A Voice in Town

How residents speak up, track decisions, and take part in elections

5.C.7 "Examine ways by which citizens may effectively voice opinions, monitor government, and bring about change in government, including voting and participation in the election process."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways people shared an opinion, circle two ways they checked what the council was doing, and number two ways people could take part in the election process. Mark these actions to see how residents can work toward a change.

The Library Hours Question

1. On Saturdays, Maya's town library closed before many families could visit. Maya and her classmates wanted longer hours. They asked library workers when people came in and learned that Saturday afternoons were busy just before closing. The students wrote a letter to the town council explaining the problem and asking for a later closing time. They also invited neighbors to sign a petition supporting the idea.

2. Before the next council meeting, Maya checked the meeting agenda on the town website. It listed a discussion of library funding. At the meeting, she heard council members explain that longer hours would require money for staff. She spoke during public comment and shared the petition. Later, she read the meeting minutes to see what the council had decided: members would study the cost before voting.

3. An election for town council was coming soon. Maya could not vote because she was too young, but she could ask candidates about library hours and share their answers with neighbors. Eligible adults could register, learn each candidate's position, and vote for the candidate they preferred. After the election, residents could follow council meetings and ask the new members to act on library hours.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the students use both a letter and a petition to make their opinion heard?

2. What could Maya learn by checking the meeting agenda before the meeting and the minutes afterward?

3. How did Maya use public comment to help the council consider a change?

4. How could an eligible adult use the coming election to support a change in library hours?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a town issue other than library hours. In three or four sentences, explain how you could share your opinion, check what local leaders decide, and take part in an election even though you cannot vote yet.

ANSWER KEY

A Voice in Town

GRADE 5 · 5.C.7

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways people shared an opinion, circle two ways they checked what the council was doing, and number two ways people could take part in the election process. Mark these actions to see how residents can work toward a change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the students use both a letter and a petition to make their opinion heard?	**The letter explained the problem and requested longer hours. The petition showed that neighbors supported the idea.**
2	What could Maya learn by checking the meeting agenda before the meeting and the minutes afterward?	**The agenda showed that library funding would be discussed. The minutes showed that the council would study the cost before voting.**
3	How did Maya use public comment to help the council consider a change?	**She spoke at the council meeting and shared the petition so members could hear that residents wanted longer library hours.**
4	How could an eligible adult use the coming election to support a change in library hours?	**An eligible adult could register, learn the candidates' positions on library hours, and vote for a preferred candidate.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our park needs a working drinking fountain. I could write to the town council and explain why visitors need one. I could read meeting minutes to find out whether the council plans to fix it. During an election, I could ask council candidates how they would handle park repairs and share their answers with adults who can vote.

Accept other passage-supported actions that serve the same purpose. For Part 3, look for a distinct local issue and workable actions for sharing an opinion, monitoring a decision, and participating in an election without voting.