From Need to Law

How Congress and the President respond to a public need

8.C.4.4.A "Describe the constitutional roles of Congress and the President to produce necessary legislation in order to meet public needs."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline what Congress does and circle what the President or executive branch does. Look for how their roles help turn a public need into a law and put it to work.

A Plan for Safer Water

1. Families in several towns learn that aging water pipes may be adding lead to tap water. Replacing pipes costs more than some towns can afford. Residents ask the federal government for help, and the President calls for a national plan. The President can recommend a new law, but cannot make one alone. A member of the House introduces a bill that would provide federal grants to replace pipes and require regular water tests. Congress must decide whether this proposed response meets the public need.

2. House committees study the bill, hear from water experts, and suggest changes. The full House debates and votes. The Senate must also debate and vote on the same final text. Members might change how grants are awarded or how much money the plan provides. If both chambers pass identical versions, Congress sends the bill to the President. Congress has the constitutional power to make laws and decide how federal money is spent. A House vote alone does not create a law, even when many residents support the plan.

3. The President can sign the bill, making it law, or veto it and send it back to Congress with objections. After a veto, Congress can still make the bill law by passing it again with a two-thirds vote in each chamber. If the bill becomes law, the executive branch, led by the President, carries it out. A federal agency could manage the grants and check whether towns follow the testing rules. These separate roles let elected officials respond to a need while requiring cooperation across branches.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do the President and a House member each help begin a response to the towns' water problem?

2. Why is a House vote alone not enough to turn the water plan into a law?

3. If the President vetoes the water bill, how can Congress still make it law?

4. If the water bill becomes law, how could the President's branch help meet the towns' need?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine many communities lack safe places to cool off during dangerous heat waves. In 4 to 5 sentences, propose a federal bill to address this need, explain what Congress would do before it becomes law, name one decision the President could make about the bill, and describe what the executive branch would do if it becomes law.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.4.4.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline what Congress does and circle what the President or executive branch does. Look for how their roles help turn a public need into a law and put it to work. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do the President and a House member each help begin a response to the towns' water problem?	**The President calls for a national plan and can recommend a law. A House member introduces a bill.**
2	Why is a House vote alone not enough to turn the water plan into a law?	**The Senate must also pass the same final text, and the bill must then go to the President.**
3	If the President vetoes the water bill, how can Congress still make it law?	**Congress can pass it again with a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate.**
4	If the water bill becomes law, how could the President's branch help meet the towns' need?	**A federal agency in the executive branch could manage the pipe-replacement grants and check that towns follow the testing rules.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would propose a bill that funds public cooling centers during dangerous heat waves. Congress would debate the plan, decide how much federal money to provide, and pass the same bill in the House and Senate. The President could sign the bill to make it law. If it becomes law, the executive branch could distribute grants to communities and oversee how the funds are used.

Accept other accurate ways the executive branch could carry out the water law. For Part 3, accept a different heat-safety proposal if the response correctly distinguishes Congress's lawmaking role from the President's decision and the executive branch's role in carrying out a law.