

A Capital Moves

Read why the United States chose Washington, D.C.

2.9.a “recognizing the reasons for moving the nation’s capital from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C. and the importance of the nation’s capital; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two reasons leaders chose a new capital area. Circle the sentences that tell why the capital is important.

From Philadelphia to Washington

- ① In the early United States, the capital was Philadelphia. It was a temporary home for the national government from 1790 to 1800. Leaders planned a new capital city near the Potomac River, between Maryland and Virginia.
- ② Leaders wanted the capital in a special federal district, not inside one state. This would help the national government stay separate from state governments. The Potomac location also helped make a compromise between Northern and Southern leaders.
- ③ In 1800, the government moved to Washington, D.C. Congress meets there to make laws. The president lives and works there. The Supreme Court meets there too. Washington, D.C., is important because it is the place where national leaders do their jobs.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Why did leaders want the capital in a federal district, not inside one state?

2 How did the Potomac River location help leaders?

3 How does Washington, D.C., help the national government do its work? Give two details.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write two sentences explaining why a country needs a capital and why its capital should be separate from any one state.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the two reasons leaders chose a new capital area. Circle the sentences that tell why the capital is important. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did leaders want the capital in a federal district, not inside one state?	They wanted the national government to stay separate from state governments.
2	How did the Potomac River location help leaders?	It helped make a compromise between Northern and Southern leaders.
3	How does Washington, D.C., help the national government do its work? Give two details.	Answers may include: Congress makes laws there, the president lives and works there, and the Supreme Court meets there.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A capital gives national leaders one place to make choices and do their jobs. Keeping it separate from one state helps all states be treated fairly.

Accept answers that explain the capital as a place for national leaders to work and explain that being separate from a state keeps the national government independent. Wording may vary.