

Civic Levers

Examine how citizens influence decisions and meet legal duties.

12.G3c "Citizens have opportunities to both participate in and influence their communities and country. Citizens contribute to government processes through legal obligations such as obeying laws, paying taxes, serving on juries..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle legal duties. Underline voluntary ways to influence government. Mark who each requirement applies to.

Participation and Public Duty

- ① Imagine residents discussing a dangerous crosswalk at a city council hearing. A student presents crash reports and requests a longer pedestrian signal. Other speakers support the request, while a business owner raises traffic concerns. Council members weigh evidence, public comments, safety rules, and cost. Attending hearings, contacting officials, organizing, and voting are ways to influence decisions. These voluntary actions can inform officials and support accountability, but they do not guarantee a preferred result.
- ② Legal duties also help public institutions function. People must obey applicable laws and pay taxes they legally owe; these obligations are not limited to citizens. Taxes support services such as roads, schools, and courts. Eligible citizens who receive a jury summons must respond as directed; the court handles requests for an excuse or postponement. Jurors weigh evidence under a judge's instructions, supporting courts and the right to a fair trial. A summons does not guarantee selection for a jury.
- ③ Selective Service registration is another legal requirement with specific eligibility rules. It generally covers male U.S. citizens and male immigrants ages eighteen through twenty-five, with exceptions. Registration creates a record for possible military conscription; it is not enlistment or an order to report for military service. Procedures can change, including the transition to automatic registration under federal law. Consult the Selective Service System for current requirements and status checks. Understanding which duties apply, and distinguishing them from voluntary participation, helps people act responsibly.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Name two voluntary ways to influence public decisions described in the passage.

2 How can jury service support both a government process and an individual right?

3 Why is it inaccurate to say that all civic duties apply only to citizens?

4 How does Selective Service registration differ from entering military service?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

For a real or fictional community issue, write three or four sentences explaining one voluntary way to influence a decision, one applicable legal duty, and how fulfilling that duty supports the community.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Circle legal duties. Underline voluntary ways to influence government. Mark who each requirement applies to. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two voluntary ways to influence public decisions described in the passage.	Any two: attend hearings, contact officials, organize, or vote.
2	How can jury service support both a government process and an individual right?	Jurors listen to evidence and apply a judge's instructions, helping courts operate and protecting the right to a fair trial.
3	Why is it inaccurate to say that all civic duties apply only to citizens?	Applicable laws and taxes owed also apply to noncitizens; Selective Service requirements include many male immigrants.
4	How does Selective Service registration differ from entering military service?	Registration creates a record for possible conscription. It is not enlistment or an order to report for military service.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Residents could present crosswalk safety evidence at a city council hearing and request a longer pedestrian signal. Presenting a proposal is voluntary. Residents also must obey applicable traffic laws while traveling to the hearing. That duty protects other road users even when residents disagree with the current street design.

Accept accurately stated participation actions and duties from the passage. For the open response, accept a realistic lawful action, a valid legal obligation such as obeying laws, paying legally owed taxes, reporting for jury service when required, or Selective Service registration when applicable, and a clear explanation of its public purpose.