Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

Circle group

Many town councils save time at each meeting for public comment. Any resident can walk up to a microphone and speak. The topic might be a broken streetlight. It might be a plan for a new park. It might be a worry about cars near a school.

Each speaker usually gets a short limit. It is often about three minutes. A clerk or a timer keeps track. The limit is fair. Many people may want a turn. The meeting cannot go on all night.

Speakers often start with their name and street. Then they get to the point. A good speaker picks one main idea. They give a reason. They say what they hope the council will do.

The council members listen. They usually do not answer right away. They may say thanks and look into the problem later. Some people cannot come to the meeting. They can sometimes send a letter.

Public comment does not promise anything. People may not get what they ask for. But they get a chance to be heard by the people who decide.

Questions

1. How long does each speaker usually get?

_____

_____

2. Why is the time limit fair?

_____

_____

3. What do speakers often say first?

_____

_____

4. What does a good speaker do?

_____

_____

5. Do council members usually answer right away?

_____

_____

6. Does public comment promise that people get what they ask for?

_____

_____

Words to know

resident: a person who lives in a certain town or place
comment: something you say to share your thoughts
clerk: a person who keeps records and does office work
limit: the most that is allowed
council: a group of people chosen to make decisions for a town

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

Triangle group

Many town councils set aside time at each meeting for public comment. Any resident who wants to may walk up to a microphone and speak. The topic might be a broken streetlight, a plan for a new park, or a worry about traffic near a school.

Each speaker is usually given a short limit, often about three minutes. A clerk or a timer keeps track. The limit is fair because many people may want a turn, and the meeting cannot go on all night.

Speakers often begin by saying their name and the street where they live. Then they get right to the point. A good speaker picks one main idea, gives a reason, and says what they hope the council will do.

The council members listen, but they usually do not answer right away. They may thank the speaker and look into the problem later. People who cannot come to the meeting can sometimes send a letter instead.

Public comment does not promise that anyone will get what they ask for. What it does give is a chance to be heard by the people who make the decisions.

Questions

1. How long is each speaker usually given?

_____

_____

2. Why is the time limit fair?

_____

_____

3. What do speakers often say first?

_____

_____

4. What does a good speaker do?

_____

_____

5. Do council members usually answer right away?

_____

_____

6. Does public comment promise that people will get what they ask for?

_____

_____

Words to know

resident: a person who lives in a certain town or place
comment: something you say to share your thoughts
clerk: a person who keeps records and does office work
limit: the most that is allowed
council: a group of people chosen to make decisions for a town

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

Square group

Many town councils reserve a portion of every meeting for public comment, during which any resident who wishes to may walk up to a microphone and speak. The subject might be a broken streetlight, a proposal for a new park, or a concern about heavy traffic near a school.

Each speaker is generally allowed a brief limit, frequently about three minutes, and a clerk or a timer keeps track of the time. This limit is fair because numerous people may want a turn, and the meeting cannot continue throughout the entire night.

Speakers commonly begin by stating their name and the street where they live, and then they move directly to the point. An effective speaker chooses one main idea, supplies a reason for it, and explains what they hope the council will do about it.

The council members listen attentively, although they usually do not respond immediately. They may thank the speaker and investigate the problem at a later time. Residents who are unable to attend the meeting can sometimes send a letter instead.

Public comment does not guarantee that anyone will receive what they request. What it does provide is an opportunity to be heard by the very people who make the decisions.

Questions

1. How long is each speaker generally allowed?

_____

_____

2. Why is the time limit fair?

_____

_____

3. What do speakers commonly say at the beginning?

_____

_____

4. What does an effective speaker do?

_____

_____

5. Do council members usually respond immediately?

_____

_____

6. Does public comment guarantee that people receive what they request?

_____

_____

Words to know

resident: a person who lives in a certain town or place
comment: something you say to share your thoughts
clerk: a person who keeps records and does office work
limit: the most that is allowed
council: a group of people chosen to make decisions for a town

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

Easier · 179 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.3

1. A short limit, often about three minutes.
2. Many people may want a turn, and the meeting cannot go on all night.
3. Their name and the street where they live.
4. Picks one main idea, gives a reason and says what they hope the council will do.
5. No, they listen and may look into the problem later.
6. No, it only gives people a chance to be heard by the ones who decide.

Triangle: Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

This passage · 189 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.7

1. A short limit, often about three minutes.
2. Many people may want a turn, and the meeting cannot go on all night.
3. Their name and the street where they live.
4. Picks one main idea, gives a reason and says what they hope the council will do.
5. No, they usually listen and may look into the problem later.
6. No, it only gives people a chance to be heard by the decision makers.

Square: Three Minutes at the Council Microphone

Harder · 205 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 10.1

1. A brief limit, frequently about three minutes.
2. Numerous people may want a turn, and the meeting cannot continue all night.
3. Their name and the street where they live.
4. Chooses one main idea, supplies a reason and explains what they hope the council will do.
5. No, they listen and may investigate the problem later.
6. No, it only provides an opportunity to be heard by the decision makers.