Who Holds Power?

Sort governments by the limits on their leaders.

MWH.C.3.1.A "Distinguish between limited and unlimited forms of government, including the role of the citizen and the concept of individual liberty."

NAME _____ DATE _____

LIMITED GOVERNMENT	UNLIMITED GOVERNMENT
Enforceable laws restrict leaders' power and protect individual liberties. Citizens can use legal means to challenge leaders and take part in government.	No enforceable law or independent institution effectively restricts leaders' power. Leaders can take away liberties, and citizens have no reliable way to challenge those decisions.
A city charter requires a public vote before officials raise bus fares, and officials obey the result.	A monarch shuts down a religious festival at will, and no institution has authority to reverse the ban.

1 SORT

8 items

For each item, circle LIMITED or UNLIMITED, then choose two item numbers for Part 2 and explain the clue that supports each choice.

1.	An independent court cancels a president's order because it violates the constitution.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
2.	A legislature refuses to fund a prime minister's project, and the prime minister must comply.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
3.	A ruler imprisons peaceful critics without trial, and no court can intervene.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
4.	Officials who try to censor reports of corruption face penalties under a free speech law.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
5.	A dictator seizes families' property at will, with no legal appeal.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
6.	A leader cancels elections whenever a rival gains support, and no institution can stop it.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
7.	A ruler can rewrite any law alone, and judges must accept the changes.	LIMITED UNLIMITED
8.	Voters remove a leader in a scheduled election, and the leader leaves office as the law requires.	LIMITED UNLIMITED

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, specific government situation for each category. Show what a leader does and whether anyone can enforce a limit on that leader's power.

LIMITED _____

UNLIMITED _____

CHALLENGE

A country holds elections, but its leader can ignore court rulings and jail opponents without trial. Classify the government and explain why the elections do not change your answer in two sentences.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.3.1.A

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	An independent court cancels a president's order because it violates the constitution.	**LIMITED**	A court enforces a constitutional limit on the president.
2	A legislature refuses to fund a prime minister's project, and the prime minister must comply.	**LIMITED**	The legislature can enforce a limit on the prime minister's power.
3	A ruler imprisons peaceful critics without trial, and no court can intervene.	**UNLIMITED**	The ruler can violate citizens' liberties without an effective legal check.
4	Officials who try to censor reports of corruption face penalties under a free speech law.	**LIMITED**	An enforceable law protects citizens' speech from officials.
5	A dictator seizes families' property at will, with no legal appeal.	**UNLIMITED**	Citizens cannot use the law to challenge the seizure.
6	A leader cancels elections whenever a rival gains support, and no institution can stop it.	**UNLIMITED**	No institution can enforce a limit on the leader's power.
7	A ruler can rewrite any law alone, and judges must accept the changes.	**UNLIMITED**	Judges cannot check the ruler's power to change laws.
8	Voters remove a leader in a scheduled election, and the leader leaves office as the law requires.	**LIMITED**	The law limits the leader's term, and citizens can remove 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)

- **LIMITED**: A governor tries to extend their term, but an election commission enforces the legal term limit.
- **UNLIMITED**: A military chief orders every school closed, and no court or legislature has authority to stop the order.

Challenge: This is an unlimited government because the leader can ignore court rulings and jail opponents without trial. Elections alone do not limit power when citizens cannot enforce their rights or hold the leader to the law.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify a concrete clue in each chosen item and connect it to an enforceable limit or the lack of one. For Part 3, examples must make clear whether a limit on the leader's power can be enforced.