

Liberty in Public

Evaluate how public rules can protect freedom and community well-being.

12.G3a "Citizens should be informed about rights and freedoms, and committed to balancing personal liberties with a social responsibility to others."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline liberties. Circle effects on others. Mark proposed ways to protect both expression and access.

A Plaza Policy Debate

- ① Imagine residents debate rallies in Riverton's civic plaza, a traditional public forum near a hospital. Peaceful speech and assembly receive constitutional protection. Officials cannot favor speakers because they agree with a message. They may address significant interests such as emergency access and disruptive noise, but fair application alone is insufficient. Content-neutral time, place, and manner rules must also be narrowly tailored and leave ample alternative ways to communicate.
- ② A proposed reservation process covers events expecting over fifty people. It seeks to prevent scheduling conflicts and keep an emergency lane open. An evening amplified-sound limit would still allow signs and unamplified speech. Supporters cite patients' access and rest; critics worry that lengthy notice requirements would obstruct spontaneous responses to news. No policy is automatically lawful merely because its supporters invoke safety. Residents should examine evidence, burdens, and alternatives.
- ③ The council considers free online and in-person applications, a prompt process for urgent events, and written appeal procedures. Such changes could reduce burdens, but their details and operation still matter. Social responsibility includes considering patients, pedestrians, and nearby residents while exercising liberty. It does not require abandoning unpopular criticism or accepting every official decision. Informed citizens can distinguish voluntary courtesy from enforceable restrictions and ask whether public interests are addressed without unnecessarily burdening expression.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What freedom does the passage identify as protected, and what is one limit on using a public place?

2 How would the reservation rule and emergency lane address a responsibility to other people?

3 What constitutional requirements must the proposed event rules satisfy beyond fair application?

4 How does the shorter notice procedure try to balance liberty with social responsibility?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

At 11:30 p.m., a group plans a loud rally on a sidewalk outside an apartment building to oppose a city decision. In 3 or 4 sentences, propose a content-neutral plan that protects the group's ability to express its message and addresses one effect on other people. Name one alternative way the group could communicate if loud amplification is limited, and explain why your plan is fair.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline liberties. Circle effects on others. Mark proposed ways to protect both expression and access. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What freedom does the passage identify as protected, and what is one limit on using a public place?	Peaceful speech and assembly are protected. A lawful rule may preserve emergency access or address disruptive noise while meeting constitutional standards.
2	How would the reservation rule and emergency lane address a responsibility to other people?	They would prevent conflicting events and keep space open for emergency vehicles, helping protect safe access to the hospital.
3	What constitutional requirements must the proposed event rules satisfy beyond fair application?	They must be content-neutral, narrowly tailored to significant interests, and leave ample alternative communication channels.
4	How does the shorter notice procedure try to balance liberty with social responsibility?	It gives groups a way to respond quickly to breaking news while still considering whether space is available and preserving planning for safety and access.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would propose a nighttime amplification limit based on documented noise impacts, applying without regard to viewpoint. Organizers could use signs or unamplified speech, or schedule amplification earlier. This could protect residents' sleep while preserving criticism. Officials would still need to assess tailoring and whether the alternatives allow meaningful communication.

Accept equivalent explanations that accurately connect a protected liberty with a specific responsibility to others. For the open response, accept reasonable plans that apply rules without favoring a viewpoint, preserve meaningful expression, and explain a community interest.