

Decisions Close By

Trace how local choices connect to other levels of government.

CE.4 "The student will apply history and social science skills to analyze American constitutional government at the local level by describing the structure and powers of the local government and explaining the local lawmaking process..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the local lawmaking steps in paragraph 1, circle the outside influences in paragraph 2, and number the four levels of government named in paragraph 3. These marks will help you track who makes decisions and what shapes them.

A Decision Beyond Town Hall

- ① Local government handles services close to home, such as parks, libraries, roads, water, and waste collection. A town may have an elected council and a mayor, while a county may have an elected board of supervisors. These bodies set policies and approve budgets. To make a local ordinance, members introduce a proposal, hold a public meeting, hear residents, debate changes, and vote. If it passes, the mayor or another authorized official may sign it, depending on the locality's charter. Staff members then carry out the ordinance.
- ② Local choices are affected by events beyond town hall. A state law can require local schools or health departments to follow certain rules. Federal grants can help pay for projects, but the local government must meet grant requirements. A hurricane, a disease outbreak, or a rise in fuel prices after an international conflict can change local plans. For example, emergency crews may need more supplies, and buses may cost more to operate. Local leaders use these outside conditions when they revise budgets or decide which services need attention first.
- ③ Governments at several levels have different powers and responsibilities. Local governments collect property taxes, fees, and sometimes sales-tax revenue allowed by state law. States collect taxes and make statewide laws. The federal government collects federal taxes and handles powers such as national defense and interstate trade. Tribal governments serve their own citizens and exercise governmental powers on their lands, while their authority is shaped by federal law, treaties, and court decisions. Citizens can vote, attend meetings, contact officials, and serve on advisory groups. During emergencies, these governments may share funding, information, and workers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Describe the local ordinance process after members introduce a proposal.

2 How can a state law and a federal grant each affect a local government's choices?

3 What international event example could change local plans? Name two effects it could have on local services.

4 Compare a local government's role with a tribal government's role described in paragraph 3. Then name one way citizens can engage with government.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine that your local government is considering flood-warning sirens after a major storm. Write 5 to 6 sentences explaining a local lawmaking step, one outside influence, one way residents can engage, and how at least two levels of government could finance or work on the plan together.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the local lawmaking steps in paragraph 1, circle the outside influences in paragraph 2, and number the four levels of government named in paragraph 3. These marks will help you track who makes decisions and what shapes them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe the local ordinance process after members introduce a proposal.	Members hold a public meeting, hear residents, debate changes, and vote. If the ordinance passes, an authorized official may sign it, and staff carry it out.
2	How can a state law and a federal grant each affect a local government's choices?	A state law can require local schools or health departments to follow rules. A federal grant can help pay for a project, but the local government must meet the grant requirements.
3	What international event example could change local plans? Name two effects it could have on local services.	An international conflict can raise fuel prices. Emergency crews may need more supplies, and buses may cost more to operate.
4	Compare a local government's role with a tribal government's role described in paragraph 3. Then name one way citizens can engage with government.	Local governments provide nearby services and make local policies or ordinances. Tribal governments serve their own citizens and exercise governmental powers on their lands. Citizens can vote, attend meetings, contact officials, or serve on advisory groups.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The county board introduces an ordinance to fund flood-warning sirens and holds a public meeting before voting. A state safety rule could affect where the sirens are placed. Residents can attend the meeting or contact board members about the plan. County property-tax revenue could pay for part of the project, and a federal grant could pay for equipment. If nearby tribal lands are affected, county and tribal officials can share warning information while each government makes decisions within its authority.

Accept accurate answers that use the passage's examples or clearly state the same relationships. For the open response, accept other realistic local decisions if the student includes all required parts and accurately describes cooperation or separate authority.