

Political and Civic Participation Notes Sheet-Sample Answers

Directions: Use what you learn while reading “Political and Civic Participation” to fill in the boxes below. Then, answer the questions at the end.

Form of Participation	Explain In Your Own Words
Voting	It's an opportunity for all voices to be heard equally. You express your priorities and opinions directly to elected representatives and leaders. Even if your preferred candidate doesn't win, your vote matters because it lets the winners and losers know how much support their viewpoints hold.
Communicating With Public Officials	Helps the elected officials know what views you're passionate about. You can write, email, call, or speak face-to-face with them. There's meant to be open communication between the constituents and the elected officials.
Using Your First Amendment Right	These are: freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom to petition, freedom to assemble. No matter which of the freedoms exercised, the U.S. Supreme Court has affirmed that people are protected when they bring to the government's attention their unresolved concerns, provide information to political leaders about unpopular policies and issues, and expose government misconduct.
Political Campaigns	By running for office, you have the chance to set priorities that are important to you, shape your community, your state, or the nation as a whole, as well as represent the people who voted you into office.

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Community Service	Providing time, effort, services or talents to help others. Our nation wouldn't function without the selfless volunteerism and help of community members.
Staying Informed	It's our duty to stay up-to-date with current policies, political movements, and campaigns. We do this by using trusted sources for investigation.

1. Why is political and civic engagement important?

Our country was founded on the principle "we the people". The people hold the power, and what good is the power if it's held in uninformed and disengaged hands? We have a responsibility to our nation to progress and grow, and we are an integral part of that change.

2. In what ways can citizens' rights to participate be limited?

In some states felons can have their right to vote removed. The FEC can set limits on political donations. And protesting can have certain limitations based on local ordinances. Also, lawless action can impact a person's right to protest.

3. What would cause someone to possibly lose their right to vote?

Being a convicted felon in some states.

4. Do you think the reasons that citizens' rights to participate can be limited are fair? Why or why not?

Answers will vary, but student must include justification to response.