

Voices in Texas

Rights, responsibilities, and participation in a democratic community

7.15 "Citizenship. The student understands the rights and responsibilities of Texas citizens in a democratic society. The student is expected to: explain rights of Texas citizens..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each right named in the passage and circle each civic responsibility or participation action. Number the sentences that explain why civic participation matters.

A Playground Proposal

- ① At a meeting in a Texas town, residents discuss adding shade structures at a public playground. People have the right to share opinions about public issues and to petition government officials. They may speak, write, assemble peacefully, and practice their religion. These freedoms are protected by the United States and Texas constitutions. Rights have limits: people must use them without harming others, threatening others, or breaking laws. The discussion lets residents use their voices in a public setting.
- ② Civic responsibilities are duties that help a democratic community work. Texans are expected to obey laws, pay required taxes, and report for jury service when summoned, unless a court excuses them. Residents also have a responsibility to stay informed about issues that affect their community. Learning from reliable sources helps people judge claims and make thoughtful choices. These responsibilities support fair laws, public services, and court decisions. A person may disagree with a policy while still following the law and working to change it.
- ③ Civic participation means taking part in public life. For the playground proposal, residents can attend a meeting, contact an elected official, vote if they are eligible, or volunteer with a local project. Participation matters because it gives leaders information about community needs and brings different viewpoints into decisions. When people listen, discuss evidence, and work together, they can address problems peacefully. Even a small action, such as sending a respectful message, can connect a resident to the democratic process and strengthen the community.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are two rights a resident could use to share views about the playground proposal?

2 Name two civic responsibilities from the passage. What condition does the passage give for jury service?

3 How is following a law while trying to change it an example of both responsibility and participation?

4 Why does civic participation matter, according to the passage? Give two reasons.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

A town is considering adding a crosswalk near a school. Write four sentences: name one right you could use, one civic responsibility you would meet, one participation action you would take, and why your participation could matter.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each right named in the passage and circle each civic responsibility or participation action. Number the sentences that explain why civic participation matters. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are two rights a resident could use to share views about the playground proposal?	A resident could share an opinion about the public issue and petition government officials. The resident could also speak, write, or assemble peacefully.
2	Name two civic responsibilities from the passage. What condition does the passage give for jury service?	Answers include obeying laws, paying required taxes, staying informed, and reporting for jury service. A person reports for jury service when summoned, unless a court excuses the person.
3	How is following a law while trying to change it an example of both responsibility and participation?	Following the law is a civic responsibility. Working to change a policy is civic participation because the person takes part in public life.
4	Why does civic participation matter, according to the passage? Give two reasons.	It gives leaders information about community needs and brings different viewpoints into decisions. It can also help people address problems peacefully and strengthen the community.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would use my right to petition the city council about adding a crosswalk near our school. I would meet my responsibility by learning about the proposal from reliable sources and following local rules. I would attend the council meeting and share respectful evidence about student safety. My participation could help leaders understand a community need before they decide.

Accept equivalent rights, responsibilities, and participation actions that are supported by the passage. For the open response, accept reasonable examples that clearly distinguish a right, a responsibility, and a civic participation action.