

Shared Needs, Shared Solutions

Trace why communities fund goods and services for everyone.

CE.13.b “explaining how and why government provides certain public goods and services;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each public good or service in the passage, then circle the words that explain why government provides it.

When Communities Act Together

- ① At dusk, streetlights help drivers and walkers see hazards. A town government pays to install and maintain them because people can use the light even if they did not buy it. One person's use does not leave less light for others. A business might not earn enough money by lighting every street, so the community acts together. Streetlights are a public good, something many people can use at the same time, and it is hard to keep nonpayers out.
- ② Government also provides services, which are actions that meet community needs. Firefighters respond when homes or businesses burn, and public schools educate children. These services protect safety and build knowledge that benefit the whole community, not only the people receiving help that day. Residents pay taxes, and elected officials decide how to use that shared money. A private company may offer some similar services, but it could charge fees that keep some people out or focus only on places where it can make a profit.
- ③ Government cannot provide every possible good or service. Budgets are limited, so officials compare costs, benefits, and community needs before making choices. For example, a county might pay for a flood-warning system because quick alerts can protect many families, including families that could not afford private warnings. People can share opinions at public meetings, contact officials, or vote for leaders. These choices show why public goods and services are supported by public money: they address shared problems and aim to benefit the community.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What two features of streetlights make them a public good, according to the passage?

2 Why might a private business choose not to light every street?

3 How do taxes and elected officials help provide public services?

4 Why might a county choose to fund a flood-warning system even when its budget is limited?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a shared community need not named in the passage. In 3 or 4 sentences, propose a government good or service, explain why a private business might not provide it fairly or widely, and state how the government could pay for it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each public good or service in the passage, then circle the words that explain why government provides it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two features of streetlights make them a public good, according to the passage?	Many people can use the light at the same time, and it is hard to keep people who did not pay from using it.
2	Why might a private business choose not to light every street?	It might not earn enough money by providing light on every street.
3	How do taxes and elected officials help provide public services?	Residents pay taxes as shared money, and elected officials decide how to use that money for services.
4	Why might a county choose to fund a flood-warning system even when its budget is limited?	Quick alerts can protect many families, including families that could not afford private warnings, so the system addresses a shared need.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A city could provide a public library with books, computers, and study space. Many residents could use it, including people who could not afford to buy these resources. A private business might charge fees or serve only customers likely to pay. The city could use tax money to operate the library.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect government action to shared benefits, broad access, or limited private profit. For the open response, accept any realistic community need, a clear reason for public provision, and a reasonable public funding source.