Name: _____ Date: _____

The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

Circle group

Most laws last until someone changes them. Some laws have an end date written inside. These are called sunset provisions. Like a sunset, the law fades away on a set day.

Say a city passes a rule that lets food trucks park downtown. Lawmakers are not sure how it will work. Will sidewalks get crowded? Will nearby restaurants lose customers? So they make the rule last two years. On that date, the rule ends. It stays only if the council votes to keep it.

This makes someone take a fresh look. Before the vote, council members read reports. They listen to neighbors. They ask if the rule fixed the problem. They can renew it, improve it, or let it lapse. Without a sunset, a bad rule might stay for decades. No one might remember to check it.

Sunsets have a price too. Reviews take time. A good rule could be lost if the council is busy. Families and businesses may find it hard to plan. So sunsets are often used for new or experimental rules. They are less common for the basic laws people use every day.

Questions

1. What is a sunset provision?

_____

_____

2. What happens on the end date if the council does nothing?

_____

_____

3. What is one thing council members do before they vote?

_____

_____

4. What is one price of using sunsets?

_____

_____

5. Why does the food truck rule last only two years?

_____

_____

6. Why are sunsets used more for new rules than for basic laws?

_____

_____

Words to know

provisions: parts of a law that say what must happen
renew: to keep going for another period of time
lapse: to end because nothing was done to continue it
experimental: being tried out to see if it works

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: _____

The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

Triangle group

Most laws stay in effect until someone changes them. Some laws, however, come with an end date written right into the text. These are called sunset provisions, because like a sunset, the law is built to fade away on a certain day.

Suppose a city passes a rule that lets food trucks park downtown. Lawmakers are not sure how it will work. Will the sidewalks get crowded? Will nearby restaurants lose customers? So they write the rule to last for two years. When the date arrives, the rule ends unless the council votes to keep it.

The advantage is that someone has to take a fresh look. Before the vote, council members read reports, listen to neighbors, and ask whether the rule solved the problem it was meant to solve. They can renew it as it is, improve it, or let it lapse. Without a sunset, a rule that no longer works might stay on the books for decades simply because no one remembered to review it.

Critics point out that sunsets have a price too. Reviewing takes time, and a good rule could be lost if the council is busy. Businesses and families may also find it hard to plan if a rule might vanish. Because of this, sunsets are often used for new or experimental rules rather than for the basic laws that people rely on every day.

Questions

1. What is a sunset provision?

_____

_____

2. What happens on the end date if the council does nothing?

_____

_____

3. What is one thing council members do before deciding to renew a rule?

_____

_____

4. What is one price of using sunsets?

_____

_____

5. Why does the food truck rule last only two years?

_____

_____

6. Why are sunsets used more for new rules than for basic laws?

_____

_____

Words to know

provisions: parts of a law that say what must happen
renew: to keep going for another period of time
lapse: to end because nothing was done to continue it
experimental: being tried out to see if it works
critics: people who point out the weak parts of something

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: _____

The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

Square group

Most laws remain in effect until somebody amends them. Certain laws, however, carry an expiration date written directly into their text. These are known as sunset provisions, because, much like a sunset, the law is designed to fade away on a particular day.

Suppose a city adopts a rule allowing food trucks to park downtown, and lawmakers are uncertain about the results. Will the sidewalks become crowded? Will nearby restaurants lose customers? To find out, they write the rule so that it lasts for two years. When that date arrives, the rule ends unless the council votes to keep it.

The advantage is that somebody is forced to take a fresh look. Before the vote, council members study reports, listen to neighbors, and consider whether the rule solved the problem it was intended to solve. They may renew it as it stands, improve it, or allow it to lapse. Without a sunset, a rule that no longer works could remain on the books for decades simply because no one remembered to review it.

Critics observe that sunsets carry a cost as well. Reviewing takes time, and a worthwhile rule could be lost if the council happens to be busy. Businesses and families may also struggle to plan if a rule might suddenly vanish. For that reason, sunsets are often applied to new or experimental rules rather than to the basic laws that people depend on every day.

Questions

1. What is a sunset provision?

_____

_____

2. What happens on the expiration date if the council takes no action?

_____

_____

3. What is one thing council members do before they vote on renewing a rule?

_____

_____

4. What cost do critics see in sunsets?

_____

_____

5. Why is the food truck rule set to last only two years?

_____

_____

6. Why are sunsets applied more often to new rules than to basic laws?

_____

_____

Words to know

provisions: parts of a law that say what must happen
renew: to keep going for another period of time
lapse: to end because nothing was done to continue it
experimental: being tried out to see if it works
critics: people who point out the weak parts of something

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: The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

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

Circle: The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

Easier · 187 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.7

1. An end date written into a law.
2. The rule ends.
3. Read reports, listen to neighbors, or ask if the rule fixed the problem.
4. Reviews take time, or people find it hard to plan.
5. Lawmakers are not sure how it will work.
6. People use basic laws every day and need to plan around them.

Triangle: The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

This passage · 230 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.2

1. An end date written into a law.
2. The rule ends.
3. Read reports, listen to neighbors, or ask whether the rule solved its problem.
4. Reviewing takes time, or people may find it hard to plan.
5. Lawmakers are not sure how it will work.
6. People rely on basic laws every day and need to plan around them.

Square: The Law That Expires Unless Renewed

Harder · 237 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.3

1. An expiration date written directly into the text of a law.
2. The rule ends.
3. Study reports, listen to neighbors, or consider whether the rule solved its problem.
4. Reviewing takes time, and people may struggle to plan.
5. Lawmakers are uncertain about how it will turn out.
6. People depend on basic laws every day and need to plan around them.