

Case 9: What is on your ballot, and where do you check?

Content note

This case explains general rules. It is not legal advice for your situation.

Overview

Students read a story in which Dec, who turns 18 in October, looks past the headline race on his sample ballot. He finds a school board race, a city council race and a transit bond. They compare the ballot with a creator’s voter guide that mixes facts with picks, and they read Vote.gov’s guidance for people 18 and under. They then write a personal checklist of official sources for registration, deadlines and their own sample ballot.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- find a detail in a short text and point to it
- tell a fact from an opinion
- write a complete sentence that answers a question

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- find contests below the big race on a sample ballot
- match at least three contests to something they decide
- point families to official, address-based information without taking sides

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A, B and C on half-pages, one set per group
- Office-to-issue matching cards

The task in this edition

Task: Match offices on a sample ballot to the everyday things they decide, then make a poster for families about finding their own ballot.

Students make: Matching sheet plus a poster

Pacing

Opener (page 142): 6 min. Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the group-chat excerpt.

Key terms (pages 143 and 144): 6 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

Look at the evidence (page 147): 12 min. Short on time: 10 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

Look at the evidence (page 148): 5 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read Gia’s reminder aloud. Students fill in only the What it shows box.

Key idea (pages 149 and 150): 8 min. Short on time: skip. Say that a pick tells you how to vote and a fact can be checked.

Pacing, continued

Sort the evidence (pages 151 and 152): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 153): 8 min. Short on time: 5 min. Take the vote and read the best option’s feedback. Skip Improve a draft.

Your task (pages 154 and 155): 18 min. Short on time: 17 min. Groups match two contests instead of three.

Check your work (pages 156 and 157): 5 min. Short on time: skip. Check the posters yourself with the rubric.

Questions to discuss (page 158): 10 min. Short on time: 3 min. Use the first My take frame as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 159): at home.

Periods: full chapter 86 minutes; one period 45 minutes.

Standards

RI.6.1 Use evidence from the text to support what it says directly and what you can infer from it.

W.6.2 Write an informative text that explains a topic by choosing, organizing and analyzing relevant information.

W.6.5 With help from peers and adults, strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing or rewriting.

Case 9 plan, continued

Standards, continued

- SL.6.1.c** Ask and answer specific questions with details that add to the discussion.
- SL.6.1.d** Review the main ideas of a discussion and show you understand other views by reflecting and paraphrasing.
- RI.7.1** Use several pieces of evidence from the text to support what it says directly and what you can infer.
- W.7.2** Write an informative text that explains a topic by choosing, organizing and analyzing relevant information.
- W.7.5** With help from peers and adults, strengthen writing by planning and revising, focusing on purpose and audience.
- SL.7.1.c** Ask questions that draw out more detail, and respond with relevant ideas that bring the discussion back on topic.
- SL.7.1.d** Take in new information from others and change your view when the evidence calls for it.
- RI.8.1** Use the evidence that most strongly supports your analysis of what a text says and implies.
- W.8.2** Write an informative text that explains a topic by choosing, organizing and analyzing relevant information.
- W.8.5** With help from peers and adults, strengthen writing by planning and revising, focusing on purpose and audience.

Standards, continued

- SL.8.1.c** Ask questions that connect several speakers’ ideas, and respond with relevant evidence and observations.
- SL.8.1.d** Take in new information from others and qualify or defend your view based on the evidence.
- D2.Civ.2.6–8** Explain the roles citizens play, such as voters, jurors, taxpayers, petitioners and protesters. In this case: Students explain specific roles played by citizens, such as voters.

Codes of ethics

- **SPJ Code of Ethics:** Seek Truth and Report It
- **RTDNA Code of Ethics:** Opening statement (before the guiding principles)
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** “We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings...” (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

- **Opener (page 142):** Low
- **Key terms (pages 143 and 144):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (page 147):** Low
- **Look at the evidence (page 148):** Low
- **Key idea (pages 149 and 150):** Low

Heat map, continued

- **Sort the evidence (pages 151 and 152):** Medium
- **Practice (page 153):** Low
- **Your task (pages 154 and 155):** Low
- **Check your work (pages 156 and 157):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your official election information.

- With a trusted adult, visit [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov) and choose your state or territory
- Check eligibility, preregistration and registration rules for your age
- Find a sample ballot for your address and circle one local office
- Learn what that office does before researching candidates

Who to ask: Your county or local election office, a civics teacher, a school librarian

Safety: Never share your address, birthdate or voter information in group chats. Use official government sites (.gov) for registration.

Sources

- [Vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov), “Your state or territory’s voting information,” No date listed
- [Vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov), “Preparing to vote: age 18 and under,” No date listed

Case 9 plan, continued

Sources, continued

- USAGov, “Sample ballots and voter guides,”
No date listed
- National Constitution Center, “The 26th
Amendment of the U.S. Constitution,” No
date listed

Case 9: What is on your ballot, and where do you check?

Dec turns 18 before the election on November 3, 2026, and his feed covers only one race on his ballot.

On your own Read What happened. Underline the contests Mateo finds below the big race. About 6 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who finds Dec's official sample ballot before anyone tells him how to vote.
New skill: Check an official source for your own area.



Mateo and Gia work in a notebook at a café table.

What happened

It is Sunday at the library desk. Dec turns 18 in October, before the general election on November 3, 2026. His feed is full of posts about one big race. Mateo and Gia are helping him find out what else is on his ballot.

They look at a sample ballot for the November election. The front shows the big race from Dec's feed. The second page has more: a school board race, a city council seat and Measure T, a transit bond. Mateo notices that nobody is posting about Measure T.

A creator's voter guide is also going around. It says registration closes "the 14th," but it never names a state. It also tells people how to vote on the school board race and Measure T. Gia is writing a reminder for the group chat.

Mateo has his own problem. He may still be registered at his mom's address in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Dec says he does not need anyone to pick for him. He needs to know what is on his ballot and whether he is registered in time.

Your question: What is on Dec's ballot, and where should he check his own information?

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 4 min. Read What happened aloud. Skip the group-chat excerpt.

💬 Say this

"Dec's feed is full of one race. What else do you think is on his ballot?" — List guesses on the board. Keep them for the sample ballot.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students think a ballot holds only the big national races. **Listen for:** "It's just president or Congress." **Then:** Point to the second page of the sample ballot in the story: school board, city council, Measure T.

📖 Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.
- Explain that a measure is a question voters decide directly, like Measure T.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example. Then write your first guess in the box. About 6 minutes.

Sample ballot A sample ballot is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot.

En español: boleta de muestra

In this case: Dec's sample ballot lists a school board race, a city council seat and Measure T below the big race from his feed.

Registration Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.

En español: inscripción electoral

In this case: Dec turns 18 in October and needs to know whether he is registered in time. The guide's deadline names no state.

Voter guide A voter guide is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election.

En español: guía para votantes

In this case: A creator's voter guide mixes one deadline with two picks: "vote Candidate B" and "Measure T: yes, obviously."

Jurisdiction A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.

En español: jurisdicción

In this case: Mateo may still be registered in New Bedford, Massachusetts. A different place can mean a different ballot and a different deadline.

Who is involved



Mateo

Helping Dec read the sample ballot

"Dec's feed is all the big race. Then you flip the sample ballot: school board, city council, a transit bond. Nobody's posting about Measure T."



Gia

Writing the group-chat reminder

"The creator's guide says 'registration closes the 14th.' Whose 14th? It doesn't even say which state."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Read the key terms aloud. Skip Who is involved.

💬 Say this

"Which key term explains why Mateo's ballot might not match Dec's?" — Wait for jurisdiction.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat a voter guide and a sample ballot as the same document. **Listen for:** "The guide is the ballot." **Then:** Ask which one lists the contests for an address and which one tells you how to vote.

📖 Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Many election offices publish Spanish materials. Show where to find them.
- **Cognates:** election (elección), candidate (candidato), jurisdiction (jurisdicción), official (oficial), district (distrito), amendment (enmienda), constitution (constitución), vote (voto).

🌡 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

Any first guess is fine. Students return to it on the My take page.

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think is on Dec's ballot?

I think Dec's ballot has ___ because ___.

Q I think Dec's ballot has only the big race because that is all his feed talks about.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no text or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 143. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 143.

Reading passage

Flip the ballot over

On your own Read the passage. At each Stop and think box, pause and answer the question in your head or with a partner. About 4 minutes.

Words to know

- **Sample ballot:** A sample ballot is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot.
- **Voter guide:** A voter guide is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election.
- **Registration:** Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.
- **Jurisdiction:** A jurisdiction is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority.
- **Claim:** A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Material connection:** A material connection is a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect.

The story: More than one race

It is Sunday at the library desk. Dec turns 18 in October, before the general election on November 3, 2026. His feed is full of posts about one big race. Mateo and Gia are helping him find out what else is on his ballot.

They look at a sample ballot. The front shows the big race from Dec's feed. Then Mateo flips it over. The second page has a school board race, a city council seat and Measure T, a transit bond. "Nobody's posting about Measure T," Mateo says.

A creator's voter guide is going around too. It says registration closes "the 14th." It never says which state. It also tells people how to vote on the school board race and Measure T.

Dec is clear about what he wants. "I don't need someone picking for me," he says. He needs to know what is on his ballot and whether he is registered in time. Your job is to find his official sample ballot before anyone tells him how to vote.

Stop and think. Why might a feed show only one race when the ballot has five or more?

Pacing

Reading: about 4 min (433 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

Stop and think

1. **After "The story: More than one race":** Why might a feed show only one race when the ballot has five or more?
2. **After "Facts, picks and your own address":** Which lines in the creator's guide are facts you can check, and which are picks?
3. **After "How voting rules really work":** Why could Mateo's ballot be different from Dec's?

Facts, picks and your own address

A **sample ballot** is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot. A **voter guide** is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election. The two do different jobs. Start with the sample ballot. Then check a guide's facts apart from its picks.

In Case 1, you learned that a **claim** can be checked with evidence. "Registration closes the 14th" is a claim. But the 14th of what month, in which state? Gia asks, "Whose 14th?" The picks, like "Measure T: yes, obviously," are opinions, not facts.

In Case 8, you learned to ask about a **material connection**, a relationship with a brand, like payment or a free product, that viewers might not expect. The guide never says who wrote it or who pays for it. That is worth asking.

Your address decides which contests appear on your ballot. A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. Mateo realizes he may still be registered at his mom's address in New Bedford, Massachusetts. His ballot and deadline could be different from Dec's. **Registration** is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote.

 **Stop and think.** Which lines in the creator's guide are facts you can check, and which are picks?

How voting rules really work

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment protects the right to vote for citizens 18 and older (National Constitution Center, no date listed). Rules for registering differ by state. Most states let teens preregister before they turn 18 (Ballotpedia News, September 26, 2025). Gia's reminder for the group chat sends everyone to Vote.gov to check their own registration and sample ballot.

 **Stop and think.** Why could Mateo's ballot be different from Dec's?

Sources

Real source | National Constitution Center | No date listed

The 26th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution

Real source | Ballotpedia News | September 26, 2025

Most states allow teenagers to pre-register to vote before turning 18, and some let them vote in primaries

Real source | Vote.gov | No date listed

Your state or territory's voting information

This page continues page 145. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 145.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read each document. For each one, write what it shows and what it leaves out. About 12 minutes.

Evidence A | Sample ballot

Sample ballot for the November general election

Federal: U.S. Representative. State: State Senator; Superior Court judge (retention). Local: Board of Education, District 3 (vote for two); City Council, Ward 5. Measures: Measure T, transit improvements bond.

Look closely: Which contests sit below the big race, and which one touches Dec's school?

What it shows

➤ Offices at three levels, plus Measure T, a transit bond.

One question I still have

➤ What does each office decide?

Evidence B | Voter guide post

A creator's voter guide

All you need for November!! Registration closes the 14th. School board: vote Candidate B, the only one who cares about students. Measure T: yes, obviously.

Look closely: Which line could you check, and which lines tell you how to vote?

What it shows

➤ A deadline, plus picks for the school board and Measure T.

One question I still have

➤ Which state is "the 14th" for?

Case 9 | Look at the evidence | Grades 6—8 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 12 min.

✂ Short on time: 10 min. Students fill in only the What it shows boxes.

💬 Say this

"Put one finger on a line you could check and one on a line that tells you how to vote." — Use two highlighter colors if you have them.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the guide's picks as facts because the guide sounds sure. **Listen for:** "It says obviously, so it's true." **Then:** Ask what source could prove "Measure T: yes." None can; it is a pick.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the sample ballot aloud, one level of government at a time.
- **Cognates:** election (elección), candidate (candidato), jurisdiction (jurisdicción), official (oficial), district (distrito), amendment (enmienda), constitution (constitución), vote (voto).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask why Gia's reminder leaves out a deadline on purpose, and what each reader has to do instead.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Look at the evidence, continued

Evidence C | Group-chat draft

Gia's reminder

Check your registration and your own sample ballot at vote.gov. Deadlines depend on your state. Please don't post your address here.

Look closely: What does Gia share, and what does she ask friends to keep private?

What it shows

🔍 Gia sends friends to Vote.gov and asks them not to post addresses.

One question I still have

🔍 Where do I find my own deadline?

What is still missing from the evidence?

🔍 We don't know Dec's state, his deadline or whether he is registered. We also don't know who wrote the creator's guide.

Notes

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Read Gia's reminder aloud. Students fill in only the What it shows box.

💬 Say this

"Put one finger on a line you could check and one on a line that tells you how to vote." — Use two highlighter colors if you have them.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the guide's picks as facts because the guide sounds sure. **Listen for:** "It says obviously, so it's true." **Then:** Ask what source could prove "Measure T: yes." None can; it is a pick.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page.
- Read the sample ballot aloud, one level of government at a time.
- **Cognates:** election (elección), candidate (candidato), jurisdiction (jurisdicción), official (oficial), district (distrito), amendment (enmienda), constitution (constitución), vote (voto).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask why Gia's reminder leaves out a deadline on purpose, and what each reader has to do instead.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Key idea: sample ballots

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics. Then answer the question in the box. About 8 minutes.

A **sample ballot** is a preview of the contests and measures that will appear on your ballot. A measure is a question that voters decide directly, such as Measure T. A **voter guide** is a document that explains or recommends choices in an election. The two have different purposes. Start with the ballot for your address, and then check a guide's facts apart from its picks.

Your address decides which contests appear on your ballot. A **jurisdiction** is the place or area where a particular government or rule has authority. A friend two districts over may see different local races. A school board and a city council have different jobs, so each one makes different decisions. Before you research candidates, find out which office has power over the issue you care about.

Registration is signing up with your election office so that you are on the list of people who can vote. Rules and deadlines vary by state, so do not copy a friend's deadline. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment protects the right to vote for citizens 18 and older. Most states let people preregister before they turn 18. Several states let 17-year-olds vote in a primary if they will be 18 by the general election.

Professional standards

Real source | Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ)

SPJ Code of Ethics: Seek Truth and Report It

"Label advocacy and commentary."

In plain words: Journalists who follow the SPJ code mark opinions and recommendations so readers can tell them apart from facts.

Question: The creator's guide mixes a registration deadline with "vote Candidate B." Which lines are checkable facts, and which are picks?

Your answer

A fact I can check is _____. A pick is _____.

➤ A fact I can check is "Registration closes the 14th." A pick is "vote Candidate B."

Case 9 | Key idea | Grades 6—8 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Say that a pick tells you how to vote and a fact can be checked.

💬 Say this

"The SPJ code says to label advocacy. Which lines in the creator's guide are advocacy?" — Wait for the two picks.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the SPJ code as a law that creators must follow. **Listen for:** "The creator broke the rules." **Then:** Say: "SPJ's code binds no one by law. It shows how journalists label opinion."

📖 Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.

🔗 Stretch

- Use the RTDNA row: what would a guide that helps Dec decide include about the school board race?

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

A square QR code located at the bottom left of the page, next to the source information.

Real source | NPR | August 6, 2023

Some states are trying to boost youth voter registration. Here's what they're doing

Explains preregistration and other state steps that let teens sign up before they turn 18.



Explains preregistration and other state steps that let teens sign up before they turn 18.



Rules differ by state, so where you live decides when you can register and what you vote on.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 149. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 149.

Sort the evidence

On your own Match each of Dec's questions to the rule or office that answers it. Then write whose view is missing. About 8 minutes.

Separate the two questions Dec has: what is on his ballot, and can he vote. Which rules and offices answer each, and which source should he check first?

Which contests and measures appear on Dec's ballot

Who decides

His address and district lines, drawn through redistricting

Under which rule

Who lives with it

Your way in

[Vote.gov](#), which links to his state or local election office

Whether Dec can register and vote in November

Who decides

Under which rule

Twenty-Sixth Amendment: the vote at 18 cannot be denied on account of age
State rules on preregistration, deadlines and 17-year-old primary voting

Who lives with it

Your way in

[Vote.gov](#), which links to his state or local election office

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

 Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

“Dec has two questions. Which rule or office answers each one?” — Model the registration question together.

Watch for

Misconception: Students think the Twenty-Sixth Amendment sets every voting rule. **Listen for:** “The Constitution says when you register.” **Then:** The amendment protects the vote at 18. States set registration rules and deadlines.

Support

- Let students draw the arrows before they write sentences.

Heat check

 **Medium.** The missing-perspective question can turn to students' own eligibility.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Dec and his friends. No student shares their own or a family member's eligibility.

Whose perspective is missing?

Whose view is missing from these documents? What would you ask them?

The view that is missing is _____. I would ask _____.

⦿ The election office's view is missing. I would ask where Dec can find his own sample ballot.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is a vertical margin line on the left side, creating a narrow left margin. The paper appears to be from a notebook or a standard sheet of stationery.

This page continues page 151. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 151.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what you would do with a friend's sample ballot. Then fix the two marked phrases. About 8 minutes.

You live at a new address. A friend sends their sample ballot and says, "Just use this one." What should you do?

- ☐ A Use it, because you and your friend live in the same state.
- ☒ B Check your registration and find the official sample ballot for your address.
- ☐ C Use a creator's voter guide instead, since it covers the whole election.

Why I chose it

➤ B. Your address decides your ballot. A friend's ballot or a guide may not match yours, so check your own first.

Improve a draft

A student's first draft

Guys the election is coming up and it's a big one!! **1** Registration closes on the 14th so do it now. Here's the voter guide I use, it tells you exactly who to vote for so you don't have to research. Also **2** drop your addresses and I'll check if you're registered for you. Only the big race really matters anyway, the rest is small stuff. My cousin in another state said the same deadline works for her too, so just use mine. Let's go vote!!

Rewrite each marked phrase so it says only what the evidence supports.

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ Deadlines depend on your state.
Check yours at [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov).

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ Please don't post your address here.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Take the vote and read the best option's feedback. Skip Improve a draft.

💬 Say this

"A friend sends their sample ballot and says, "Just use this one." What do you do?" — Take a vote before any discussion.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose A because the friend lives in the same state. **Listen for:** "Same state, same ballot." **Then:** Point to the key idea: a friend two districts over may see different local races.

📖 Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

🌡 Heat check

■□□ Low.

➤ Answer key

A revised version: Election reminder: registration deadlines and voting options depend on your state, so check yours at [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov), which links to your state's election office. You can also look up your sample ballot for your own address there. It shows everything you'll vote on, including school board and local measures, not just the big race. If you use a voter guide, check the facts it gives and remember its picks are someone's opinion. Under 18? Many states let you preregister, and some let 17-year-olds vote in primaries. Check your state's rules. No need to share your address here.

Grades 6—8

Your task

On your own Read the steps. Fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft.

Match offices on a sample ballot to the everyday things they decide, then make a poster for families about finding their own ballot.

Use: A sample ballot and one-line office descriptions.

You'll make: Matching sheet plus a poster

Time: 45 minutes

- 1 Read the sample ballot in Evidence A. Circle three contests at the state or local level.
- 2 Match each circled contest to something it decides. Use the office cards.
- 3 Read Gia's reminder in Evidence C. Find where a family gets its own ballot.
- 4 Write your poster text in the Your draft box, 3 to 5 sentences.
- 5 Add one sentence on why a friend's ballot might look different.
- 6 Check that your poster does not tell anyone how to vote.

Show it your way

Write it: Write 3 sentences with the frame "The __ decides __. To find your ballot, __."

Say it: Explain to a partner which office on the sample ballot decides something about your school, and how a family can find its own ballot.

Show it: Make the family poster: three offices, each with a picture of what it decides, plus the steps to find your own ballot.



Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Case 9 | Your task | Grades 6—8 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 18 min.

✂ Short on time: 17 min. Groups match two contests instead of three.

💬 Say this

"What does a family need first to find its ballot?" — Point to vote.gov.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Posters tell families how to vote. **Listen for:** "Vote yes on Measure T!" **Then:** Ask what the measure is about. Write that instead.

📄 Support

- Office-to-issue matching cards
- Frames: "The __ decides __. To find your ballot, __."
- Vocabulary: ballot, office, measure, register
- Group work

➡ Stretch

- Add a note about why a friend's ballot might differ from yours.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

Your task, continued

Board of Education, District 3, decides:

the school budget and the school calendar

Measure T asks voters about:

paying for transit improvements, like buses

U.S. Representative votes on:

federal laws, in Congress

Where a family finds its own ballot

Go to vote.gov, choose your state, then find the ballot for your address.

Your draft

Your poster text, 3 to 5 sentences

The ___ decides ___. To find your ballot, ___.

Your ballot is more than the big race. The school board decides the school budget and calendar. Measure T asks voters about transit. To find your ballot, go to vote.gov and choose your state. Your address decides your races, so a friend's ballot may look different.

This page continues page 154.

Standards

Common Core, grade 6: RI.6.1; W.6.2; W.6.5; SL.6.1.c; SL.6.1.d.

Common Core, grade 7: RI.7.1; W.7.2; W.7.5; SL.7.1.c; SL.7.1.d.

Common Core, grade 8: RI.8.1; W.8.2; W.8.5; SL.8.1.c; SL.8.1.d.

C3 Framework: D2.Civ.2.6–8.

The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

Answer key

A strong response:

- Matches at least three offices accurately
- Points to official sources
- Nonpartisan
- Explains address-based differences

What to notice in the sample:

1. Matches an office to an everyday decision.
2. Points families to an official source.
3. Explains why ballots differ, the challenge in this task.

Check your work

On your own Answer the Check your work questions and mark your level in each rubric row. Then write one change you made. About 5 minutes.

Does your poster match at least three contests to what they decide?	☒ Yes	☐ No
Does it send families to vote.gov or their election office?	☒ Yes	☐ No
Does it avoid telling anyone how to vote?	☒ Yes	☐ No
Does it say why a friend's ballot might differ?	☒ Yes	☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Copies one person's deadlines.	☐ Mentions official sources vaguely.	☐ Points to official sources for each person's state.	☐ Points to official sources and explains why rules differ.
Reasoning	☐ Treats a guide as the ballot.	☐ Mentions the ballot but not local contests.	☐ Separates ballot, guide and registration.	☐ Explains why local offices matter to the audience.
Audience & purpose	☐ Collects private info.	☐ Generic hype.	☐ Useful, private, nonpartisan.	☐ Includes people not yet eligible.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Adds a link.	☐ Replaces copied deadlines with official routes.	☐ Explains how each change helps friends in different situations.

Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

 Short on time: skip this page. Skip this page. Check the posters yourself with the rubric.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Ask for one official source added or one pick removed.

Watch for

Misconception: Students keep a copied deadline. **Listen for:** “Registration closes the 14th.” **Then:** Point to the Evidence row. Replace the date with the official place to check it.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: The educator checks the matching sheet for at least three accurate matches and the poster for official sources and a nonpartisan tone.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** Points to official sources for each person's state.
- **Reasoning:** Separates ballot, guide and registration.
- **Audience & purpose:** Useful, private, nonpartisan.
- **Revision:** Replaces copied deadlines with official routes.

[illegible]

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question. Then finish My take. About 10 minutes.

- 1 Which contest on the sample ballot could affect Dec's school or his bus?

➤ The Board of Education race could affect his school. Measure T, the transit bond, could affect his bus.

- 2 Mateo may still be registered in New Bedford. Why might his ballot differ from Dec's?

➤ Your address decides your ballot. New Bedford is in another state, so Mateo's races could be different.

- 3 Anika is 16. How can she be part of this election before she can vote?

➤ She can check if her state lets her preregister. She can also learn what the school board decides.

My take

I think Dec should ___ because ___.

➤ I think Dec should check vote.gov first because it leads to his own ballot and deadline.

The evidence that changed my first guess is ___.

➤ The sample ballot changed my first guess. It has local races below the big one.

One question I still have is ___.

➤ One question I still have is what the city council decides.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 3 min. Use the first My take frame as an exit ticket.

💬 Say this

"Answer with a detail from the evidence, not a candidate or party you like." — Post the question numbers and take one answer per question.

🔗 Stretch

- Ask what one local office on the ballot decides, and how a student could learn that before researching candidates.
- Going further: Which election office covers your address? Find it through Vote.gov. If you live away from home for school, write one question asking that office which address and rules apply to you.
- Going further: Plan an election reminder for your own group chat. Who might a group chat miss? Link to an official source so nobody has to trust a screenshot.
- Going further: Record a one-minute audio guide that tells listeners how to find their own sample ballot. Then write the same steps as a checklist. Check that both lead to the same official page.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Question 3: Medium.** Some students cannot vote for reasons other than age, and may feel singled out.

Cool-down: Keep answers about Anika. No student shares their own or a family member's eligibility.

Talk about this case at home

Case 9: What is on your ballot, and where do you check?

In this case, a teen about to turn 18 finds local races on his ballot that his feed never mentions. Your student compared a sample ballot with a voter guide, then wrote a guide that points to official sources without telling anyone how to vote.

Questions to talk about

- 1 What offices appear on a local ballot, besides the big races?
- 2 Where can someone find official information about registering to vote?
- 3 How can you tell a fact in a voter guide from a recommendation?

Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.



See the case online.

Case 9 | Talk about this case at home | Grades 6—8 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

💬 Say this

“Take this page home or read it with someone you trust.” —
Nobody needs to share their own voting information or
anyone else’s.