

Voices in Texas

Compare viewpoints and examine why public debate matters.

7.16 "Citizenship. The student understands the importance of the expression of different points of view in a democratic society. The student is expected to: identify different points of view of political parties and interest groups on important..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each viewpoint, circle the political party or interest group connected to it, and put a star beside each sentence that explains why free speech or a free press matters.

Debating Texas Issues

- ① In 1918, Texas women gained the right to vote in state primary elections. The Texas Equal Suffrage Association argued that women deserved a voice in laws affecting schools, work, and families. Anti-suffrage groups argued that voting would pull women away from family duties and change politics. The next year, Texas legislators voted to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment. This debate shows that interest groups can disagree strongly while seeking to influence public policy in Texas elections.
- ② Today, water is a major Texas issue because cities, farms, and industries need dependable supplies. Many Texas Republicans favor building projects such as reservoirs, pipelines, or desalination plants, while emphasizing property rights and local control. Many Texas Democrats emphasize conserving water, repairing leaking systems, and making sure poorer communities can afford safe water. The Texas Farm Bureau often supports reliable water for agriculture. The Sierra Club urges conservation and raises concerns about dams or projects that may harm rivers and wildlife.
- ③ Free speech lets Texans publicly support, question, or criticize these ideas. Freedom of the press lets reporters investigate proposals, attend public meetings, and share information with people who could not attend. News reports can compare claims about costs, water use, or environmental effects. Citizens can then read more than one source, notice opinion as well as evidence, and speak at meetings or vote. These freedoms do not guarantee that every claim is true, but they help people examine competing views.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the Texas Equal Suffrage Association and anti-suffrage groups disagree about women voting?

2 What is one difference between the water approaches described for many Texas Republicans and many Texas Democrats?

3 What water concern does the Texas Farm Bureau emphasize? What concern does the Sierra Club emphasize?

4 Why are free speech and a free press important when Texans disagree about an issue?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a Texas issue, such as school funding, transportation, or drought planning. In four sentences, state two different viewpoints held by political parties or interest groups, then explain how free speech and a free press can help Texans judge the issue.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each viewpoint, circle the political party or interest group connected to it, and put a star beside each sentence that explains why free speech or a free press matters. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Texas Equal Suffrage Association and anti-suffrage groups disagree about women voting?	The Equal Suffrage Association said women deserved a voice in laws. Anti-suffrage groups said voting would pull women from family duties and change politics.
2	What is one difference between the water approaches described for many Texas Republicans and many Texas Democrats?	Many Republicans favor projects such as reservoirs, pipelines, or desalination plants and emphasize local control. Many Democrats emphasize conservation, repairing leaks, and affordable safe water.
3	What water concern does the Texas Farm Bureau emphasize? What concern does the Sierra Club emphasize?	The Texas Farm Bureau emphasizes reliable water for agriculture. The Sierra Club emphasizes conservation and possible harm to rivers and wildlife.
4	Why are free speech and a free press important when Texans disagree about an issue?	They allow people to share and question ideas, while reporters investigate proposals and compare claims. Citizens can use information from more than one source before speaking or voting.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

On school funding, an educators' group may support more state funding to raise teacher pay and services. A taxpayer group may support limits on spending and local tax increases. At public meetings, supporters and critics can explain their reasons. Independent news reports can check claims and help voters learn how proposals may affect communities.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the viewpoints when they match the passage. For the open response, accept any reasonable Texas issue, two clearly different viewpoints, and an accurate explanation of how speech and press support informed public decisions.