

# Voices Shape Policy

How individuals can influence a local policy decision

**CE.9.c** “explaining the role that individuals play in the political policy-making process by expressing their opinions formally or informally via print media, electronic media, or in-person;”

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline each way a person expresses an opinion. In the margin, label it print, electronic, or in-person, and label it formal or informal when the passage tells you.

### A Rule Near the Park

- ① Riverton's city council is considering a rule that would require slower speeds near public parks. Before the council votes, residents can help shape the policy. They may learn about the proposal, decide what they think, and share reasons with officials or neighbors. Individual opinions do not guarantee a result, but they can show leaders which concerns people have. Council members may use public comments, messages, and news coverage as they revise the proposal or choose how to vote.
- ② At a council listening session, Maya signs up to give a two-minute public comment. She states her name, supports lower speeds, and explains that children cross near her apartment building. This is a formal, in-person way to express an opinion because the council records the comment as part of its meeting. Later, Maya sends an email to each council member with the same concern and a suggested crossing location. Email is electronic media, and a clear, respectful message can become part of the information officials consider.
- ③ Maya also writes a letter to the local newspaper. In the letter, she asks readers to attend the next meeting and gives her reasons for supporting the rule. This print-media opinion may inform other residents and place the issue in public discussion. Her neighbor Luis posts a short message online saying he worries that the rule could slow buses. His electronic post is informal, yet it can lead others to research the proposal or contact officials. Useful participation includes listening to different views and using accurate information.

**2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE** \_\_\_\_\_ Use the passage

**1** Which action is a formal, in-person way for Maya to share her opinion? Why is it formal?

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**2** How does Maya use electronic media to take part in the policy-making process?

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**3** What print-media action does Maya take, and what does she ask readers to do?

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**4** How is Luis's online message different from Maya's public comment? Include the type of media and the level of formality.

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**3 YOUR TURN** \_\_\_\_\_ Your own words

Imagine your school board is considering a rule requiring reusable trays in school cafeterias. Write a formal three-sentence email to a school board member that states your opinion, gives two reasons, and asks for a specific action.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline each way a person expresses an opinion. In the margin, label it print, electronic, or in-person, and label it formal or informal when the passage tells you. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                                                                 | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                          |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Which action is a formal, in-person way for Maya to share her opinion? Why is it formal?                                 | <b>Maya gives a public comment at the council listening session. It is formal because the council records it as part of its meeting.</b>                        |
| 2 | How does Maya use electronic media to take part in the policy-making process?                                            | <b>She emails each council member about her concern and suggests a crossing location. Officials can consider the message as information about the proposal.</b> |
| 3 | What print-media action does Maya take, and what does she ask readers to do?                                             | <b>She writes a letter to the local newspaper. She asks readers to attend the next meeting.</b>                                                                 |
| 4 | How is Luis's online message different from Maya's public comment? Include the type of media and the level of formality. | <b>Luis uses electronic media through an informal online post. Maya uses an in-person, formal public comment at a council meeting.</b>                          |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

I support requiring reusable trays in our school cafeterias. Reusable trays could reduce trash, and they may save money over time because the school would buy fewer disposable trays. Please vote for the rule and ask the district to plan how trays will be washed safely.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the media type and formality when they match the passage. For Part 3, accept a respectful formal email with a clear opinion, two relevant reasons, and a specific request to the school board member.