

Voices in Our Community

How First Amendment freedoms help people take part in public life.

SS4CG2 “Explain the importance of freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline actions people can take because of First Amendment freedoms. Number three sentences that explain why these freedoms are important.

Freedoms That Matter

- ① The First Amendment protects several freedoms that help people take part in a democracy. People may practice a religion, or choose not to practice one. They may speak their ideas and share news through the press. They may gather peacefully with others and petition the government, which means asking leaders to change or solve a problem.
- ② These freedoms are important because they let people share different beliefs and ideas without needing government approval. For example, neighbors might meet peacefully to discuss unsafe crossings near their school. They can write a petition asking the city council for a crosswalk. Leaders can learn about the concern, while people can work together to ask for a safer community.
- ③ First Amendment freedoms also help communities hear more than one view. A newspaper can report on a town decision, and people can respond with their own opinions. Peaceful groups may support different plans. These rights do not allow threats or violence, and schools may set fair rules for safety and learning. Still, the freedoms help citizens raise concerns and take part in public life.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What two actions do the neighbors take to ask for a crosswalk?

2 How do the neighbors' actions show why the freedom to petition is important?

3 How can freedom of the press help a community hear more than one view?

4 What does the passage say people may not do when using First Amendment freedoms? Why may schools set fair rules?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Think of an issue at a public place in your community. Write exactly 3 sentences explaining how people could use one or two First Amendment freedoms to address the issue and why those freedoms matter.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline actions people can take because of First Amendment freedoms. Number three sentences that explain why these freedoms are important. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two actions do the neighbors take to ask for a crosswalk?	They meet peacefully to discuss the unsafe crossings and write a petition to the city council.
2	How do the neighbors' actions show why the freedom to petition is important?	Petitioning lets people ask government leaders to solve a problem or make a change.
3	How can freedom of the press help a community hear more than one view?	A newspaper can report on a town decision, and people can share their own opinions about it.
4	What does the passage say people may not do when using First Amendment freedoms? Why may schools set fair rules?	People may not make threats or use violence. Schools may set fair rules for safety and learning.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

People want longer Saturday hours at the public library. They could meet peacefully to plan their ideas and send a petition to city leaders. These freedoms matter because people can share a concern and ask leaders to consider a solution.

Accept equivalent descriptions of peaceful assembly, petition, speech, press, or religious freedom that match the passage. For the open response, accept any realistic public issue, named First Amendment freedom or freedoms, and a clear explanation of why the freedom helps people participate.