Nia Speaks Up

How citizens help shape decisions at three levels

3.C.5 "Explain the role citizens have in making decisions and rules within the community, state, and nation, such as participating in local and regional activities, voting in elections, running for office, and voicing opinions in a positive way."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one way citizens can take part at each level: town, state, and nation. Circle the group that makes decisions at each level.

From One Park to Many States

1. On Saturday, Nia bikes to a park near her home. At one corner on a town street, cars turn quickly, so neighbors ask the town council for a safer crossing. Nia tells the council how hard it is to see cars from her bike. Other people speak, too. The council listens and votes on a plan for a marked crossing. Nia also joins neighbors to pick up litter near the park.

2. On longer rides, Nia crosses into other towns in her state. A state rule about bike helmets could affect riders in every town there. State lawmakers listen to ideas about such rules and vote on them. Adults can vote in state elections to choose lawmakers. An adult who meets the rules can also run for state office. Nia can write a polite letter to share her view.

3. The river beside Nia's park flows through several states. A national law about keeping rivers clean could affect people far beyond her town. Members of Congress make national laws. Adults can vote to choose members of Congress, and eligible adults can run for those offices. Nia cannot vote yet, but she can send a respectful message to a member of Congress explaining why clean water matters to her.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could Nia's words help the town council decide about the crossing?

2. Why could Nia's letter help with a state helmet rule even though she cannot vote?

3. How can adults help choose the people who make state rules? How could an adult become one of those people?

4. How can Nia take part in a national decision about clean rivers? Why could that decision affect people beyond her town?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your town is deciding whether to put benches near a bus stop. In two or three sentences, explain one positive way you could take part and how it might help town leaders decide.

ANSWER KEY

Nia Speaks Up

GRADE 3 · 3.C.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way citizens can take part at each level: town, state, and nation. Circle the group that makes decisions at each level. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could Nia's words help the town council decide about the crossing?	**Nia tells the council that it is hard to see cars from her bike. The council can consider her experience when it votes on the crossing plan.**
2	Why could Nia's letter help with a state helmet rule even though she cannot vote?	**State lawmakers listen to ideas about rules. Nia's letter can share her view before they vote.**
3	How can adults help choose the people who make state rules? How could an adult become one of those people?	**Adults can vote in state elections to choose lawmakers. An adult who meets the rules can run for state office.**
4	How can Nia take part in a national decision about clean rivers? Why could that decision affect people beyond her town?	**Nia can send a respectful message to a member of Congress. The river flows through several states, so a national law about it could affect people beyond her town.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would speak politely at a town meeting about the bus stop. I would explain that some riders may need a place to sit while they wait. Town leaders could use this idea when deciding whether to add benches.

For the marking job, accept any passage-based way citizens take part at each level. For Your Turn, accept a positive action and a clear explanation of how it could help town leaders decide.