

From Problem to Policy

Use evidence, research choices, and contact the right local officials.

SS.7.CG.2.10 "Explain the process for citizens to address a state or local problem by researching public policy alternatives, identifying appropriate government agencies to address the issue, and determining a course of action."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each policy alternative, circle each government agency or public body, and write 1, 2, or 3 beside the parts that show gathering evidence, researching choices, and taking action.

Making Oak Street Safer

- ① When families at Pine Ridge Middle School noticed that cars moved quickly past the bus stop, they described the problem clearly: students needed a safer way to cross Oak Street. Citizens can begin by gathering reliable facts. They might record traffic at different times, read the city's crash reports, and ask neighbors about close calls. A clear description and evidence help officials understand the problem. People should separate facts, such as the number of cars, from opinions, such as "the street feels dangerous."
- ② Next, citizens can research public policy alternatives, which are possible government responses. For Oak Street, alternatives could include adding a marked crosswalk, lowering the speed limit, placing a crossing guard there, or changing the bus-stop location. Citizens should compare each choice by using city budget documents, traffic studies, and public meeting information. They can ask what each option costs, who would carry it out, and how it could improve safety. Researching more than one choice helps citizens recommend a realistic policy, rather than simply complain.
- ③ Citizens also need to identify the government agency with authority over each part of the issue. A city transportation or public works department may plan a crosswalk or study traffic. The city council may vote on local funding or rules. A school district can review bus-stop procedures, while police may enforce traffic laws. After researching, citizens can choose a course of action. They might write an evidence-based email, speak during public comment, or join with others to present a recommendation to the right agency.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are two kinds of evidence citizens could gather before asking officials to address the Oak Street problem?

2 What two questions should citizens ask when comparing possible policy alternatives?

3 Which local government body may vote on funding or local rules for a safety plan?

4 If citizens recommend a marked crosswalk, which agency should they contact first? Explain why.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a state or local problem that matters to you. Write one paragraph that states the problem, gives two policy alternatives, names an appropriate government agency, identifies one evidence source, and explains one action you would take to share your recommendation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each policy alternative, circle each government agency or public body, and write 1, 2, or 3 beside the parts that show gathering evidence, researching choices, and taking action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are two kinds of evidence citizens could gather before asking officials to address the Oak Street problem?	They could record traffic at different times, read city crash reports, or ask neighbors about close calls.
2	What two questions should citizens ask when comparing possible policy alternatives?	They should ask what each option costs, who would carry it out, and how it could improve safety. Any two are acceptable.
3	Which local government body may vote on funding or local rules for a safety plan?	The city council.
4	If citizens recommend a marked crosswalk, which agency should they contact first? Explain why.	They should contact the city transportation or public works department because it may plan a crosswalk or study traffic.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Overflowing trash cans at Riverside Park create litter near the playground. The city could add more trash cans and pickups, or it could install animal-resistant cans. I would review parks department budget information and count full cans for one week. The city parks department is the right agency because it manages the park. I would send the department an evidence-based recommendation.

Accept reasonable evidence sources, alternatives, agencies, and actions if they fit the student's stated state or local problem. The agency should have a clear connection to the problem, and the action should communicate a researched recommendation.