

Changing the Constitution

Follow the steps for adding an amendment.

SS5CG2.a "Explain the amendment process outlined in the Constitution."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the two ways an amendment can be proposed. Circle the words that tell how many states must ratify, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside the stages: proposed, ratified, and becomes part of the Constitution.

A Careful Change

- ① The Constitution can be changed by an amendment, but the process is purposely difficult. Article V requires action at the national level and approval by the states. First, an amendment must be proposed. This high bar helps make sure a proposed change has broad support before the country asks states to consider it carefully for approval.
- ② Congress may propose an amendment when two-thirds of both the House of Representatives and the Senate agree. There is another route that has never been used to propose an amendment: two-thirds of state legislatures may ask Congress to call a convention for proposing amendments. Either route is designed to show unusually wide agreement across the nation.
- ③ Next, three-fourths of the states must ratify, or approve, the proposed amendment. Congress chooses whether state legislatures or state conventions will vote on ratification. When the required number of states ratifies it, the amendment becomes part of the Constitution. The Twenty-sixth Amendment followed this process and lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 nationwide.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What must happen at the national level before states can consider approving an amendment?

2 How can Congress propose an amendment?

3 What is the other way an amendment can be proposed?

4 How many states must ratify an amendment, and what happens after that number approves it?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine Congress proposes an amendment. Write four sentences that explain its path from proposal to becoming part of the Constitution. Include the national proposal step, the ratification choice, and the number of states needed.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the two ways an amendment can be proposed. Circle the words that tell how many states must ratify, then write 1, 2, and 3 beside the stages: proposed, ratified, and becomes part of the Constitution. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What must happen at the national level before states can consider approving an amendment?	An amendment must be proposed.
2	How can Congress propose an amendment?	Two-thirds of both the House of Representatives and the Senate must agree.
3	What is the other way an amendment can be proposed?	Two-thirds of state legislatures can ask Congress to call a convention for proposing amendments.
4	How many states must ratify an amendment, and what happens after that number approves it?	Three-fourths of the states must ratify it. Then it becomes part of the Constitution.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Congress proposes an amendment after two-thirds of the House and Senate agree. Congress chooses state legislatures to vote on ratification. The amendment needs approval from three-fourths of the states. After that approval, it becomes part of the Constitution.

Accept equivalent wording for propose, ratify, approve, state legislatures, and state conventions. Responses must distinguish national action to propose from state approval to ratify and must use the correct fractions.