Power and Service

How people help a constitutional republic work

8.C.4.6.A "Describe the right to vote and public service as the cornerstones of a constitutional republic."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show how voting helps people influence government, and circle two examples of public service. Put a star beside the sentence that explains how voting and public service work together.

After the Election

1. On a rainy Tuesday, residents of Cedar Falls line up to choose members of their city council. The voters do not decide every city rule themselves. They choose representatives who will debate and vote on issues such as library hours and road repairs. In a constitutional republic, the people give elected officials authority through elections, while a constitution and laws set limits on that authority. At the city level, local laws and a state constitution also shape what officials may do. Voting connects the people's choices to government decisions.

2. Voting matters after the ballots are counted, too. Suppose council members promise to extend library hours, but later propose cutting them. At the next election, eligible voters can support other candidates. Between elections, residents can speak at a public meeting and ask why the plan changed. Those actions cannot force the council to agree, but they give officials reasons to explain their choices. The right to vote gives citizens a peaceful way to choose leaders and hold them accountable, rather than handing power to one person permanently.

3. Public service keeps this system working between elections. A poll worker checks voters in and follows election rules without favoring a candidate. A council member studies the budget and listens to residents before voting. Neighbors might volunteer to help at the library, even if they hold no office. These roles differ, but each puts community needs ahead of private gain. Voting gives officials a public mandate; service helps turn that trust into fair, useful work. Together, voting and public service support a government that answers to the people and follows the law.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does choosing city council members give voters a voice in decisions about library hours and roads?

2. If council members break a promise about library hours, how can voters hold them accountable?

3. How does a poll worker's service help protect the role of voting in a constitutional republic?

4. Why does the passage describe both voting and public service as important to a government that answers to the people?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A city plans to close its only public playground to save money. In four sentences, explain how residents could use voting and public service to respond, and why both actions matter in a constitutional republic.

ANSWER KEY

Power and Service

GRADE 8 · 8.C.4.6.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show how voting helps people influence government, and circle two examples of public service. Put a star beside the sentence that explains how voting and public service work together. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does choosing city council members give voters a voice in decisions about library hours and roads?	**Voters choose representatives who debate and vote on those city issues.**
2	If council members break a promise about library hours, how can voters hold them accountable?	**At the next election, eligible voters can support other candidates.**
3	How does a poll worker's service help protect the role of voting in a constitutional republic?	**The poll worker follows election rules without favoring a candidate, helping voters take part in a fair election.**
4	Why does the passage describe both voting and public service as important to a government that answers to the people?	**Voting lets people choose leaders and hold them accountable. Public service helps officials and volunteers meet community needs while following the law.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Residents could ask council candidates about the playground and vote for a candidate whose plan they support. A resident could also serve on a parks advisory board and gather ideas for saving money. The council must make its decision within the law, not just follow the loudest group. Voting gives residents a voice in choosing leaders, while public service helps those leaders understand and meet community needs.

Accept other passage-supported explanations of voting and public service. For Part 3, look for a lawful use of voting, a distinct act of public service, and an explanation of why both matter.