Who Holds Power?

England's struggle to limit royal authority

MWH.C.3.2.B "Examine the development of parliamentary sovereignty constitutional mixed government and liberty in England, including the importance of the English Bill of Rights and how it limited the power of the Monarch."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two actions by kings that led to conflict with Parliament, circle three limits or protections named in the English Bill of Rights, and number two sentences that explain how power shifted or remained unequal.

A Crown Under Conditions

1 In 1642, conflict between King Charles I and Parliament erupted into civil war. Charles had tried to govern without Parliament for eleven years and had raised money through disputed methods. Parliament argued that the king could not ignore its role in lawmaking and taxation. After parliamentary forces won, Charles was tried and executed in 1649. England briefly became a republic, but the monarchy returned in 1660. These upheavals did not settle who held final authority. They did show that governing England required more than a monarch's will: Parliament could organize resistance and claim a voice in the nation's rules.

2 By 1688, King James II had alarmed many leaders by suspending laws and favoring Catholics for important offices. Parliamentary leaders invited William of Orange to England. James fled, and Parliament offered the crown to William and Mary. This change, called the Glorious Revolution, strengthened Parliament's claim to choose the ruler and set conditions for governing. In 1689, William and Mary accepted the English Bill of Rights. It declared that a monarch could not suspend laws or raise taxes without Parliament's consent. It also protected free elections to Parliament and freedom of speech during its debates.

3 These rules helped shape a constitutional mixed government: the monarch kept the crown, while Parliament's two houses, the Lords and Commons, held essential powers over laws and public money. Parliamentary sovereignty grew over time as Parliament became the leading lawmaking authority, rather than a body the monarch could ignore. Liberty here meant protection against certain abuses of royal power, not equal rights for everyone. Women could not vote, and many men lacked the property needed to vote. Parliament could still pass harsh laws. The settlement therefore limited one source of arbitrary power, the crown, without making England a modern democracy.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did actions by Charles I and James II each bring Parliament into conflict with the monarch?

2. How did two rules in the English Bill of Rights limit a monarch's power?

3. Why was England's government after 1689 both mixed and moving toward parliamentary sovereignty?

4. Why did the settlement protect liberty without creating equal rights for everyone? Give one exclusion and one remaining risk.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine that in 1690 a royal official orders a new harbor tax without Parliament's consent and stops a town's election to the House of Commons. Write a five-sentence petition to your neighbors explaining why these actions violate the 1689 settlement, how the monarch and Parliament share power, and one way liberty remains limited.

ANSWER KEY

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two actions by kings that led to conflict with Parliament, circle three limits or protections named in the English Bill of Rights, and number two sentences that explain how power shifted or remained unequal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did actions by Charles I and James II each bring Parliament into conflict with the monarch?	**Charles governed without Parliament and raised money through disputed methods. James suspended laws and favored Catholics for important offices, alarming leaders who then invited William to England.**
2	How did two rules in the English Bill of Rights limit a monarch's power?	**The monarch could not suspend laws or raise taxes without Parliament's consent. Both rules prevented the monarch from acting alone on major governing decisions.**
3	Why was England's government after 1689 both mixed and moving toward parliamentary sovereignty?	**It was mixed because the monarch kept the crown while Parliament's Lords and Commons held essential powers. It moved toward parliamentary sovereignty as Parliament became the leading lawmaking authority.**
4	Why did the settlement protect liberty without creating equal rights for everyone? Give one exclusion and one remaining risk.	**The rules limited abuses of royal power, but women could not vote, and Parliament could still pass harsh laws.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Neighbors, the new harbor tax cannot be collected without Parliament's consent under the English Bill of Rights. Stopping our election also violates its protection of free elections to Parliament. The monarch keeps the crown, but Parliament must have a say in governing and public money. These rules protect us from decisions made solely by a ruler and strengthen Parliament's authority. Yet liberty remains limited because women and many men without enough property cannot vote.

Accept responses that accurately connect a royal action to Parliament's authority or a protection in the Bill of Rights. For the petition, accept another passage-supported limit on liberty, such as Parliament's ability to pass harsh laws.