

Marketplace Rules at Work

How government rules balance safety, fairness, and rights

CE.13.f "describing how governments regulate commerce to protect consumers, the environment, competition in the marketplace, and property rights; and"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each government action in the passage. Circle the words that show whether the action protects consumers, the environment, competition, or property rights.

Rules for Selling Picnic Tables

- ① A growing outdoor furniture company wants to sell picnic tables across the state. Before stores can offer the tables, inspectors may check whether the paint contains dangerous amounts of lead. A rule can also require a clear label if a product needs special care or has a safety risk. These rules regulate commerce, the buying and selling of goods and services. They protect consumers by helping families avoid unsafe products and by giving them information before they spend money.
- ② Government rules can also protect places people share. A furniture factory might need a permit that limits harmful chemicals released into a nearby river. The permit does not tell the factory what style of tables to make. Instead, it sets a limit on pollution that could harm water, fish, and people. Other laws protect competition. If one huge company tries to buy every local table maker only to raise prices, government agencies can review or challenge the deal. Competition gives shoppers meaningful choices.
- ③ Businesses also rely on property rights. A designer who creates a new folding-table latch may seek a patent, which can give the inventor a limited-time right to control who makes or sells that invention. A store's name or logo may be protected by trademark law, so another seller cannot use it in a confusing way. These rules encourage people to invest in ideas and build reputations. Courts can enforce such rights, while laws also set limits so rights do not excuse fraud or unsafe sales.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How do the paint inspection and product label each protect consumers?

2 What does the factory permit limit, and what harm is it meant to prevent?

3 Why might a government agency review or challenge one company buying every local table maker?

4 How is a patent different from a trademark in the passage?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a business or industry not mentioned in the reading. Complete all four rows with a government rule or action and a specific result, using one row each for consumers, the environment, competition, and property rights.

PROTECTION FOCUS	GOVERNMENT RULE OR ACTION	SPECIFIC RESULT

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each government action in the passage. Circle the words that show whether the action protects consumers, the environment, competition, or property rights. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the paint inspection and product label each protect consumers?	The inspection can find dangerous lead in paint, helping families avoid unsafe products. A label gives shoppers safety or care information before they buy.
2	What does the factory permit limit, and what harm is it meant to prevent?	It limits harmful chemicals released into the river. It is meant to protect water, fish, and people from pollution.
3	Why might a government agency review or challenge one company buying every local table maker?	The agency may act to prevent the company from controlling the market and raising prices. This protects competition and keeps meaningful choices for shoppers.
4	How is a patent different from a trademark in the passage?	A patent can give an inventor limited-time control over making or selling an invention. A trademark protects a store's name or logo from confusing use by another seller.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

PROTECTION FOCUS	GOVERNMENT RULE OR ACTION	SPECIFIC RESULT
Consumers	Require toy stores to list warnings about small parts	Families can avoid toys that may cause choking.
Environment	Require battery makers to collect used batteries	Fewer toxic materials enter landfills.
Competition	Block a merger of two dominant internet providers	Customers keep more choices for service.
Property rights	Enforce copyright against copies of a musician's song	The creator can control use of the song.

Accept answers that accurately connect a government action to the type of protection it provides. For the table, accept different valid industries and regulations if all four protection areas are addressed and each result logically follows.