

Change by Design

Read how amendments help the Constitution meet national needs.

8.16.A “summarize the purposes for amending the U.S. Constitution; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each statement that explains a purpose of amending the Constitution or an effect an amendment can have. Number the different purposes you find.

Why the Constitution Changes

- ① The Constitution is meant to last, but its writers knew that the nation could face new problems. Article V provides a process for adding amendments, which are changes or additions to the Constitution. This process is intentionally difficult. A proposal needs broad support in Congress or among the states, and three-fourths of the states must ratify it. The high requirement helps ensure that an amendment reflects a serious national need, not a temporary political reaction.
- ② Amendments have served several purposes. Some correct limits or unfair rules in the original Constitution. After the Civil War, the Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery, while the Fourteenth Amendment required equal protection of the laws. Other amendments expand political participation. The Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments removed particular barriers to voting. Together, these changes show that amendments can protect individual rights and make the political system include more people in decisions that affect their communities and country.
- ③ Amendments can also clarify government power or respond to conditions the original Constitution did not fully address. The Twenty-Second Amendment limited presidents to two elected terms. The Twenty-Fifth Amendment created rules for presidential succession and inability, reducing uncertainty during a crisis. The Twenty-Seventh Amendment, ratified in 1992, prevents a congressional pay change from taking effect until after the next election. These examples show that amendments can improve the Constitution's operation while preserving its basic framework.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why does the amendment process require broad support and approval by three-fourths of the states?

2 Name two purposes for amendments described in paragraph 2. Give one amendment example for each purpose.

3 Summarize the shared purpose of the Twenty-Second, Twenty-Fifth, and Twenty-Seventh Amendments.

4 How do the amendments in paragraphs 2 and 3 show two different ways the Constitution can be changed?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent one realistic future problem that might lead people to seek an amendment. In two or three sentences, state the amendment's purpose and explain how it would protect rights, expand participation, clarify government power, or improve government operations.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each statement that explains a purpose of amending the Constitution or an effect an amendment can have. Number the different purposes you find. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why does the amendment process require broad support and approval by three-fourths of the states?	It helps ensure that an amendment reflects a serious national need rather than a temporary political reaction.
2	Name two purposes for amendments described in paragraph 2. Give one amendment example for each purpose.	Amendments can protect individual rights, such as the Thirteenth Amendment ending slavery. They can also expand political participation, such as the Nineteenth Amendment removing a barrier to voting.
3	Summarize the shared purpose of the Twenty-Second, Twenty-Fifth, and Twenty-Seventh Amendments.	They address government operations by limiting presidential terms, setting rules for succession and inability, and delaying congressional pay changes until after an election.
4	How do the amendments in paragraphs 2 and 3 show two different ways the Constitution can be changed?	Paragraph 2 describes amendments that protect rights and expand voting participation. Paragraph 3 describes amendments that clarify government rules and improve how government operates.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A future amendment could set clear rules for how the government protects people's personal data from advanced technology. Its purpose would be to protect individual rights by limiting unreasonable collection and use of private information.

Accept equivalent summaries that identify amendments as tools for addressing serious national needs, protecting rights, expanding participation, or improving government operations. For the open response, accept any realistic problem and a clear, plausible purpose tied to one of these functions.