

How Laws Work

Read how New York State government is organized and makes protective laws.

4.4b "The New York State Constitution establishes the basic structure of government for the state. The government of New York creates laws to protect the people and interests of the state."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that explains the Constitution's job. Circle the words that name each branch, and put a star beside two examples of how laws can protect people or New York's interests.

New York State Government

- ① The New York State Constitution is the state's basic plan for government. It explains how state government is organized and what powers it has. The plan divides work among three branches. The Legislature makes laws. The executive branch, led by the governor, carries out laws. Courts in the judicial branch decide cases and explain what laws mean in New York.
- ② A proposed law is called a bill. A state senator or Assembly member may introduce a bill. Lawmakers study it, discuss it, and vote. For a bill to move forward, the State Senate and the State Assembly must each pass the same version. The bill then goes to the governor, who may sign it into law or veto it.
- ③ State laws can protect people and the interests of New York. For example, a law may set safety rules for school buses or protect water from pollution. The Constitution also gives people rights and freedoms, along with responsibilities. Because power is shared among branches, one group does not make, carry out, and judge laws alone. This structure helps guard the common good.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What is the New York State Constitution, and what does it explain?

2 Name the three branches of New York State government. What is one job of each branch?

3 What must happen before a bill can go to the governor?

4 Choose one example from the passage. How can that law protect people or New York's interests?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write three sentences about a new New York State law you would propose. Name the law, explain whom or what it would protect, and tell what the Legislature and governor would do with the bill.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that explains the Constitution's job. Circle the words that name each branch, and put a star beside two examples of how laws can protect people or New York's interests. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is the New York State Constitution, and what does it explain?	It is the state's basic plan for government. It explains how state government is organized and what powers it has.
2	Name the three branches of New York State government. What is one job of each branch?	The Legislature makes laws. The executive branch carries out laws. The judicial branch decides cases and explains what laws mean.
3	What must happen before a bill can go to the governor?	The State Senate and the State Assembly must each pass the same version of the bill.
4	Choose one example from the passage. How can that law protect people or New York's interests?	Answers may explain that school bus safety rules protect people, or that water-pollution laws protect New York's water.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Safe Crosswalk Law would require bright crosswalk signs near busy schools. It would help protect children as they walk to school. The Legislature could pass the bill, and the governor could sign it into law.

Accept accurate paraphrases of the passage for Parts 1 and 2. For Your Turn, accept a reasonable proposed state law that includes protection and correctly describes the Legislature passing a bill and the governor acting on it.