Shade and Say

Community service and civic action at three levels of government

USG.5.7 "Describe opportunities available to individuals to contribute to the well-being of their communities and participate responsibly in the political process at local, state, and federal levels of government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one action that helps neighbors right away. Number the group's actions aimed at local, state, and federal government, then circle one way they participate responsibly.

A Safer Place to Wait

1. On a hot July afternoon, Maya notices that the bus stop outside the library has no shade. Riders waiting there include older neighbors and students traveling to summer jobs. Maya and two friends bring sealed water bottles to a nearby community center, where staff offer them to anyone who needs one. The friends also ask riders what would make the stop safer. Several mention the lack of shade, while others point to cars moving too fast past the stop. The group records these concerns without posting anyone's name or photo. Helping riders now matters, but lasting changes may require public decisions.

2. The town manages the bus stop, so Maya asks the town council when residents may speak at its next public meeting. At the meeting, she shares the riders' concerns and asks the council to consider a shelter in its budget. She notes that the road beside the stop is a state highway. For the traffic concern, her group writes to the state transportation department and their state legislators, requesting a safety review rather than claiming that one solution will work. They include the stop's location and the times they observed fast traffic. Public officials can evaluate the request using that information.

3. A shelter could cost more than the town can pay alone. Maya's group writes to their members of Congress to support federal funding for public transit, which can help communities pay for eligible projects. They do not tell neighbors that a letter will guarantee money or that Congress chooses each bus shelter. Before sharing a petition, they check its claims against the town budget and meeting notes. Eligible voters in the group can also consider candidates' transportation proposals before voting in town, state, or federal elections. By combining service, careful research, and public participation, the group supports neighbors while seeking change.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the group help riders right away, and why does it also seek public action?

2. What does Maya ask the town council to consider, and how does she bring riders' concerns to the council?

3. Why does the group contact state officials about traffic, and what information does it give them?

4. What federal action does the group take, and what does it avoid promising neighbors?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a community need other than the bus stop. In 5 to 7 sentences, describe one way you could help directly, one action you could take with local government, and one action you could take with state or federal government. Explain how you would use facts responsibly.

ANSWER KEY

Shade and Say

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one action that helps neighbors right away. Number the group's actions aimed at local, state, and federal government, then circle one way they participate responsibly. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the group help riders right away, and why does it also seek public action?	**They provide water through the community center. Public decisions may be needed for lasting changes to the stop.**
2	What does Maya ask the town council to consider, and how does she bring riders' concerns to the council?	**She asks the council to consider a shelter in its budget and shares riders' concerns at a public meeting.**
3	Why does the group contact state officials about traffic, and what information does it give them?	**The road is a state highway. The group gives the stop's location and the times it observed fast traffic.**
4	What federal action does the group take, and what does it avoid promising neighbors?	**The group asks members of Congress to support federal transit funding. It does not promise that its letter will secure money or that Congress selects each shelter.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My neighborhood food pantry runs short of fresh produce in winter. I would ask the pantry what it needs, then help collect requested items rather than guessing. I would check the town meeting schedule and ask the town council about space for a weekly produce pickup. I would also write to my state legislators to ask what state food assistance programs could support local pantries. I would verify any numbers with the pantry before sharing them at a meeting. I would not promise that either government action would solve the shortage.

Accept other accurate descriptions of the passage's service and civic actions. For Part 3, look for a direct contribution, appropriate actions at two specified levels of government, and a concrete way to use facts responsibly.