

Access Takes Action

Trace how disability-rights advocates used multiple methods to change society.

11.10b "Individuals, diverse groups, and organizations have sought to bring about change in American society through a variety of methods."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline methods used to seek change. Circle a success and a remaining limitation.

Disability Rights and Public Change

- ① Before the 1970s, many children with disabilities were excluded from public schools or denied meaningful instruction. Families and advocates challenged exclusion through lawsuits, public testimony, and organizing. In 1975, Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1990. Participating states had to ensure eligible children received a free appropriate public education. Individualized education programs (IEPs) specified services based on each child's needs.
- ② Disability-rights activists also sought access beyond schools. During the 1990 Capitol Crawl, demonstrators climbed the U.S. Capitol steps without their wheelchairs or other mobility aids to highlight inaccessible public spaces. The protest complemented years of organizing and lobbying. Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that year. It expanded protections in employment, government services, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications. Passage was an achievement, but legal protections did not automatically remove every barrier.
- ③ Advocates used personal stories to shape public opinion, protests to create pressure, lobbying to influence legislation, and legal complaints to seek enforcement. These methods addressed different obstacles and could reinforce one another. Disputes over costs and implementation continued. People still faced inaccessible buildings or services and had to press institutions to fulfill their obligations. The movement illustrates both the power and the limits of legislation: rights can change on paper before everyday access changes in practice.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What two methods did parents, students, and advocates use to challenge unequal school treatment before the 1975 law?

2 How did IDEA use federal power to change public education for eligible students with disabilities?

3 How did the Capitol Crawl use direct action to seek change?

4 State one success of the ADA and one limitation described in the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

In four sentences, propose a school or community access campaign. Identify a group, goal, two methods, a possible success, and a limitation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline methods used to seek change. Circle a success and a remaining limitation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two methods did parents, students, and advocates use to challenge unequal school treatment before the 1975 law?	They used lawsuits, public testimony, and local organizing. Any two are correct.
2	How did IDEA use federal power to change public education for eligible students with disabilities?	The law required participating states to ensure eligible children received a free appropriate public education, with IEPs specifying services for individual needs.
3	How did the Capitol Crawl use direct action to seek change?	Demonstrators climbed the Capitol steps without their mobility aids to highlight inaccessible public spaces and build pressure for change.
4	State one success of the ADA and one limitation described in the passage.	A success was expanded legal protection against disability discrimination in major areas of public life. A limitation was that barriers remained, so people still had to file complaints, seek enforcement, and challenge inaccessible places and services.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Riders with disabilities could organize for reliable bus access. They could document inaccessible stops and present findings at transit meetings. Officials might fund improvements and set repair deadlines. Budget constraints or weak follow-through could delay results, requiring continued monitoring.

Accept equivalent descriptions of methods, goals, successes, and limitations when they are supported by the passage. For the open response, check for a clear issue, a named group, two distinct methods, and realistic success and limitation.