Permission to Move

How Soviet documents and registration controlled movement

TOT.C.8.2.C "internal passports to control people's movements"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two document or registration requirements, circle two groups whose movement officials could restrict, and number two consequences of those restrictions. Use your marks to trace how the state controlled where people could go or settle.

An Address Required Approval

1. In 1932, Soviet leaders introduced an internal passport system. This was not a booklet for crossing national borders. It was an identity document used within the Soviet Union, especially in cities and other areas where passports were required. A passport listed personal details and helped officials record where a person lived. To settle in a city, a person generally needed both a passport and official registration at a particular address. Police could check documents, and a person without the required papers could be ordered to leave. A trip, a new home, and a new job could therefore depend on state approval.

2. The rules did not affect everyone in the same way. Most collective farm workers were not issued internal passports in the 1930s, although people in cities generally received them. A farm worker who wanted to move permanently to a city could face barriers to obtaining documents and registering there. Without registration, it was difficult to live legally or find formal work in the city. Officials said the system helped manage city populations and keep track of residents. It also gave authorities a way to limit migration from rural areas and make it harder for farm workers to leave collective farms.

3. During the devastating famine of 1932 to 1933, movement became a matter of survival for many rural families. In January 1933, Soviet authorities ordered officials to stop peasants from leaving Ukraine and the North Caucasus in search of food. Police and railway officials turned back many travelers. This order was one restriction alongside the passport rules, not a rule printed in every passport. Together, document checks, residence registration, and travel restrictions gave the state power over where people could seek food, live, and work. The system controlled movement by turning an ordinary journey into a decision officials could block.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could a passport check and address registration keep a person from settling in a city?

2. Why did the passport system make it harder for many collective farm workers to move to cities than for city residents?

3. During the famine, how did the January 1933 order restrict movement beyond the passport rules?

4. Officials said the passport system helped them manage cities. How did the same system also give them power over where people lived and worked?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a city resident with an internal passport who travels to another city for a job. In four sentences, explain what you would need to do to settle there, what might happen if an official refused, and why reaching a city was not the same as being allowed to live there.

ANSWER KEY

Permission to Move

HIGH SCHOOL · TOT.C.8.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two document or registration requirements, circle two groups whose movement officials could restrict, and number two consequences of those restrictions. Use your marks to trace how the state controlled where people could go or settle. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could a passport check and address registration keep a person from settling in a city?	**A person generally needed a passport and registration at a city address. Police could order someone without the required papers to leave.**
2	Why did the passport system make it harder for many collective farm workers to move to cities than for city residents?	**Most collective farm workers were not issued passports, while city residents generally received them. Farm workers could therefore struggle to obtain the documents needed to register and live in a city.**
3	During the famine, how did the January 1933 order restrict movement beyond the passport rules?	**It ordered officials to stop peasants from leaving Ukraine and the North Caucasus to search for food. Many travelers were turned back.**
4	Officials said the passport system helped them manage cities. How did the same system also give them power over where people lived and worked?	**By requiring documents and address registration, officials could prevent people from settling legally in a city or finding formal work there.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I arrive in the new city with my internal passport, hoping to take a factory job. To settle there, I need officials to register me at an address. If registration is refused, I may be unable to live there legally or find formal work. Even though I reached the city, state approval can determine whether I can stay.

Accept responses that distinguish possession of a passport from registration at an address. Students should explain how an official decision could affect where a person could live or work.