From Bill to Law

How citizens and national officials can protect voting rights

4.P.2.1 "Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of government, the benefits of democratic systems, and their responsibilities as citizens..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the voting barrier, circle how Luis tells an official his view, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the bill's introduction, Congress's approval, and the president's signing.

A Way Into the Voting Place

1. At a neighborhood meeting, Luis hears that some voters with disabilities cannot enter their polling place. A polling place is where people cast votes. The Constitution protects voting rights, and national laws can help people use those rights. Luis wants to know how a new law might make polling places easier to enter. He also wants officials to hear from the people affected.

2. Imagine that a member of Congress introduces a bill requiring accessible entrances at polling places for federal elections. Congress is the lawmaking part of the national government. Its members debate the bill and vote. If both the House of Representatives and the Senate approve it, the president can sign it into law. The president leads the part of government that carries out laws. Courts can decide whether laws follow the Constitution.

3. Before Congress votes, Luis reads the bill and checks facts about polling places. At a public meeting, he listens to voters who disagree about the bill. Then he writes to his representative, sharing what he learned and asking for an accessible entrance. Listening with respect is a civic virtue. Writing to an official is one way citizens can take part in government and speak up for rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could the proposed law help people use a right protected by the Constitution?

2. Which two parts of Congress must approve the bill before the president can sign it?

3. What jobs do Congress, the president, and courts have in the passage?

4. What does Luis do before writing to his representative? Which action shows a civic virtue?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a federal office accepts requests to officials only through an online form. In three sentences, explain how this could affect the right to ask the government for change, suggest a fair rule, and tell how you would check facts and share your view with a member of Congress.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 4 · 4.P.2.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the voting barrier, circle how Luis tells an official his view, and write 1, 2, and 3 beside the bill's introduction, Congress's approval, and the president's signing. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could the proposed law help people use a right protected by the Constitution?	**Accessible entrances could help voters with disabilities enter polling places and cast their votes.**
2	Which two parts of Congress must approve the bill before the president can sign it?	**The House of Representatives and the Senate.**
3	What jobs do Congress, the president, and courts have in the passage?	**Congress debates and votes on bills. The president can sign a bill into law and leads the part of government that carries out laws. Courts can decide whether laws follow the Constitution.**
4	What does Luis do before writing to his representative? Which action shows a civic virtue?	**He reads the bill, checks facts, and listens to voters who disagree. Listening with respect shows a civic virtue.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

People without internet access might not be able to ask officials for change. A fair rule would let people mail their requests to the office, too. I would find out how many people lack internet access, then write to my representative about the rule.

Accept answers that connect accessible entrances to voting and identify listening with respect as a civic virtue. For Part 3, accept a different workable way to send requests if the student explains the right affected and how they would learn and share their view.