

2025 MCAS Sample Student Work and Scoring Guide

Grade 8 Civics

Question 4: Constructed-Response

Reporting Category: Rights & Responsibilities

Practice Category: Explanations and Reasoning

Standard: [8.T4.7](#) - Apply knowledge of the meaning of leadership and the qualities of good leaders to evaluate political leaders at the community, the state and national levels.

Item Description: Analyze a source to explain how an elected official demonstrated a leadership quality.

This item can be found in the released item sets on the [MCAS Resource Center](#).

Question

Based on the information in Source 3, identify one leadership quality demonstrated by Representative Powell. Explain your reasoning.

Source 3

A summary of Representative Adam Clayton Powell Jr.'s work in the U.S. House of Representatives is shown.

Adam Clayton Powell Jr. was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1945 to 1971. When he was first elected, he was one of only two African American legislators in Congress. Powell continually fought for civil rights legislation despite criticism from his political party and the press.

From 1961 to 1967, Representative Powell chaired the Committee on Education and Labor in the U.S. House of Representatives. He also worked closely with other members of Congress, civil rights organizations, and presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson on civil rights issues. He helped to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which reduced discrimination in housing, jobs, and education.

Continue to the following page to see the sample student responses for this question.

Score Point 1A*

One leadership quality that Representative Powell has is perseverance, because even though there were many people telling him that he should not fight for civil rights, he did so anyway. He helped to do what many others would have been too afraid for their political position to do, and that was obtain equal rights for all people, no matter their race. He spent 19 years trying to get those rights, and this shows his perseverance because he kept fighting and fighting until the law was passed in 1964.

Score Point 1B*

Brave is a leadership quality that demonstrated Representative Powell. Representative Powell was one of only two African Americans legislators in Congress. Therefore he suffered racism and criticism, but he was brave and continued to work hard to fight for civil rights legislation. The author states "Powell continually fought for civil rights legislation despite criticism from his political party and the press"(2). As a result of this he was chaired the Committee on Education and Labor in the U.S House of Representatives which allowed him to work closely with presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. In conclusion, Powell's braveness led him to help pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which reduced discrimination.

Score Point 0

One leadership quality demonstrated by Representative Powell is that he was able to work closely with others.

*Letters are used to distinguish between sample student responses that earned the same score (e.g., 1A and 1B).