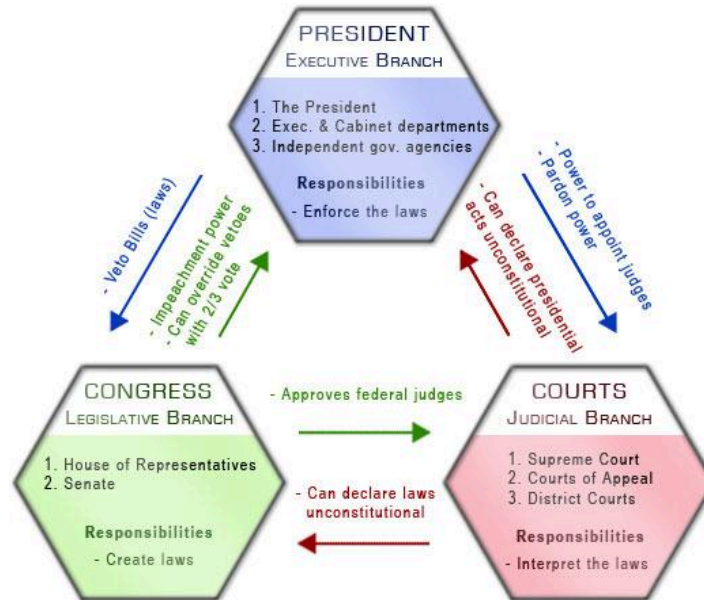


Lesson #5: Power and Balance

Activity 5.4: Checks and Balances



In dividing the powers up amongst the three branches of government, the framers of the Constitution created a system of checks and balances. This ensured that no one branch would become too powerful.

Each branch of government has its own powers, and those powers were intentionally divided between them so they could hold one another accountable and prevent any one branch from taking over. In this lesson, students will further investigate the system of checks and balances that the framers of the Constitution put in place to prevent too much governmental power.

Social Studies Benchmark:

9.1.4.6.5: Describe the systems of enumerated and implied powers, separation of powers, and checks and balances.

Reading Benchmarks:

9.12.2.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

9.12.4.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, geographic, historical, or economic aspects of history/social studies.

¹ <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/55/Separation_of_Powers.jpg>

Learning Target:

I can determine how the three branches interact and hold each other accountable.

- I understand how the Congressional separation of powers created a system of checks and balances.
- I can give examples of checks each branch has on the others.

Essential Question:

What is the separation of powers and the system of checks and balances? What is the difference between enumerated and implied powers?

- How did the Congressional separation of powers create a system of checks and balances?
- What are some examples of checks each branch has on the others?

To complete Activity 5.4 please follow the steps below:

Complete the tasks listed below and submit your responses by uploading a file to the “Add Submission” box. Respond to the critical thinking questions below. Please submit your responses to each question using the text submission box located at the bottom of this moodle page. Please answer with proper response construction and make sure to include your name properly on the assignment. Name, Course, Grade, Date.

STEP 1: Constitutional Principles Video & Viewing Questions

Before watching [this "Constitutional Principles" video](#), answer the [previewing questions](#) (“Before You Watch”). Record and save your answers in a document. During the video, complete the [“While You Watch”](#) questions. After the video, as you are reflecting upon what you saw, answer the [“After You Watch”](#) questions.

STEP 2: Identify Examples of Checks & Balances

Explore the following links and identify the example(s) of checks and balances that are represented! Fill in your responses in a chart like the one below:

	Which Branch is Doing the “Checking”?	Which Branch is Being “Checked”?	Explain!
Presidential Vetos			
Congressional Declarations of War			

Precedent-Setting Supreme Court Cases			
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STEP 3: Checks and Balances in Action: The Stolen Valor Act

Read [iCivics “Suggestion: Protect Military Medals”](#) and record your answers to the following questions.

1. Identify the ways in which each branch played a role in limiting (“checking”) the power of another.
2. What did Congress do in response to the ruling that the Stolen Valor Act was unconstitutional?

Upload your responses to the “Add Submission” box!

1. Open document to your computer
2. Complete the Activity
3. Click "Save As" and save it onto a special place on your computer
4. Click "Upload a File"
5. Upload the file to this Moodle page
6. Click Save