

Who Shapes Decisions

Track how people and groups watch and affect local government.

SS.7.CG.2.8 "Examine the impact of media, individuals, and interest groups on monitoring and influencing government."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline actions that monitor government, circle actions that try to influence a government decision, and write M, I, or G in the margin to show whether the action comes from media, an individual, or an interest group.

Bus Shelters and Public Action

- ① At a city council meeting, reporter Maya Chen takes notes on a proposal to add bus shelters near a middle school. She checks the meeting agenda, watches public comments, and later compares the final vote with the written proposal. Her news article explains which council members supported the plan and quotes people on different sides. By reporting what officials said and did, the article helps residents monitor government. Residents can use that information to ask questions, attend later meetings, or contact their representatives.
- ② One resident, Luis, notices that the proposal does not explain how shelters will be kept clean. He reads the council budget online, emails a question to his council member, and gives a one-minute comment at a meeting. An interest group called Access for All also studies the plan. Its members ask for enough space for wheelchair users and submit a letter with suggested changes. The group tells officials that it received no money from a bus company. Sharing that information helps people judge the group's possible interests.
- ③ Media reports can increase the effect of citizen action, but they can also leave out details or favor one viewpoint. Before sharing an article, residents can check its sources and compare it with council records or another reliable report. Officials may respond when many people learn about an issue, yet government decisions still must follow laws and public procedures. Monitoring means watching and checking government actions. Influencing means trying to shape a decision through lawful actions such as comments, letters, organized campaigns, or news coverage.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What did Maya do to monitor the city council's work? Give two actions from the passage.

2 How did Luis both monitor and influence the bus-shelter proposal?

3 What change did Access for All seek, and why did the group share information about its funding?

4 Why should residents check an article's sources and compare it with council records or another reliable report?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a local government issue. Write exactly three sentences explaining how media, one individual, and an interest group could monitor or influence government on that issue. Include one way people can check information or possible interests.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline actions that monitor government, circle actions that try to influence a government decision, and write M, I, or G in the margin to show whether the action comes from media, an individual, or an interest group. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What did Maya do to monitor the city council's work? Give two actions from the passage.	She checked the meeting agenda, watched public comments, and compared the final vote with the written proposal. Any two are acceptable.
2	How did Luis both monitor and influence the bus-shelter proposal?	He monitored it by reading the council budget. He tried to influence it by emailing his council member and giving a public comment.
3	What change did Access for All seek, and why did the group share information about its funding?	The group sought enough space for wheelchair users. It shared that it received no bus-company money so people could judge the group's possible interests.
4	Why should residents check an article's sources and compare it with council records or another reliable report?	Media reports can leave out details or favor one viewpoint. Comparing sources helps residents check the information.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For a proposed park renovation, a local news site could report on the council meeting and link to the project budget. A resident could read the budget, then email a council member about safe playground equipment, while a neighborhood group could submit a letter supporting shade trees. Readers could compare the article with council records and check whether the group received funding from a landscaping company.

Accept equivalent descriptions of monitoring, influencing, and checking possible bias or interests when they match the passage. For the open response, accept any lawful, realistic actions that include media, an individual, an interest group, and a method for checking information or interests.