Media & Public Records



Name _____ Date _____

1 Recall, then make a connection.

Start from memory. Write a meaning or quick example for each term.

corroboration	public record	interpretation

Distinguish a public record from an interpretation of it. How does corroboration help a reporter decide whether a claim about government performance is supported?

Context for the task

The relationship between media and government includes informing the public, scrutinizing official claims, providing a forum for debate, and explaining decisions. The First Amendment protects freedom of speech and press against governmental restriction within constitutional law. Protection of the press does not make every published claim accurate. Likewise, an official statement is evidence of what an agency says, but not automatic proof that every promised result occurred.

2 Build the sequence.

Build a responsible reporting sequence

The fictional editor records these steps before publication.

Arrange the sequence.

A. Obtain the relevant public records and ask the agency to explain the figures.

B. Check the calculation and compare the claim with independent relevant evidence.

C. Publish a qualified account naming sources, limits, and any correction to the original claim.

D. Identify the exact claim and the period being compared.

Sequence: _____ -> _____ -> _____ -> _____

Explain one connection between two neighboring steps.

Evidence, application & transfer.



3 Read the evidence closely.

What would test the service claim?

The agency says the increased budget made evening service more usable. You need evidence about service, not merely the existence of the appropriation.

Select every record directly relevant to that claim.

A. Before-and-after route schedules and actual trip-completion records.

B. A privacy-protecting summary of rider access problems and documented changes in those problems.

C. The agency's slogan announcing commitment to excellence.

D. The appropriation vote alone, without implementation records.

Selections: _____ Explain your reasoning:

4 Apply the idea.

What does FOIA actually promise?

A reporter seeks federal agency records using the federal Freedom of Information Act. The briefing notes that legal exemptions can protect interests such as personal privacy.

Which explanation is accurate?

A. FOIA provides a process for requesting federal agency records, with exemptions; it does not make every government record automatically available.

B. FOIA requires publication of every private person's identifying information.

C. The federal FOIA process automatically replaces every state and local records law.

My choice: _____ Explain why it fits:

5 Carry the idea forward.

Write a four-to-six-sentence news update about the transit budget. Include the verified change, a claim that remains unproven, the records needed next, and a sentence explaining why media scrutiny matters.