

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Silent Rules and Social Ties: An 8th Grade Philosophy Challenge

How does an unwritten agreement hold a nation together? Identify 10 core concepts regarding civic duty and the origins of modern government authority.

1. In a democratic society, what is the primary source of a leader's 'legitimacy' or right to rule?

Answer: B) The approval and consent of the citizens

In 8th grade civics, we learn that legitimacy in a democracy comes from the 'consent of the governed,' meaning people agree to follow the laws if they have a say in them.

2. True or False: Natural rights are privileges that a government gives to its citizens as a reward for good behavior.

Answer: B) False

Political philosophers argue that 'natural rights' are inherent to all human beings from birth; the government's job is to protect them, not create them.

3. The imaginary agreement where people give up some total freedom to live in a safe, organized community is called the Social ____.

Answer: B) Contract

The Social Contract is a fundamental concept where individuals trade some absolute freedom for the security and benefits of a governed society.

4. Which term describes a system where everyone is treated the same by the law, regardless of their status or wealth?

Answer: C) Equality before the law

Equality before the law ensures that justice is applied fairly and that no one is above the legal system.

5. True or False: A 'meritocracy' is a system where positions of power are given to people based on their abilities and hard work.

Answer: A) True

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Meritocracy is an ideal where advancement is based on individual achievement and talent rather than wealth or family ties.

6. When a government is divided into different branches to prevent one person from having too much power, it is using a system of checks and ____.

Answer: A) Balances

Checks and balances ensure that authority is shared and that each branch of government can limit the power of the others.

7. If you are balancing the 'Common Good' against 'Individual Rights,' what are you trying to decide?

Answer: A) What is best for the whole group vs. what is best for one person

Political philosophy often explores the tension between protecting an individual's freedom and doing what benefits the entire community.

8. A person who is a legal member of a nation and has certain rights and duties is known as a ____.

Answer: C) Citizen

Citizenship defines the relationship between an individual and their political community, including the right to participate in governance.

9. Which of these is an example of a 'civic duty'—something a person is expected or required to do to help their society function?

Answer: B) Serving on a jury

Jury duty is a classic example of a civic obligation that supports the justice system and the fair treatment of fellow citizens.

10. True or False: In political philosophy, 'justice' usually refers only to punishing criminals and nothing else.

Answer: B) False

In philosophy, justice is much broader; it includes the fair distribution of resources, opportunities, and rights across a society.