# Three Election Paths

Connect citizen actions to local, state, and federal elections

**8.C.6** "Explain ways that citizens can participate in the election process (e.g., political parties, campaigns, and elections) at the federal, state, and local levels."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline one way Maya participates or could participate at each level, circle her political party activity, and number the offices 1 for local, 2 for state, and 3 for federal.

### One Concern, Three Elections

1. At the crosswalk outside Maya's school, drivers speed past students each morning. Maya cannot vote yet, but she wants to know which candidates would address the problem. She reads the city council candidates' plans for safer streets and attends a public candidate forum. She asks each candidate whether they would support a new crossing signal. City council members make local decisions about streets and city spending. Maya shares what she learns with neighbors who can vote in the city election. Her questions help voters compare specific plans.

2. Maya also learns that state decisions can affect road safety. Candidates for the state legislature discuss laws and state funding for transportation. At a public meeting held by a political party, Maya listens to members discuss which state candidate to support. Political parties organize people with shared goals and may help their candidates campaign. Maya could volunteer for a candidate's campaign by handing out approved flyers or helping at an event. Campaign work helps a candidate explain a position to voters, but hearing one party's view is not the same as comparing candidates.

3. For a federal election, Maya checks the positions of candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives on national transportation funding. A member of the House votes on federal laws and spending, not on the location of a city crossing signal. Maya compares the candidates' views and discusses them with an eligible voter in her family. Voters choose a House member in a federal election, state lawmakers in state elections, and city council members in local elections. Voting rules vary by state, but citizens who meet their state's voting requirements can register and vote.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Maya participate in the local election even though she cannot vote yet? Explain how one of her actions could help voters.

2. What does Maya do through a political party at the state level, and what could she do for a state candidate's campaign?

3. Why does Maya compare U.S. House candidates' views on national transportation funding instead of asking them to choose the location of the crossing signal?

4. How could an eligible citizen take part in elections at all three levels described in the passage?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose an issue other than road safety. In five or six sentences, explain how you could participate in local, state, and federal elections related to that issue, including a political party activity and a campaign activity.

ANSWER KEY

# Three Election Paths

GRADE 8 · 8.C.6

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way Maya participates or could participate at each level, circle her political party activity, and number the offices 1 for local, 2 for state, and 3 for federal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How does Maya participate in the local election even though she cannot vote yet? Explain how one of her actions could help voters. | **She asks city council candidates about a crossing signal and shares what she learns with neighbors, helping voters compare the candidates' plans.** |
| 2 | What does Maya do through a political party at the state level, and what could she do for a state candidate's campaign? | **She listens at a public party meeting to members discuss a state candidate. She could volunteer for a candidate's campaign by handing out approved flyers or helping at an event.** |
| 3 | Why does Maya compare U.S. House candidates' views on national transportation funding instead of asking them to choose the location of the crossing signal? | **House members vote on federal laws and spending, while city officials make local street decisions.** |
| 4 | How could an eligible citizen take part in elections at all three levels described in the passage? | **An eligible citizen could register and vote for a city council member in a local election, a state lawmaker in a state election, and a House member in a federal election.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I care about safe drinking water in my town. In the local election, I would ask city council candidates how they would replace aging city water pipes, then share their answers with neighbors. For the state election, I would attend a public political party meeting to hear a state legislative candidate's plan for water testing. I would also volunteer at a state candidate's campaign event to help voters learn about that plan. For the federal election, I would compare U.S. House candidates' positions on funding for water systems. These steps would help me judge the candidates now and vote when I am eligible.

Accept other passage-supported actions for questions 1 and 2. For Your Turn, look for a distinct action connected to each election level, plus a political party activity and a campaign activity.