Choices Beyond Borders

Weigh interests, ideals, and foreign policy powers

USG.C.7.2 "Evaluate the role of the national government in formulating and carrying out foreign policy. Explain different philosophies nations pursue to protect their self-interests abroad, such as isolationism and internationalism..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two U.S. goals, circle three foreign policy tools, and number the two sentences that describe the president's and Congress's powers. Use your marks to compare what the United States wants to achieve with how it can act.

The U.S. Response to War in Ukraine

1. When Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, the United States faced choices that extended beyond one country's borders. Fighting threatened European security, disrupted shipments of grain, and forced millions of people from their homes. U.S. leaders sought to protect allies and trade while defending the principle that countries should not seize neighbors' territory by force. Those interests and ideals can support the same policy, but they can also clash when a policy risks escalation or harms civilians.

2. An isolationist approach would limit involvement to avoid costs and dangerous commitments abroad. An internationalist approach favors working with other countries on shared threats. The United States has used diplomacy with partners, sanctions that restrict certain dealings with Russia, military aid for Ukraine's defense, and humanitarian aid for people displaced by war. It has not sent U.S. troops to fight Russia in Ukraine. NATO, an alliance whose members promise mutual defense, coordinates security for its members, but Ukraine is not a member.

3. The Constitution divides foreign policy powers. The president leads diplomacy, commands the armed forces, and makes treaties with the approval of two-thirds of senators present. Congress funds or limits aid, regulates foreign trade, and can declare war. A president cannot promise unlimited assistance without Congress providing money. U.S. officials may argue that aid protects allies and the rule against conquest; critics may ask whether spending abroad leaves fewer resources at home. To judge the policy, weigh those costs against its security and humanitarian effects.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How can supporting Ukraine serve both a U.S. interest and an American ideal? Name one risk the passage says leaders must weigh.

2. How would an isolationist and an internationalist likely differ over U.S. military aid to Ukraine? Use the passage's descriptions of both approaches.

3. If the president proposes more aid to Ukraine, how could Congress affect whether that plan happens?

4. Why does NATO's mutual-defense promise not automatically require its members to defend Ukraine? Name one tool the United States has used instead of sending troops to fight there.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A major storm damages ports in a country that supplies food to a U.S. ally. In four to five sentences, recommend two U.S. foreign policy tools, identify one action for the president and one for Congress, and weigh a U.S. interest against an American ideal.

ANSWER KEY

Choices Beyond Borders

HIGH SCHOOL · USG.C.7.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two U.S. goals, circle three foreign policy tools, and number the two sentences that describe the president's and Congress's powers. Use your marks to compare what the United States wants to achieve with how it can act. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How can supporting Ukraine serve both a U.S. interest and an American ideal? Name one risk the passage says leaders must weigh.	**It can help protect allies while defending the principle that countries should not seize neighbors' territory by force. Leaders must weigh the risk of escalation or harm to civilians.**
2	How would an isolationist and an internationalist likely differ over U.S. military aid to Ukraine? Use the passage's descriptions of both approaches.	**An isolationist would favor limiting aid to avoid costs and commitments. An internationalist would favor working with partners to address the shared security threat.**
3	If the president proposes more aid to Ukraine, how could Congress affect whether that plan happens?	**Congress could provide, reduce, or withhold funding for the proposed aid.**
4	Why does NATO's mutual-defense promise not automatically require its members to defend Ukraine? Name one tool the United States has used instead of sending troops to fight there.	**Ukraine is not a NATO member. The United States has used military aid, humanitarian aid, diplomacy, or sanctions instead of sending troops to fight Russia in Ukraine.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The United States should send humanitarian aid to families whose homes and food supplies were damaged. The president could use diplomacy to coordinate port repairs with the affected country and nearby allies. Congress could fund relief supplies and oversee how the money is spent. Restoring food shipments protects a U.S. ally, but aid should also reach isolated communities even if helping them does not improve trade.

Accept other passage-supported risks and foreign policy tools in Part 2. For Part 3, accept feasible tools and constitutional roles if the response explains a genuine tension between an interest and an ideal.