A Voice, A Duty

Read how people take part in a constitutional republic.

8.C.4.6 "Define civic virtue and explain the individual's duties and responsibilities. Describe the right to vote and public service as the cornerstones of a constitutional republic. Examine other political rights and responsibilities of citizens..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline actions that help people shape public decisions, circle legal duties, and write 1 beside one detail that shows civic virtue. These marks will help you distinguish ways to participate from duties people must fulfill.

The Crosswalk Question

1. When a town considers adding a crosswalk near a busy library, neighbors may disagree about where it belongs. Civic virtue means putting the community's well-being alongside personal interests. A resident who reads the traffic report, listens to another view, and speaks respectfully at a public meeting practices it. Informed civil discourse lets people test claims instead of trading insults. Residents can also join a peaceful, nonviolent protest to call attention to a safety concern. These actions do not guarantee agreement, but they help the community make better choices.

2. In a constitutional republic, people elect representatives who must govern under a constitution. Voting allows eligible citizens to choose those representatives and hold them accountable. In most U.S. elections, voters must be U.S. citizens who meet age, residency, and registration rules. Public service is another cornerstone: people may serve in elected office, work in government, or volunteer on a local board. Citizens can also support a candidate's campaign by making calls or sharing information. A campaign volunteer should check claims before repeating them, even when a claim favors the volunteer's choice.

3. Rights come with responsibilities, and some duties apply to citizens and other residents alike. Both must obey laws and pay taxes that apply to them, even if they cannot vote. Jury service helps courts decide cases fairly: eligible citizens who are summoned may be required to serve, while noncitizens cannot serve on federal juries. Most male U.S. citizens and male immigrants living in the country must register with Selective Service from ages 18 through 25. Registration does not mean immediate military service. These obligations help sustain the republic that protects political rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What is civic virtue? Explain how the resident at the public meeting shows it.

2. Why are voting and public service both cornerstones of a constitutional republic? Give one example of public service from the passage.

3. How could someone support the crosswalk through informed civil discourse or nonviolent protest? Explain what makes the action responsible.

4. Which duties in the last paragraph apply to citizens and other residents, and which duty is limited to eligible citizens?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your community is considering a new rule to reduce litter near a creek. Write four sentences explaining one act of civic virtue, one way an eligible citizen could take part in public decisions, one responsibility shared by citizens and other residents, and why these choices matter.

ANSWER KEY

A Voice, A Duty

GRADE 8 · 8.C.4.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline actions that help people shape public decisions, circle legal duties, and write 1 beside one detail that shows civic virtue. These marks will help you distinguish ways to participate from duties people must fulfill. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What is civic virtue? Explain how the resident at the public meeting shows it.	**Civic virtue means considering the community's well-being alongside personal interests. The resident shows it by reading the report, listening to another view, and speaking respectfully.**
2	Why are voting and public service both cornerstones of a constitutional republic? Give one example of public service from the passage.	**Voting lets eligible citizens choose representatives and hold them accountable. Public service lets people contribute to governing, for example, by serving in elected office or on a local board.**
3	How could someone support the crosswalk through informed civil discourse or nonviolent protest? Explain what makes the action responsible.	**The person could discuss the traffic report respectfully or join a peaceful protest. Using evidence, listening to others, or remaining nonviolent makes the action responsible.**
4	Which duties in the last paragraph apply to citizens and other residents, and which duty is limited to eligible citizens?	**Citizens and other residents must obey applicable laws and pay applicable taxes. Most male citizens and male immigrants living in the country must register with Selective Service at the stated ages. Serving on a federal jury is limited to eligible citizens.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would read about where trash enters the creek and listen respectfully to neighbors who disagree about the proposed rule. An eligible citizen could vote for a council candidate who supports a workable cleanup plan. Citizens and other residents must obey any litter laws that apply to them. Together, informed discussion, voting, and following the law can protect the creek while giving neighbors a voice.

Accept other passage-supported examples of public service and responsible political participation. For the final question, distinguish duties shared by citizens and other residents from federal jury service, which is limited to eligible citizens.