Votes That Count

Trace how an amendment moved from proposal to certification.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.3 "Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the words that signal an action in the amendment process, then number the major steps in the order they happened.

Ratifying the Nineteenth Amendment

1 In 1919, after decades of campaigning for women's voting rights, Congress proposed the Nineteenth Amendment. Both the House and Senate approved its wording by the required two-thirds vote. Congress then sent the proposed amendment to the states. At that time, the Constitution required approval from three-fourths of the states before an amendment could become part of the Constitution. With forty-eight states, that meant thirty-six state legislatures had to ratify it. The proposal did not yet change voting laws.

2 When a state legislature voted to ratify the amendment, that state's approval added one to the national total. State officials sent an official record of the action to the federal government. Some legislatures rejected the amendment or delayed a vote. Those actions did not add to the thirty-six-state requirement. Supporters therefore watched the running count and focused on states where lawmakers might still vote yes. A later ratification, however, could add that state to the count.

3 By August 1920, thirty-five states had ratified. Tennessee's legislature then considered the amendment. On August 18, it voted to ratify, making Tennessee the thirty-sixth state needed. After federal officials received and checked the ratification records, Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby issued a proclamation on August 26. The proclamation certified that the Nineteenth Amendment was part of the Constitution. It barred denying citizens the right to vote on account of sex. The process was complete nationally.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What did Congress do first, and what did it do next to begin the ratification process?

2. After a state legislature ratified, what did state officials send, and how did ratification affect the national total?

3. Why did Tennessee's vote advance the process while a rejected or delayed vote did not?

4. Put these final actions in order: federal officials checked records, Tennessee ratified, and the Secretary of State issued a proclamation.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Read this new civic process: Residents submit a petition for a youth advisory board. A council committee reviews the proposal, the council holds a public hearing, the council votes, and the mayor signs the approved ordinance. Create a five-step flowchart with arrows that shows the key actions in order.

ANSWER KEY

Votes That Count

GRADE 7 · RH.6-8.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the words that signal an action in the amendment process, then number the major steps in the order they happened. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Congress do first, and what did it do next to begin the ratification process?	**Congress approved the amendment's wording by a two-thirds vote, then sent the proposed amendment to the states.**
2	After a state legislature ratified, what did state officials send, and how did ratification affect the national total?	**State officials sent an official record to the federal government, and the ratification added one state to the national total.**
3	Why did Tennessee's vote advance the process while a rejected or delayed vote did not?	**Tennessee ratified and became the thirty-sixth state needed. A rejection or delayed vote did not add a state to the required total.**
4	Put these final actions in order: federal officials checked records, Tennessee ratified, and the Secretary of State issued a proclamation.	**Tennessee ratified first, federal officials checked the records next, and the Secretary of State issued the proclamation last.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Residents submit petition → Council committee reviews proposal → Council holds public hearing → Council votes on ordinance → Mayor signs approved ordinance

Accept concise wording that preserves the passage's sequence and clearly distinguishes ratification from rejection or delay. For the flowchart, accept equivalent labels if all five actions are in chronological order.