Name: _____ Date: _____

Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

Circle group

Voters often pick between people. But sometimes the ballot asks a question. It might ask if a town should borrow money to fix a bridge. Or it might ask to change the number of board members. These can be harder to read than a list of names. The exact words matter.

Start with who is asking and what the measure would do. Many places print a short summary and the full text. Next, look for the words that tell what a yes vote means. Some questions use yes to change a rule. Others use yes to keep the rule the same. A fast reader could pick the opposite of what they meant.

Look at the details too. If money is involved, where does it come from? How long does it last? Is there a date when the change starts?

Voters can get ready before election day. Many election offices mail a voter guide or post one online. Most places also publish a sample ballot. Reading it at home leaves time to ask a parent, a librarian or a neighbor about hard words.

The goal is not to vote a certain way. It is to make sure your choice matches what you think. Reading with care is a way to respect your own vote.

Questions

1. What is one kind of question a ballot might ask?

_____

_____

2. What should a voter look for to learn what yes means?

_____

_____

3. What can voters use to get ready before election day?

_____

_____

4. Why can a ballot question be harder than a list of names?

_____

_____

5. How could a fast reader vote the opposite of what they meant?

_____

_____

6. What is the goal of reading slowly?

_____

_____

Words to know

ballot: the paper or screen a voter uses to cast a vote
measure: a proposal that voters decide on
summary: a short account of the main points
sample: a practice copy that shows what the real one looks like
details: small but important facts

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: _____

Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

Triangle group

Voters often choose between people, but sometimes the ballot asks a question instead. It might ask whether a town should borrow money to repair a bridge, or whether to change the number of members on a board. These questions can be harder to read than a list of names, because the exact words matter.

Start with who is asking and what the measure would do. Many places print a short summary along with the full text. Next, look for the words that tell you what a yes vote means. Some questions are written so that yes changes a rule, while others use yes to keep the rule the same. A voter who reads quickly could choose the opposite of what they meant.

Pay attention to the details too. If money is involved, does the question say where it comes from and how long it lasts? Does it mention a date when the change would start?

Voters can prepare before election day. Many election offices mail out a voter guide or post one online, and most places publish a sample ballot ahead of time. Reading it at home leaves time to ask a parent, a librarian or a neighbor about words you do not know.

The goal is not to vote a certain way. It is to make sure your choice matches what you actually think. Reading carefully, even if it takes a minute, is a way of respecting your own vote.

Questions

1. What is one kind of question a ballot might ask?

_____

_____

2. What should a voter look for to learn what a yes vote means?

_____

_____

3. What can voters use before election day to prepare?

_____

_____

4. Why can a ballot question be harder to read than a list of names?

_____

_____

5. How could a fast reader end up voting the opposite of what they meant?

_____

_____

6. What is the main goal of reading a question slowly?

_____

_____

Words to know

ballot: the paper or screen a voter uses to cast a vote
measure: a proposal that voters decide on
summary: a short account of the main points
sample: a practice copy that shows what the real one looks like
details: small but important facts

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: _____

Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

Square group

Voters usually choose between candidates, but occasionally the ballot poses a question instead. It might ask whether a town ought to borrow money to repair a bridge, or whether the number of members on a board should be altered. Such questions can be more difficult to read than a list of names, because the precise wording matters a great deal.

Begin by finding out who is asking and what the measure would accomplish. Many places print a short summary alongside the full text. Then look for the words that explain what a yes vote means. Some questions are written so that yes changes a rule, whereas others use yes to leave the rule as it is. A voter who reads hastily could end up choosing the opposite of what was intended.

Attend to the details as well. If money is involved, does the question say where it comes from and how long it will last? Does it mention a date on which the change would begin?

Voters can prepare well before election day. Many election offices mail out a voter guide or post one online, and most places publish a sample ballot in advance. Reading it at home leaves time to ask a parent, a librarian or a neighbor about any unfamiliar words.

The goal is not to vote in a particular way but to make certain that your choice matches what you truly think. Reading carefully, even when it takes a minute, is a way of respecting your own vote.

Questions

1. What is one kind of question a ballot might pose?

_____

_____

2. What should a voter look for to find out what a yes vote means?

_____

_____

3. What can voters rely on to prepare before election day?

_____

_____

4. Why can a ballot question be more difficult to read than a list of names?

_____

_____

5. How could a hasty reader end up choosing the opposite of what was intended?

_____

_____

6. What is the chief purpose of reading a question slowly?

_____

_____

Words to know

ballot: the paper or screen a voter uses to cast a vote
measure: a proposal that voters decide on
summary: a short account of the main points
sample: a practice copy that shows what the real one looks like
details: small but important facts

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: Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

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

Circle: Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

Easier · 213 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.2

1. If a town should borrow money to fix a bridge, or change the number of board members.
2. The words that tell what a yes vote will do.
3. A voter guide or a sample ballot.
4. The exact words matter.
5. Yes might change a rule or keep it, and they might not notice which.
6. To make sure your choice matches what you think.

Triangle: Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

This passage · 241 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.9

1. Whether a town should borrow money to repair a bridge, or change the number of board members.
2. The words that tell what a yes vote will do.
3. A voter guide or a sample ballot.
4. The exact words matter.
5. Yes might change a rule or keep it, and they might not notice which.
6. To make sure your choice matches what you actually think.

Square: Reading a Ballot Question Word by Word

Harder · 251 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.4

1. Whether a town ought to borrow money to repair a bridge, or whether the number of board members should change.
2. The words that explain what a yes vote would do.
3. A voter guide or a sample ballot.
4. The precise wording matters a great deal.
5. Yes might change a rule or leave it as it is, and the reader might not notice which.
6. To make certain your choice matches what you truly think.