Who Held Power?

Trade, self-government, and plans for unity in 1754

8.C.1.1 "Analyze the political and economic climate in the British colonies on the eve of the French and Indian War. Examine how the unofficial British policy of salutary neglect created an environment suited to self-determination in the colonies..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two examples of colonial self-government, circle one trade restriction, and number the two examples of groups using or proposing a shared council to track how power was divided.

An Ocean Away from Britain

1 By 1754, Britain's mainland colonies faced a puzzle: who should make decisions for people living an ocean away? Under **salutary neglect**, British officials often allowed colonial assemblies to handle local affairs, even while Parliament claimed authority over trade. Voters in some New England towns debated local matters at town meetings, and elected colonial legislatures approved taxes. These habits encouraged some colonists to expect a voice in government, though women, enslaved people, and most Native people were excluded from colonial voting. Local control did not mean complete independence.

2 Trade created another tension. Under **mercantilism**, Britain sought wealth by directing colonial trade to benefit the empire. The Navigation Acts required many goods to travel on English or colonial ships and directed certain colonial exports through English ports. Some merchants resented these limits, even as others profited from imperial trade. In the 1730s and 1740s, the First Great Awakening urged people to judge religious claims for themselves rather than simply obey established ministers. Its message of spiritual equality encouraged challenges to inherited authority, helping prepare ideas later used by revolutionaries.

3 In 1754, with war against France looming, colonial delegates proposed the Albany Plan of Union. A shared council chosen by colonial legislatures and a president appointed by the king would manage defense and diplomacy with Native nations. The plan would protect colonial territory and imperial trade while keeping a measure of local control, but neither the colonies nor Britain adopted it. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, a longstanding alliance of Native nations, already used a shared council for common concerns. Unlike the proposed union under British rule, its member nations governed themselves.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did salutary neglect help some colonists develop ideas about self-government? Use one local practice from the passage.

2. Why might a colonial merchant have had mixed feelings about Britain's trade system?

3. How could the First Great Awakening's message challenge established authority without giving everyone political equality?

4. How was the Albany Plan's shared council like the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's council, and how was the proposed union different?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a short letter from a colonial assembly member in 1754 arguing for or against the Albany Plan. Explain how a trade concern, a colonial self-government practice, and a comparison with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy shape your position.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.1.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two examples of colonial self-government, circle one trade restriction, and number the two examples of groups using or proposing a shared council to track how power was divided. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did salutary neglect help some colonists develop ideas about self-government? Use one local practice from the passage.	**British officials often let colonists handle local affairs. By approving taxes in elected legislatures or debating matters in town meetings, some colonists came to expect a voice in government.**
2	Why might a colonial merchant have had mixed feelings about Britain's trade system?	**The Navigation Acts limited shipping and where certain exports could go, which some merchants resented. Other merchants profited from trade within the empire.**
3	How could the First Great Awakening's message challenge established authority without giving everyone political equality?	**It encouraged people to judge religious claims for themselves and promoted spiritual equality. The passage also shows that many people remained excluded from colonial voting.**
4	How was the Albany Plan's shared council like the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's council, and how was the proposed union different?	**Both councils brought members together to address common concerns. The Albany Plan proposed a union under British rule, while the Haudenosaunee member nations governed themselves.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Delegate, I support the Albany Plan because a shared council could coordinate defense and protect trade during a war with France. Still, our assembly should choose its council members, since we already vote on local taxes and expect a say in decisions. Britain limits some trade through the Navigation Acts, so a new union must not silence local voices. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy shows that separate nations can meet in a shared council, though its nations govern themselves and our proposed union would remain under a king.

Accept either position on the Albany Plan if the letter explains all three required connections using accurate evidence. Do not treat spiritual equality during the First Great Awakening as political equality for all colonists.