# When Status Changes

How communities make life transitions visible

**S.3.6** "Discuss how societies recognize rites of passage."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline one public action or symbol in each ceremony, and circle the people who lead or witness it. Write 1, 2, and 3 beside the different changes the ceremonies recognize.

### Three Ways to Mark a Change

1. On a June evening, seniors in a public school gym cross a stage as their names are called. Families applaud, and a principal hands each student a diploma cover. The cover itself does not create the academic record; the school has already checked course requirements. Yet the walk makes a change visible: students who spent years in the school are now recognized as graduates. Caps and gowns make the group easy to identify, while individual names give each person a moment of public attention. The ceremony also lets families and teachers witness a transition they helped support.

2. In some families across Latin America and among Latino communities elsewhere, a quinceañera marks a girl's fifteenth birthday. Customs vary widely: one family might hold a religious service and a large party, while another chooses a small gathering or no celebration at all. At one party, relatives invite the teenager to dance and offer speeches about her growing responsibilities. These actions do not mean every fifteen-year-old has the same duties or that adulthood arrives on a single day. Instead, the gathering publicly acknowledges a stage of growing independence through family participation, shared words, and a celebration shaped by local choices.

3. At a United States naturalization ceremony, eligible applicants take the Oath of Allegiance and receive certificates of naturalization. A judge or an authorized government official leads the event; guests may watch, and new citizens may celebrate afterward. Unlike a birthday party, this rite includes a legal change: taking the oath is a required step in becoming a citizen through naturalization. The ceremony joins an official declaration to public recognition of a new civic status. Across these settings, witnesses, spoken words, and visible actions help others recognize change, but the kind of change and who organizes the event differ.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do two parts of the graduation ceremony make the students' new status visible to others?

2. How can relatives at a quinceañera recognize a change without claiming that every fifteen-year-old has the same responsibilities?

3. How does the naturalization ceremony recognize a different kind of change from a quinceañera?

4. Compare the role of witnesses in two ceremonies from the passage. Who witnesses each change, and why does their presence matter?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Design a rite for a neighborhood garden that recognizes a volunteer becoming a garden steward. In four to six sentences, explain the change, two specific actions or symbols, who witnesses it, and why their recognition matters.

ANSWER KEY

# When Status Changes

HIGH SCHOOL · S.3.6

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one public action or symbol in each ceremony, and circle the people who lead or witness it. Write 1, 2, and 3 beside the different changes the ceremonies recognize. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How do two parts of the graduation ceremony make the students' new status visible to others? | **Crossing the stage as names are called gives each graduate public attention. Caps and gowns identify them as a group of graduates.** |
| 2 | How can relatives at a quinceañera recognize a change without claiming that every fifteen-year-old has the same responsibilities? | **Dancing and speeches acknowledge the teenager's growing independence, but families choose different customs and teenagers do not all have identical duties.** |
| 3 | How does the naturalization ceremony recognize a different kind of change from a quinceañera? | **The required oath marks a legal change to citizenship. A quinceañera is a family celebration that acknowledges growing independence, not a legal change.** |
| 4 | Compare the role of witnesses in two ceremonies from the passage. Who witnesses each change, and why does their presence matter? | **At graduation, families and teachers see students recognized as graduates. At a quinceañera, relatives take part in publicly acknowledging a teenager's growing independence.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A volunteer becomes a garden steward after learning how to care for shared plots. At a weekend gathering, the volunteer plants a labeled seedling in the common bed and receives a key to the tool shed. Other gardeners and nearby residents watch. Planting shows a promise to care for the space, while the key signals new responsibility. Their public welcome lets everyone know whom to ask for help with garden tools.

Accept other passage-supported examples of actions and witnesses. For the open task, look for a clear transition, two meaningful actions or symbols, witnesses, and an explanation of how public recognition matters.