7	7. A small unelected council picks its own replacements and makes all national laws.	**LEADERS**	The council controls leadership and laws without voter input.
8	8. Voters elect lawmakers who select a prime minister, and opposition parties can compete in the next election.	**VOTERS**	Competitive elections give voters a way to change the lawmakers who select the leader.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **VOTERS**: In a fictional country, voters elect a legislature, and courts can block its laws if they violate the constitution.
- **LEADERS**: A self-appointed committee controls the courts and jails anyone who runs against its members.

Challenge: LEADERS fits because the unelected council holds final power. Elections do not give voters control if the council can reject winners and laws.

For the two explanations in Part 2, look for a specific clue about whether voters can choose or replace those who hold power. The challenge tests whether students look beyond the presence of elections.