The Last Bus

How a town weighs competing needs before a vote

MWH.P.1.1.A "Evaluate the impact of perspectives, civil discourse, and democratic principles on addressing civic issues."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two different views about the bus proposal. Circle a meeting practice that helped people discuss the issue fairly, then number two ways the council responded to public concerns.

A Later Ride Home?

1. In the fictional town of Bellford, the council faced a choice about the last bus on Route 6. The route stopped running at 8 p.m., although the community college held evening classes and the hospital employed night-shift workers. A proposal would keep buses running until 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Riders said the change could make jobs and classes reachable without costly rides home. Other residents worried that late buses might add noise near their homes. The transit director warned that the town would have to move money from another service or raise revenue.

2. At a public meeting, the council gave each speaker two minutes and asked everyone to respond to ideas rather than insult people. A hospital employee explained that a late bus would reduce her need to pay for rides. A resident near a proposed stop described worries about sleep and asked whether the stop could be moved. A college student who could not attend sent a written comment, which the council read aloud. The transit director shared estimates of operating costs but said the number of late riders was uncertain. Council members asked both supporters and opponents what evidence a trial should collect.

3. The council voted to test the later service for three months rather than make a permanent change immediately. To pay for the trial, it reduced one lightly used midday trip, a decision that could inconvenience some riders. It also moved the late stop away from the homes mentioned at the meeting. The council promised to publish counts of late riders, reports of noise, and comments from midday riders before a second vote. The majority approved the trial, but residents who disagreed could still submit comments. The plan did not settle every concern; it made the next decision more open to evidence and affected voices.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the hospital employee and the resident near the stop view the proposal differently? Name one part of the council's plan that addressed each view.

2. Which two meeting practices helped people take part in a civil discussion, and why might those practices improve the decision?

3. Evaluate the trial as a compromise: Who could benefit, and who could face a new cost?

4. How could publishing the trial results and holding a second vote make the council's decision more democratic?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A town is deciding whether to add lights to a public park after dark. In four or five sentences, propose a fair decision process that considers two different perspectives, a civil-discourse rule, and evidence the town should review before a vote. Explain one likely benefit and one possible cost of your proposal.

ANSWER KEY

The Last Bus

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.P.1.1.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two different views about the bus proposal. Circle a meeting practice that helped people discuss the issue fairly, then number two ways the council responded to public concerns. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the hospital employee and the resident near the stop view the proposal differently? Name one part of the council's plan that addressed each view.	**The employee wanted an affordable ride home, while the resident worried about sleep. The council tested later service and moved the stop away from nearby homes.**
2	Which two meeting practices helped people take part in a civil discussion, and why might those practices improve the decision?	**The council gave speakers equal time and asked them to address ideas without insults. These practices let different views be heard and considered.**
3	Evaluate the trial as a compromise: Who could benefit, and who could face a new cost?	**Evening riders could gain a way home, but riders who use the reduced midday trip could be inconvenienced.**
4	How could publishing the trial results and holding a second vote make the council's decision more democratic?	**The council could weigh evidence about ridership and noise, and people affected by the trial, including those who opposed it, could comment before the next vote.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Evening walkers may favor park lights because they could see the paths, while nearby residents may worry about light entering their homes. At a public meeting, speakers should have equal time and respond to ideas without personal attacks. The town could test shielded lights for one month before a final vote. Officials should gather reports from walkers and nearby residents about visibility, glare, and costs. A trial might make paths easier to use after dark, but it would require money and could still disturb neighbors.

Accept other passage-supported evaluations that identify who benefits, who bears a cost, and how public participation or evidence could affect the decision. For the open task, accept different fair processes if the response meets all stated requirements.