Build the Argument

Sort positions from sourced facts about the voting age.

TOT.P.4.1.B "Compose argumentative written products, including a precise claim as distinguished from opposing claims, organizing logical reasoning, and providing credible evidence to develop an argument."

NAME _____ DATE _____

CLAIM

A claim takes a position on an issue. Someone could reasonably disagree with it.

Cities should plant more street trees to reduce summer heat.

EVIDENCE

Evidence is a relevant, checkable fact from a credible source. You can use it to support or question a claim.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that shade from trees can lower surface temperatures.

1 SORT

8 items

Circle CLAIM or EVIDENCE for each statement, then choose one item from each category and explain how you knew where each belongs.

1.	1. The National Archives says the 26th Amendment was ratified in 1971.	CLAIM EVIDENCE
2.	2. Congress should lower the federal voting age to 16 so teens have a say in laws that affect them.	CLAIM EVIDENCE
3.	3. Federal elections should remain limited to voters age 18 and older because that rule is easy to apply.	CLAIM EVIDENCE
4.	4. The 26th Amendment protects citizens age 18 or older from being denied a vote because of age (National Archives).	CLAIM EVIDENCE
5.	5. Sixteen-year-olds should be allowed to vote for Congress to bring younger perspectives into lawmaking.	CLAIM EVIDENCE
6.	6. Takoma Park, Maryland, allows residents age 16 to vote in city elections (city election rules).	CLAIM EVIDENCE
7.	7. Voting is optional for 16- and 17-year-olds in Brazil (Brazil's Superior Electoral Court).	CLAIM EVIDENCE
8.	8. Federal lawmakers should keep the voting age at 18 to give voters more time to learn about government.	CLAIM EVIDENCE

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new claim about the federal voting age and one relevant fact from a named, credible source that could support or challenge your claim.

CLAIM _____

EVIDENCE _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences: state a claim that disagrees with your Part 3 claim, then explain why your Part 3 fact does not settle which voting age is best.

ANSWER KEY

Build the Argument

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PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	1. The National Archives says the 26th Amendment was ratified in 1971.	**EVIDENCE**	This is a checkable historical fact with a named source.
2	2. Congress should lower the federal voting age to 16 so teens have a say in laws that affect them.	**CLAIM**	This takes a debatable position in favor of a policy change.
3	3. Federal elections should remain limited to voters age 18 and older because that rule is easy to apply.	**CLAIM**	This takes a debatable position against a policy change.
4	4. The 26th Amendment protects citizens age 18 or older from being denied a vote because of age (National Archives).	**EVIDENCE**	This is a checkable fact about the amendment, supported by a named source.
5	5. Sixteen-year-olds should be allowed to vote for Congress to bring younger perspectives into lawmaking.	**CLAIM**	This proposes a debatable change to federal voting rules.
6	6. Takoma Park, Maryland, allows residents age 16 to vote in city elections (city election rules).	**EVIDENCE**	This is a checkable fact about a local election rule.
7	7. Voting is optional for 16- and 17-year-olds in Brazil (Brazil's Superior Electoral Court).	**EVIDENCE**	This is a checkable fact attributed to an election authority.
8	8. Federal lawmakers should keep the voting age at 18 to give voters more time to learn about government.	**CLAIM**	This takes a debatable position in favor of the current age limit.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **CLAIM**: Congress should lower the federal voting age to 16 so teens can help choose the leaders who represent them.
- **EVIDENCE**: The National Archives says the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age from 21 to 18.

Challenge: Congress should keep the federal voting age at 18 so voters have more time to learn about elections. The amendment shows that the age limit changed before, but it does not prove that 16 is the best new limit.

For Part 2, look for an explanation that a claim takes a debatable position, while evidence gives a sourced, checkable fact. The Part 3 evidence should be relevant to the student's claim and name a credible source.