Who Gets a Voice?

Compare how civic choices shape political institutions.

7.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 a civic virtue in each setting, circle a democratic principle, and number two institutions that put those ideas into practice. Use your marks to compare how the institutions work.

Two Ways to Govern

1 In ancient Athens, citizens gathered to debate and vote on public decisions. Taking part in government was considered a civic duty, so the city used an assembly where eligible citizens could speak and vote directly. Many public offices were filled by lottery, which spread the chance to serve among citizens instead of leaving every job to a small group. Yet Athenian citizenship was narrow: women, enslaved people, and most foreign residents could not join the assembly. Its institutions encouraged participation, but only within that limited group.

2 In Costa Rica today, adult citizens vote for representatives rather than gathering to decide every law themselves. Its constitution guarantees voting rights for adult citizens, including women, and an independent Supreme Electoral Tribunal organizes national elections. This tribunal counts votes and announces results, helping prevent the people in office from controlling their own elections. Voters show civic responsibility by learning about issues and casting ballots. Candidates and supporters also need to accept lawful results. These habits help elections produce leaders whose authority rests on voters' choices rather than force.

3 Both places connected political power to citizens, but they built different ways to use it. Athens gave eligible citizens a direct vote in its assembly and shared some offices by lottery. Costa Rica gives citizens a vote for representatives and assigns election oversight to a separate institution. In each setting, participation can make institutions more responsive, while respect for agreed rules can help people trust decisions they dislike. One important difference is who has political rights: Costa Rica includes adult women as voters, while ancient Athens did not.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the civic duty to participate shape two institutions in ancient Athens?

2. How do Costa Rica's election tribunal and the habit of accepting lawful results work together to support government by voters?

3. Compare who could take part in Athens and Costa Rica. How did that difference affect whose choices their institutions represented?

4. How does citizen participation influence decisions differently in Athens's assembly and Costa Rica's elections?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your school is creating a student council to decide how to spend a small school fund. In four sentences, propose who can take part and how leaders or decisions are chosen, compare your plan with one feature of Athens and one of Costa Rica, and explain how a civic virtue would help your council work.

ANSWER KEY

Who Gets a Voice?

GRADE 7 · 7.P.2.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a civic virtue in each setting, circle a democratic principle, and number two institutions that put those ideas into practice. Use your marks to compare how the institutions work. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the civic duty to participate shape two institutions in ancient Athens?	**Eligible citizens could speak and vote in the assembly, and lottery spread the chance to hold many public offices among them.**
2	How do Costa Rica's election tribunal and the habit of accepting lawful results work together to support government by voters?	**The independent tribunal runs elections and announces results without leaving that control to current officeholders. Accepting lawful results helps people recognize the leaders voters chose.**
3	Compare who could take part in Athens and Costa Rica. How did that difference affect whose choices their institutions represented?	**Athens excluded women, enslaved people, and most foreign residents from its assembly, so it represented only eligible citizens. Costa Rica includes adult women among its voters, giving more citizens a voice in choosing representatives.**
4	How does citizen participation influence decisions differently in Athens's assembly and Costa Rica's elections?	**Eligible Athenians voted directly on public decisions in the assembly. Costa Rican citizens vote for representatives who make decisions in government.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Every student could vote for council members who would decide how to spend the fund. Like Costa Rica, our school would elect representatives and use a separate team to count ballots. Unlike Athens's assembly, students would not vote directly on each spending choice. Council members would listen respectfully to students with different ideas so more voices could shape their decisions.

Accept other accurate comparisons that explain how participation or respect for rules affects an institution. For Part 3, look for a workable council plan, one accurate comparison to each setting, and a clear role for a civic virtue.