Creekside Decisions

How people discuss a shared problem and choose what to do

5.P.1.1.B "Use a range of democratic procedures to discuss and make decisions about real-world problems in the community, region, and nation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways people shared ideas, and circle two ways a group reached a decision. Write T beside a town action, R beside a regional action, and N beside a national action.

Who Can Help Mill Creek?

1. After heavy rain, plastic bottles washed into Mill Creek beside the town playground. Students wanted a cleanup, but some neighbors worried that trash would return from towns upstream. At a public meeting, the town council invited residents to speak for one minute each. A recorder listed their ideas without calling any speaker a winner or loser. People suggested a cleanup day and more trash bins near the playground.

2. Because Mill Creek runs through three towns, one town could not solve the whole problem alone. Each town sent two representatives to a regional creek group. The group discussed costs and tried to reach consensus, a plan everyone could accept. They agreed to ask each town to test covered bins. Each town council would still decide whether to pay for its own bins.

3. Students also learned that a federal agency was asking for public comments on a proposed national rule about water pollution. They wrote comments asking the agency to consider how litter reaches creeks. Sending comments let people share evidence, but it did not give them the final vote. Back in town, council members heard public comments, debated the cost of bins, and voted to try them for six months. Volunteers scheduled a cleanup day.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the town meeting give residents a way to share different ideas?

2. Why did the three towns send representatives to a regional creek group instead of having just one town make the whole plan?

3. What did the regional group agree on, and what decision was left to each town council?

4. How was sending comments to the federal agency different from the town council's vote?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A busy road crosses your town and two nearby towns, and a federal agency has asked for comments on a national road safety plan. In five sentences, explain how residents could share views, how the towns could discuss and decide on a crossing plan, and how residents could take part in the national discussion.

ANSWER KEY

Creekside Decisions

GRADE 5 · 5.P.1.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways people shared ideas, and circle two ways a group reached a decision. Write T beside a town action, R beside a regional action, and N beside a national action. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the town meeting give residents a way to share different ideas?	**Residents each had one minute to speak, and a recorder listed their ideas.**
2	Why did the three towns send representatives to a regional creek group instead of having just one town make the whole plan?	**The creek runs through all three towns, so the problem affects more than one town.**
3	What did the regional group agree on, and what decision was left to each town council?	**The group agreed to ask each town to test covered bins. Each town council would decide whether to pay for its bins.**
4	How was sending comments to the federal agency different from the town council's vote?	**The comments shared evidence for the agency to consider. The council's vote made the town's decision to try bins for six months.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town could hold a public meeting so people who use the road can describe where crossings feel unsafe. Each town could send representatives to a regional meeting because the road connects all three towns. The representatives could discuss crossing locations and try to agree on a shared plan. Each town council could then vote on whether to pay for changes in its town. Residents could send comments about road safety to the federal agency for its national plan.

Accept other passage-based explanations of how speaking, consensus, comments, and voting serve different purposes. For Part 3, look for a way to share views, a regional discussion and decision process, and participation through national public comments.