

Voting Rights Shields

Read how five amendments protect access to voting.

SS5CG3.a "Explain how voting rights are protected by the 15th, 19th, 23rd, 24th, and 26th amendments."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the five amendments 1 through 5, then underline the reason or voting rule each one protects.

Five Protections for Voters

- ① In 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment added a protection to the Constitution. It says the right of U.S. citizens to vote cannot be denied or limited because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. This amendment aimed to stop states from using those reasons to keep citizens from voting. Congress has power to enforce this protection through laws.
- ② The Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, protects citizens from being denied or limited the right to vote because of sex. The Twenty-third Amendment gives Washington, D.C., electors for President and Vice President. It does not give D.C. voting members in Congress. The Twenty-fourth Amendment bans poll taxes in federal elections, so payment cannot be required to vote in those elections.
- ③ In 1971, the Twenty-sixth Amendment protected citizens who are eighteen or older from being denied or limited the right to vote because of age. Together, these amendments set important rules for voting rights. Their protections have specific limits. For example, the Twenty-third concerns presidential elections in D.C., and the Twenty-fourth rule about poll taxes applies to federal elections.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What three reasons does the Fifteenth Amendment say cannot be used to deny or limit voting rights?

2 What does the Twenty-third Amendment give Washington, D.C., and what does it not give D.C.?

3 How does the Twenty-fourth Amendment protect voters, and which elections does this protection cover?

4 Who is protected by the Twenty-sixth Amendment, and what reason cannot be used to deny or limit that person's voting right?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent a voting rule that conflicts with one amendment in the passage. In three sentences, name the amendment and explain why the rule is not allowed.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number the five amendments 1 through 5, then underline the reason or voting rule each one protects. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What three reasons does the Fifteenth Amendment say cannot be used to deny or limit voting rights?	Race, color, or previous condition of servitude.
2	What does the Twenty-third Amendment give Washington, D.C., and what does it not give D.C.?	It gives D.C. electors for President and Vice President. It does not give D.C. voting members in Congress.
3	How does the Twenty-fourth Amendment protect voters, and which elections does this protection cover?	It bans poll taxes, so payment cannot be required to vote in federal elections.
4	Who is protected by the Twenty-sixth Amendment, and what reason cannot be used to deny or limit that person's voting right?	Citizens age eighteen or older are protected. Their right to vote cannot be denied or limited because of age.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A federal election office says every voter must pay five dollars before receiving a ballot. The Twenty-fourth Amendment applies because it bans poll taxes in federal elections. The office may not require the payment.

Accept any accurate invented rule that clearly conflicts with one of the five amendments and correctly explains the amendment's protection. For the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Amendments, require the student to state the correct limit: D.C. presidential electors or federal elections.