

Power With Limits

Read how constitutional principles divide and restrain government power.

CE.1.a "explaining the fundamental principles of limited government, republicanism, federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers, and popular sovereignty;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number six sentences in the passage: 1 for popular sovereignty, 2 for republicanism, 3 for limited government, 4 for federalism, 5 for separation of powers, and 6 for checks and balances.

A Government of Shared Power

- ① The Constitution begins with the idea that government gets its power from the people. This is popular sovereignty. Citizens choose representatives through elections, and those representatives make decisions for the public. That system is republicanism, not direct rule by every voter on every law. The people can also change leaders at later elections. Limited government means officials must obey the Constitution and laws. Government may not use powers the Constitution does not give it, and individual rights place further limits on what officials may do.
- ② Federalism divides power between the national government and state governments. For example, the national government handles matters such as declaring war and printing money, while states manage many local matters, including public schools. Each level has powers of its own, and some powers are shared. Separation of powers divides the national government itself into three branches. Congress makes laws, the president carries out laws, and federal courts interpret laws. Giving different jobs to different branches helps prevent one group from controlling every part of government.
- ③ Checks and balances give each branch ways to limit the others. A president can veto a bill passed by Congress. Congress can override a veto with enough votes, and the Senate must approve many presidential appointments. Federal courts can decide whether a law or government action conflicts with the Constitution. These powers can slow government action, but that delay can protect liberty. Together, the principles create a system in which people authorize government, officials have defined duties, and no office or level of government should hold all power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How do elections show both popular sovereignty and republicanism?

2 What is the difference between federalism and separation of powers?

3 Name two checks on presidential power described in the passage.

4 Why can slower government action help protect liberty?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine Congress proposes a new national law. Write exactly six sentences explaining how popular sovereignty, republicanism, limited government, federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances could shape what happens to the proposal.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number six sentences in the passage: 1 for popular sovereignty, 2 for republicanism, 3 for limited government, 4 for federalism, 5 for separation of powers, and 6 for checks and balances. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do elections show both popular sovereignty and republicanism?	People are the source of government power, and they elect representatives to make public decisions.
2	What is the difference between federalism and separation of powers?	Federalism divides power between national and state governments. Separation of powers divides the national government into Congress, the president, and federal courts.
3	Name two checks on presidential power described in the passage.	Congress can override a presidential veto, and the Senate must approve many presidential appointments. Federal courts can also review government actions for conflicts with the Constitution.
4	Why can slower government action help protect liberty?	Checks and balances can prevent one branch or official from acting with all the power, helping protect individual rights and liberty.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Voters elect representatives, so popular sovereignty and republicanism guide the proposal. Congress can debate and pass the national law, but its power is limited by the Constitution and individual rights. The president may sign or veto the bill. Courts may review the law if someone challenges it as unconstitutional. These separate jobs and checks keep one branch from deciding everything. States would still handle their own local responsibilities, showing federalism.

Accept equivalent explanations that correctly distinguish the six principles. For the open response, accept varied lawful examples if all six principles are accurately applied in exactly six sentences.