Name: _____ Date: _____

How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

Circle group

Say a chess club writes a short rulebook. It tells when the club meets, how officers are chosen and how members vote. This kind of rulebook is often called a constitution. It is the club's most important set of rules.

A few months later, the members see a problem. The club meets on Thursdays. But many students now have band practice that day. The members want to meet on Wednesdays. Can they change the rulebook?

They can, if the rulebook says how. A change to a constitution is called an amendment. Many clubs say that an amendment must be announced at one meeting and voted on at the next. This gives everyone time to think and to come. A few members cannot sneak in a change. The rule may also say that more than half of the members must vote yes.

The Constitution of the United States works this way too. It has a process for amendments, and the process is hard on purpose. Many people across the country must agree. The country has used this process several times.

A rulebook that cannot change may stop fitting. One that changes too easily cannot be trusted. A good process balances both.

Questions

1. What is another name for a club's most important rules?

_____

_____

2. What problem do the chess club members see?

_____

_____

3. What is a change to a constitution called?

_____

_____

4. Why do many clubs announce an amendment at one meeting and vote at the next?

_____

_____

5. Why is the way to amend the United States Constitution hard on purpose?

_____

_____

6. Why would a rulebook that never changes be a problem?

_____

_____

Words to know

constitution: the main written rules for a group or a country
amendment: a change made to a rulebook or constitution
officers: members chosen to lead a group
announced: told to everyone in public
process: a set of steps for getting something done

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: _____

How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

Triangle group

Imagine a chess club writes a short rulebook. It says when the club meets, how officers are chosen and how members vote. This kind of rulebook is often called a constitution. It is the club's most important set of rules.

A few months later, the members notice a problem. The club meets on Thursdays, but many students now have band practice that day. The members want to move the meeting to Wednesdays. Can they change the rulebook?

They can, if the rulebook itself explains how. A change to a constitution is called an amendment. Many clubs say that an amendment must be announced at one meeting and voted on at the next. That gives everyone time to think and to come, so that a handful of members cannot sneak in a change. The rule may also say that more than half of the members, or even a larger share, must vote yes.

The Constitution of the United States works in a similar way. It includes a process for amendments, and the process is hard on purpose. Many people across the country have to agree before a change can be made. The country has used this process several times.

A rulebook that cannot change may stop fitting. One that changes too easily cannot be trusted. A good amendment process balances both.

Questions

1. What is another name for a club's most important set of rules?

_____

_____

2. What problem do the chess club members notice?

_____

_____

3. What is a change to a constitution called?

_____

_____

4. Why do many clubs announce an amendment at one meeting and vote at the next?

_____

_____

5. Why is the process for amending the United States Constitution hard on purpose?

_____

_____

6. Why would a rulebook that never changes be a problem?

_____

_____

Words to know

constitution: the main written rules for a group or a country
amendment: a change made to a rulebook or constitution
officers: members chosen to lead a group
announced: told to everyone in public
process: a set of steps for getting something done

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: _____

How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

Square group

Imagine that a chess club drafts a short rulebook. It describes when the club meets, how its officers are chosen and how members cast their votes. A rulebook of this kind is commonly called a constitution, and it serves as the club's most important set of rules.

A few months later, the members notice a difficulty. The club meets on Thursdays, but many students have since started band practice on that day. The members would like to move their meetings to Wednesdays. Are they permitted to change the rulebook?

They are, provided that the rulebook itself explains how. A change made to a constitution is called an amendment. Many clubs require that an amendment be announced at one meeting and voted on at the next. This delay gives everyone time to think it over and to attend, so a handful of members cannot slip in a change unnoticed. The rule may also state that more than half of the members, or even a larger share, must vote yes.

The Constitution of the United States operates in a comparable way. It contains a process for amendments, and that process is deliberately difficult. People across the whole country must agree before a change can be made, and the country has used the process several times.

A rulebook that can never change may eventually stop fitting its group, while one that changes too easily cannot be trusted. A well designed amendment process balances both concerns.

Questions

1. What is a club's most important set of rules commonly called?

_____

_____

2. What difficulty do the chess club members notice?

_____

_____

3. What is a change to a constitution called?

_____

_____

4. Why do many clubs announce an amendment at one meeting and vote on it at the next?

_____

_____

5. Why is the process for amending the United States Constitution deliberately difficult?

_____

_____

6. What could go wrong with a rulebook that can never change?

_____

_____

Words to know

constitution: the main written rules for a group or a country
amendment: a change made to a rulebook or constitution
officers: members chosen to lead a group
announced: told to everyone in public
process: a set of steps for getting something done

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: How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

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

Circle: How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

Easier · 200 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.4

1. A constitution.
2. Many students have band practice on Thursdays, when the club meets.
3. An amendment.
4. It gives everyone time to think and to come to the vote.
5. So that changes need wide agreement across the country.
6. It may stop fitting what the group needs.

Triangle: How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

This passage · 220 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.5

1. A constitution.
2. Many students have band practice on Thursdays, when the club meets.
3. An amendment.
4. It gives everyone time to think and to come to the vote.
5. So that changes need wide agreement across the country.
6. It may stop fitting what the group needs.

Square: How a Club Rulebook Learns to Change

Harder · 242 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.9

1. A constitution.
2. Many students have band practice on Thursdays, the day the club meets.
3. An amendment.
4. It gives everyone time to think it over and to attend the vote.
5. So that changes require agreement from people across the whole country.
6. It may eventually stop fitting what the group needs.