A Voice in State Decisions

Ways to take part in state government

4.C.5 "Give examples of how citizens can participate in their state government and explain the right and responsibility of voting."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways people share ideas with state lawmakers, circle who has the right to vote in state elections, and number two ways voters can prepare to make careful choices.

A Safer Trail

1. On a rainy Saturday, Maya hears that her state may spend money to repair trails in a state park. State lawmakers will decide whether to include the repairs in the state budget. Maya and her grandfather attend a public hearing where people can share ideas with lawmakers. Her grandfather explains that a safe trail would help families explore the park.

2. Maya is too young to vote, but she can still take part. She writes to her state representative, a lawmaker who speaks for people in her area. In her message, she asks the representative to support trail repairs and explains that broken boards make a bridge hard to cross. Citizens can also write about other issues that affect their communities.

3. Voting is another way citizens help choose their state government. In state elections, eligible adult citizens have the right to vote for state leaders, such as lawmakers. Voting is also a responsibility: voters should learn about candidates and issues so they can make careful choices. They can compare candidates' plans and check information from trustworthy sources. No law requires every eligible citizen to vote.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Maya's grandfather take part in state government, and what did he tell lawmakers?

2. How did Maya take part even though she cannot vote, and what reason did she give?

3. Who has the right to vote in state elections, and how can their votes affect state government?

4. Why is voting a responsibility? Name one way voters can prepare to make careful choices.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine state lawmakers are deciding whether to spend money on more buses for rural towns. Write four sentences: describe one action you could take now, give a specific reason you would share with a lawmaker, explain how an eligible adult could use the right to vote on this issue, and describe one way that voter could prepare.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 4 · 4.C.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways people share ideas with state lawmakers, circle who has the right to vote in state elections, and number two ways voters can prepare to make careful choices. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Maya's grandfather take part in state government, and what did he tell lawmakers?	**He attended a public hearing and told lawmakers that a safe trail would help families explore the park.**
2	How did Maya take part even though she cannot vote, and what reason did she give?	**She wrote to her state representative and explained that broken boards make a bridge hard to cross.**
3	Who has the right to vote in state elections, and how can their votes affect state government?	**Eligible adult citizens can vote to help choose state leaders, such as lawmakers.**
4	Why is voting a responsibility? Name one way voters can prepare to make careful choices.	**Voters should learn about candidates and issues. They can compare candidates' plans or check information from trustworthy sources.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I could write to my state representative about adding buses for rural towns. I would explain that more buses could help people get to jobs and doctors when they do not have a car. An eligible adult could vote for a state lawmaker who supports more rural buses. Before voting, that adult could compare the candidates' transportation plans.

Accept other specific, realistic reasons for supporting rural buses. Voting responses should connect an informed choice to electing state leaders, not assume that voters cast a direct vote on the bus plan.