Votes and Voices

How citizens worked to expand voting rights

SS24.6.17c "Identify constitutional amendments that expanded political rights for citizens and describe the efforts of citizens to secure these rights."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each amendment and the voting limit it banned. Circle one citizen action linked to each amendment, then write the amendment number beside that action.

A Right People Worked For

1. After the Civil War, formerly enslaved people worked to shape their communities. Black men held meetings, formed political groups, and went to the polls, often despite threats. In 1870, the 15th Amendment barred governments from denying citizens the vote because of race, color, or past enslavement. Yet some officials used unfair tests and violence to keep Black citizens from voting. Voters and organizers continued to demand protection. An amendment changed the Constitution, but people still had to push for that promise to be kept.

2. In 1913, thousands of women marched through Washington, D.C., asking for the vote. Others wrote letters, collected signatures, and stood outside the White House with signs. Some were arrested while protesting. Their work helped build support for the 19th Amendment, ratified in 1920. It barred governments from denying citizens the vote because of sex. Winning that amendment did not remove every barrier. Many women of color still faced unfair voting rules and threats. They joined others in organizing to make voting rights real in their communities.

3. Voting rights expanded again as citizens challenged two more limits. In the 1950s and 1960s, civil rights workers organized protests and voter registration drives against barriers including poll taxes. The 24th Amendment, ratified in 1964, banned poll taxes in federal elections, but it did not ban them in state elections. Later, young people argued that those old enough to serve in the military should be able to vote. They wrote to lawmakers and joined campaigns. In 1971, the 26th Amendment protected voting rights for citizens age 18 and older.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What voting limit did the 15th Amendment ban, and what did Black citizens do to claim or protect that right?

2. What voting limit did the 19th Amendment ban, and how did women build support for it?

3. Which elections did the 24th Amendment protect from poll taxes, and what did civil rights workers do to challenge voting barriers?

4. What right did the 26th Amendment protect for citizens age 18 and older, and how did young people press for that change?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose two amendments from the passage and write a four-sentence museum label. Identify the voting limit each banned, compare citizens' efforts for those rights, and explain why people may need to keep working after an amendment passes.

ANSWER KEY

Votes and Voices

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.17c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each amendment and the voting limit it banned. Circle one citizen action linked to each amendment, then write the amendment number beside that action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What voting limit did the 15th Amendment ban, and what did Black citizens do to claim or protect that right?	**It banned denying the vote because of race, color, or past enslavement. Black citizens formed political groups, voted despite threats, or demanded protection.**
2	What voting limit did the 19th Amendment ban, and how did women build support for it?	**It banned denying the vote because of sex. Women marched, wrote letters, collected signatures, or protested outside the White House.**
3	Which elections did the 24th Amendment protect from poll taxes, and what did civil rights workers do to challenge voting barriers?	**It banned poll taxes in federal elections. Civil rights workers held protests and voter registration drives.**
4	What right did the 26th Amendment protect for citizens age 18 and older, and how did young people press for that change?	**It protected their right to vote. Young people wrote to lawmakers and joined campaigns, arguing that people old enough to serve in the military should be able to vote.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The 15th Amendment banned denying the vote based on race, color, or past enslavement, while the 19th banned denying it based on sex. Black men formed political groups and voted despite threats, while women marched and collected signatures. Both groups organized, but the women also protested outside the White House. Even after these amendments passed, unfair rules and threats kept some citizens from voting, so people continued working to protect their rights.

Accept any accurate citizen actions stated in the passage. For the museum label, look for two correctly identified amendments, a comparison of citizens' efforts, and an explanation grounded in the passage.