

Your Voice Matters

Read how Canadians take part in decisions at different levels of government.

SS6CG2 "Explain citizen participation in the Canadian government."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each action that citizens can take to participate in government. Write **V** beside voting actions and **P** beside other participation actions.

Ways Canadians Participate

- ① In Canada, citizens participate in government in more ways than voting. Canadian citizens who are 18 or older may vote in federal elections for a member of Parliament, called an MP, to represent their riding in the House of Commons. They may also vote in provincial, territorial, and municipal elections under rules set in their province or territory. Before an election, people can learn about candidates, attend candidate meetings, ask questions, and discuss issues. These actions help voters make informed choices.
- ② After an election, people can share ideas with elected representatives. A resident might email an MP about a federal law or speak with a member of a provincial or territorial legislature about a service run at that level. For a local concern, such as a proposed community recreation program, residents can attend a municipal council meeting, speak during a public comment period if one is offered, or send a letter to the mayor and council. A petition gathers names to show that many people support a request.
- ③ Citizen participation also includes joining a community group, volunteering for a campaign, or giving feedback during a government public consultation. For example, residents may explain how a proposed rule could affect families, businesses, or the environment. People should use respectful language and check facts before sharing information. Elected representatives listen to many views, study evidence, and make decisions for the public. Participation does not guarantee that every request becomes policy, but it gives citizens ways to influence government and hold representatives accountable.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Who may vote in a federal election, and whom do they elect to represent their riding?

2 Name two actions a person can take before an election to make an informed choice.

3 What are two ways residents can share their views about a proposed local recreation program?

4 What does a petition show, and why does participation not guarantee that every request becomes policy?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Think of one local issue that matters to you. Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining two ways you could participate, whom you would contact or meet with, and how your actions could influence a decision.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each action that citizens can take to participate in government. Write **V** beside voting actions and **P** beside other participation actions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Who may vote in a federal election, and whom do they elect to represent their riding?	Canadian citizens age 18 or older may vote. They elect an MP to represent their riding in the House of Commons.
2	Name two actions a person can take before an election to make an informed choice.	Any two: learn about candidates, attend candidate meetings, ask questions, or discuss issues.
3	What are two ways residents can share their views about a proposed local recreation program?	Any two: attend a municipal council meeting, speak during a public comment period if offered, or send a letter to the mayor and council.
4	What does a petition show, and why does participation not guarantee that every request becomes policy?	A petition shows that many people support a request. Participation does not guarantee a result because elected representatives consider many views and evidence before making decisions.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town should add a covered bus stop near the library. I would attend a council meeting and send council members a petition signed by families who use the stop. These steps would show the council how the change could help residents and ask it to consider the project.

Accept reasonable local issues and two accurate participation methods, such as attending a council meeting, writing representatives, using a petition, joining a community group, or giving feedback in a consultation. The response should identify an appropriate local official or council and explain how citizens can influence, rather than control, a decision.