The Group Effect

How belonging can shape actions and attitudes

S.4.4 "Examine the benefits of belonging to social groups, as well as the power of social groups over behavior and attitudes."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two benefits Maya gains from the pantry team, circle one action she changes to fit in, and write 1 and 2 beside the team's earlier and later views of families' requests.

The Pantry Team

1. On Thursday afternoons, a student-run food pantry at Harbor High packs grocery bags for local families. Maya joins because she wants to help, but she stays because the team knows her name and saves her a place at the sorting table. Older members show her how to check dates and organize donations without wasting usable food. Working together makes a large job feel possible. Maya also learns whom to ask when she needs help with a school project. The pantry gives her practical skills, connections, and a sense that she matters to people beyond her usual circle.

2. At first, volunteers call every grocery bag a gift and ask families what foods they can use. Then a few popular members start joking that families who request certain foods are being picky. When they laugh, other volunteers laugh too, even if they seem uneasy. Maya stops asking families about their needs because she does not want the group to think she is difficult. Soon, she catches herself assuming a request for fresh fruit is unreasonable. No rule tells Maya what to believe, but the group's approval and teasing shape both her actions and her judgment.

3. One afternoon, a volunteer named Luis points out that a family may need foods they can store or prepare safely. He suggests asking about needs in private and offering choices when supplies allow. Two teammates agree, and the group begins treating requests as useful information rather than complaints. Maya starts asking again and notices that families often have practical reasons for their choices. The same team that made her fear standing out now supports a more respectful habit. Its influence is not automatically helpful or harmful. What members praise, question, or laugh at can change how others act and what they consider normal.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does belonging to the pantry team help Maya in two different ways?

2. Why does Maya stop asking families about their needs even though no rule changes?

3. What change in Maya's attitude shows that the group influences more than her actions?

4. How does Luis's suggestion change the group's influence on Maya? Use two details from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you join a school music ensemble preparing for a concert. In 5 to 6 sentences, explain two benefits of belonging, how teammates' reactions could shape your behavior or attitude, and how a member could help the group develop a fairer or more helpful habit.

ANSWER KEY

The Group Effect

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two benefits Maya gains from the pantry team, circle one action she changes to fit in, and write 1 and 2 beside the team's earlier and later views of families' requests. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does belonging to the pantry team help Maya in two different ways?	**She gains practical skills, such as checking donation dates, and feels included because teammates know her and save her a place.**
2	Why does Maya stop asking families about their needs even though no rule changes?	**Popular members mock families' requests, and Maya does not want the group to think she is difficult.**
3	What change in Maya's attitude shows that the group influences more than her actions?	**She begins to assume that a family's request for fresh fruit is unreasonable.**
4	How does Luis's suggestion change the group's influence on Maya? Use two details from the passage.	**Teammates begin treating requests as useful information rather than complaints, and Maya starts asking families about their needs again.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Joining the school music ensemble could give me friends and help me improve at reading music. Rehearsing together would also make a difficult concert feel manageable. If experienced players mocked beginners for asking questions, I might stay quiet when I needed help. I could even begin to think that beginners do not belong in the group. A member could invite questions and thank players who help others practice. If the ensemble praised that behavior, more students might ask for help and treat beginners with respect.

Accept other passage-supported benefits, such as connections or a sense of purpose. For the open task, look for two plausible benefits, a clear link between group reactions and an action or attitude, and a specific way to improve the group's influence.