

Texas Government at Work

How state, county, and municipal governments serve communities

7.14 "Government. The student understands the structure and functions of government created by the Texas Constitution. The student is expected to: describe the structure and functions of government at municipal, county, and state levels..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one function named for each level of government, circle each revenue source, and write 1 by a state example, 2 by a county example, and 3 by a municipal example.

Three Levels, Shared Needs

- ① In Texas, government works at several levels, and each level serves people in a different area. State government serves everyone in Texas. The Texas Constitution divides state power among legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The Legislature makes state laws and adopts a budget. The governor leads the executive branch and carries out laws. State courts decide cases under the law. For example, state government may set rules for public schools, issue driver licenses, and maintain state highways through agencies.
- ② County government serves people across a county, including many unincorporated areas. Its commissioners court, made up of a county judge and four commissioners, manages county business, adopts a budget, and sets the county tax rate. Counties support services such as courts, jails, elections, and roads. Municipal government serves a city or town. A city council adopts ordinances and a city budget, while a mayor has duties set by the city's charter. Cities commonly provide police, fire protection, water, and parks.
- ③ Governments need revenue to pay for services. Local governments often collect property taxes based on the value of land and buildings. Texas state government collects sales taxes on many taxable purchases, and some cities and counties may also collect local sales taxes. Fees are charges for a service, permit, or license, such as a park program fee or a building permit fee. Bonds let a government borrow money for a large project, then repay the borrowed amount and interest over time. Bond money can help build a courthouse or water system.

2

ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1

How do the Texas Legislature and the governor have different functions?

2

What is one function of a county commissioners court, and what is one service counties support?

3

How is a property tax different from a sales tax?

4

Why might a government use bonds for a large project?

3

YOUR TURN

Your own words

Create a service plan for a growing Texas community. Complete one row for municipal government, county government, and state government, then add one row for a large project that could use bonds.

GOVERNMENT LEVEL	FUNCTION OR ACTION	SOURCE OF MONEY

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline one function named for each level of government, circle each revenue source, and write 1 by a state example, 2 by a county example, and 3 by a municipal example. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the Texas Legislature and the governor have different functions?	The Legislature makes state laws and adopts a budget. The governor leads the executive branch and carries out laws.
2	What is one function of a county commissioners court, and what is one service counties support?	A commissioners court manages county business, adopts a budget, or sets the county tax rate. Counties support services such as courts, jails, elections, or roads.
3	How is a property tax different from a sales tax?	A property tax is based on the value of land and buildings. A sales tax is collected on many taxable purchases.
4	Why might a government use bonds for a large project?	Bonds let a government borrow money for a large project and repay the borrowed amount plus interest over time.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

GOVERNMENT LEVEL	FUNCTION OR ACTION	SOURCE OF MONEY
Municipal	Repair city water pipes	Water-service fees
County	Resurface a county road outside city limits	Property taxes
State	Issue driver licenses	License fees
Municipal	Build a water treatment plant	Bonds repaid over time

Accept equivalent accurate functions and funding matches. For the bond row, the student should show that bonds provide borrowed money that is repaid over time, usually with interest.