Who Can Help?

Trace national powers and informed citizen action.

5.P.2.1.B "Explain the structure, responsibilities, and powers exercised by officials of the national government and describe ways informed citizens can and should participate."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one power of Congress, circle one power of the president or a federal agency, write J beside what judges do, and box one way citizens can participate after learning about an issue.

A River Crosses State Lines

1. After a big storm, trash and dirty water flow into a river that crosses state lines. Families downstream ask who can help. The national government has three branches with different powers. In the legislative branch, members of Congress can write and vote on bills about pollution in waters protected by federal law. They can also decide how much money federal cleanup programs receive.

2. The president leads the executive branch. If Congress passes a bill, the president can sign it into law or veto it. Federal agencies in this branch carry out laws. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, can check whether a factory follows federal water pollution rules. The president cannot make a new law alone. Agency workers must act within powers given by law.

3. If a factory and the EPA disagree about a federal rule, their case may go to a federal court. Judges in the judicial branch decide what the law means in that case, not what cleanup plan they like best. Citizens can read reports from reliable sources, ask questions at public meetings, and contact members of Congress with their views. Eligible adults can also vote in elections for national officials.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. If Congress passes a river pollution bill, what can the president do next? How is that different from Congress's job?

2. Which branch includes the EPA, and how can the EPA help carry out a federal law?

3. If a factory and the EPA disagree about a federal rule, what can federal judges decide?

4. How could a fifth grader learn about an issue and share a view? What additional way can an eligible adult participate?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a national issue other than river pollution. In four sentences, name a national official or agency and its branch, explain one action it could take within its power, tell how you would learn about the issue, and describe how you would share your view.

ANSWER KEY

Who Can Help?

GRADE 5 · 5.P.2.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one power of Congress, circle one power of the president or a federal agency, write J beside what judges do, and box one way citizens can participate after learning about an issue. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	If Congress passes a river pollution bill, what can the president do next? How is that different from Congress's job?	**The president can sign or veto the bill. Congress writes and votes on bills.**
2	Which branch includes the EPA, and how can the EPA help carry out a federal law?	**The EPA is in the executive branch. It can check whether a factory follows federal water pollution rules.**
3	If a factory and the EPA disagree about a federal rule, what can federal judges decide?	**Federal judges can decide what the law means in the case.**
4	How could a fifth grader learn about an issue and share a view? What additional way can an eligible adult participate?	**A fifth grader could read a reliable report and contact a member of Congress. An eligible adult can also vote.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I care about keeping national parks clean. Congress, in the legislative branch, could vote on a bill to fund park cleanup. I would read a National Park Service report to learn what parks need. Then I would write to a member of Congress and explain why cleanup matters to me.

Accept other accurate powers and informed actions supported by the passage. For Part 3, check that the proposed official action fits the named branch and that the response has four sentences.