

Power Has Limits

Compare government limits, rights, and abuses of power.

6.9 "Government. The student understands the concepts of limited and unlimited governments. The student is expected to: describe and compare examples of limited and unlimited governments such as constitutional (limited) and totalitarian..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each phrase that describes a limit or protection on government power. Circle each phrase that describes unlimited control or a human rights abuse.

When Government Power Is Checked

- ① Governments make rules, collect taxes, and provide services. In a limited government, laws restrict what leaders may do. A constitution can set these limits by listing powers, protecting rights, and creating separate branches that check one another. In a constitutional government, leaders must follow the constitution, and courts may decide whether a law violates it. Regular elections give people a way to choose representatives or replace leaders. These limits do not guarantee perfect decisions, but they make government power accountable.
- ② In an unlimited government, leaders face few effective legal limits. A totalitarian government is an extreme example. It seeks to control political life and often tries to control news, schools, jobs, and public speech. Citizens may not be able to vote in free elections, criticize leaders safely, or organize an opposing political party. During Nazi rule in Germany, the government targeted Jewish people, Roma people, disabled people, and political opponents. These groups were denied rights, imprisoned, and, in many cases, murdered.
- ③ Limiting government power protects people from unfair treatment and gives them ways to challenge officials. Rights such as freedom of religion, speech, and peaceful assembly help people keep beliefs, share ideas, and work for change. Written laws, independent courts, and free elections can help enforce those rights. Even a limited government can abuse rights when officials ignore the law or treat a group unfairly. The important question is whether people have real protections and lawful ways to seek justice. Comparing governments means looking at both their rules and their actions.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are three ways a constitution can limit the power of leaders?

2 What are two ways a totalitarian government may control people or deny them political freedom?

3 Name two groups targeted during Nazi rule in Germany. What abuses did these groups face?

4 Why is it important to limit government power? Name two protections that can help people seek justice.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Create a fictional country and write exactly four sentences about its government. Describe two facts about the leaders' power, identify the government as limited or unlimited, and explain one human right that is protected or at risk.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each phrase that describes a limit or protection on government power. Circle each phrase that describes unlimited control or a human rights abuse. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are three ways a constitution can limit the power of leaders?	A constitution can list government powers, protect rights, and create separate branches that check one another.
2	What are two ways a totalitarian government may control people or deny them political freedom?	Answers may include controlling news, schools, jobs, or public speech; preventing free elections; making criticism unsafe; or preventing opposing political parties.
3	Name two groups targeted during Nazi rule in Germany. What abuses did these groups face?	Groups included Jewish people, Roma people, disabled people, and political opponents. They were denied rights, imprisoned, and, in many cases, murdered.
4	Why is it important to limit government power? Name two protections that can help people seek justice.	Limits protect people from unfair treatment and give them ways to challenge officials. Protections include written laws, independent courts, and free elections.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In Rivermark, the president can close any newspaper that criticizes her. Citizens cannot form political parties that disagree with her. Rivermark is an unlimited government because the president faces no effective legal limit and controls public speech. The right to free speech is at risk.

Accept equivalent descriptions of constitutional limits, totalitarian control, and rights abuses when they match the passage. For the open response, accept a logical classification supported by two stated details and an accurate human right.