

Power With Limits

Identify why government power needs boundaries.

6.9.B “identify reasons for limiting the power of government; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three statements that give a reason for limiting government power. Number your underlined statements 1, 2, and 3 to show three separate reasons.

Why Power Has Limits

- ① In a constitutional government, leaders have important powers. They can make laws, collect taxes, enforce rules, and provide public services. Yet people do not give government unlimited power. History shows that rulers with unchecked power can silence critics, punish people unfairly, or take property without a fair process. Limits help protect individual rights, such as freedom of speech, religious freedom, and the right to a fair trial. They also remind officials that government serves the people, not the other way around.
- ② The United States Constitution divides national power among Congress, the president, and the courts. This separation makes it harder for one person or group to control every government decision. Each branch can check some actions of the others. For example, courts can decide whether a law follows the Constitution. Elections are another limit because voters can replace many officials. These limits slow some decisions, but that slower process can prevent sudden actions that ignore rights or favor only a powerful group.
- ③ Limits on government do not mean that laws are unnecessary or that officials cannot act. Instead, limits require officials to use power according to written rules and fair procedures. A police officer, for instance, cannot simply decide that someone is guilty. Courts, juries, and legal protections help guard against mistakes and unfair punishment. By requiring accountability, limited government builds public trust. People are more likely to accept government decisions when they know leaders must follow the law and can be challenged.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are two ways rulers with unchecked power can harm people?

2 How does dividing power among Congress, the president, and the courts limit government power?

3 Why can a slower decision-making process be useful?

4 How do written rules, fair procedures, and accountability help build public trust?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

A city council proposes a rule that lets the mayor close any business indefinitely without notice or a chance to appeal. Write exactly three sentences that identify a concern, explain why the mayor's power should be limited, and propose one limit on the rule.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three statements that give a reason for limiting government power. Number your underlined statements 1, 2, and 3 to show three separate reasons. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are two ways rulers with unchecked power can harm people?	They can silence critics, punish people unfairly, or take property without a fair process.
2	How does dividing power among Congress, the president, and the courts limit government power?	It makes it harder for one person or group to control every government decision, and the branches can check one another.
3	Why can a slower decision-making process be useful?	It can prevent sudden actions that ignore rights or favor only a powerful group.
4	How do written rules, fair procedures, and accountability help build public trust?	They help ensure leaders follow the law, guard against mistakes and unfair punishment, and allow leaders to be challenged.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The proposal could let one official treat business owners unfairly. Government power should be limited so the mayor cannot close a business without a fair process. The rule should require a written reason, a time limit, and a chance to appeal to a court.

Accept other passage-based explanations of protection of rights, prevention of unfair actions, prevention of concentrated power, fair procedures, or accountability. For the open response, accept any exactly three-sentence response that states a valid concern, a reason for a limit, and a workable limit.