

Lesson 18.19: Three Branches

Three Branches Tiles

Created by Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution	Settles disputes between people	Located in the U.S. Capitol	Makes the laws
Includes the U.S. Supreme Court	Created by Article 3 of the U.S. Constitution	Has 9 Supreme Court judges	Supreme Court judges appointed for life
Settles disputes between states	Represented by the U.S. Congress	Decides if laws follow the Constitution	Located in the Supreme Court building
Head of this branch limited to two 4-year terms	Carries out the laws	Commands military	Signs or vetoes laws
Punishes law breakers	Has 2 houses: House of Representatives & Senate	Officials in this branch are elected for 2- or 6-year terms	Declares war
Creates federal budget	Prints currency	Approves treaties with other countries	Can override a veto
Appoints judges	Includes the president	Located in the White House	Created by Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution
Oversees the federal bureaucracy	Directs foreign policy	Advised by a Cabinet	Approves appointments of judges

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Three Branches of Federal Government

Legislative	Executive	Judicial

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Three Branches of Federal Government – Answer Key

Legislative	Executive	Judicial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created by Article 1 • Creates the federal budget • Represented by the U.S. Congress • Has 2 Houses: House of Representatives and Senate • Prints currency • Located in the U.S. Capitol • Have 2- or 6-year terms • Approves treaties with other countries • Makes the laws • Declares war • Can override a veto • Approves appointments of judges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of this branch limited to two 4-year terms • Oversees the federal bureaucracy (offices) • Carries out the laws • Includes the president • Directs foreign policy • Commands the military • Located in the White House • Signs or vetoes laws • Created by Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution • Appoints judges • Advised by a Cabinet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes the Supreme Court • Settles disputes between states • Punishes law breakers • Settles disputes between people • Created by Article 3 • Has 9 Supreme Court judges • Decides if laws follow the U.S. Constitution • Supreme Court judges appointed for life • Located in the Supreme Court building



Lesson 18.19: Three Branches

Name _____

Checks and Balances

The Founders designed the three branches of the federal government so that each would check the power of the others. They did not want one of the branches to become more powerful than the others.

Six tiles from the "Three Branches of the Federal Government" chart are listed below. For each power, write down which branch holds the power, and which branch is being checked.

1. Creating the federal budget.

Which branch has this power? _____

Which branch is being checked? _____

2. Deciding a law is unconstitutional.

Which branch has this power? _____

Which branch is being checked? _____

3. Can veto a law.

Which branch has this power? _____

Which branch is being checked? _____

4. Can override a veto.

Which branch has this power? _____

Which branch is being checked? _____

5. Approves appointment of judges.

Which branch has this power? _____

Which branch is being checked? _____

6. Approves treaties with other countries.

Which branch has this power? _____

Which branch is being checked? _____



Lesson 18.19: Three Branches

Name _____

Checks and Balances—Answer Key

The Founders designed the three branches of the federal government so that each would check the power of the others. They did not want one of the branches to become more powerful than the others.

Six tiles from the “Three Branches of the Federal Government” chart are listed below. For each power, write down which branch holds the power, and which branch is being checked.

1. Creating the federal budget.

Which branch has this power? **legislative**

Which branch is being checked? **executive**

2. Deciding a law is unconstitutional.

Which branch has this power? **judicial**

Which branch is being checked? **legislative**

3. Can veto a law.

Which branch has this power? **executive**

Which branch is being checked? **legislative**

4. Can override a veto.

Which branch has this power? **legislative**

Which branch is being checked? **executive**

5. Approves appointment of judges.

Which branch has this power? **legislative**

Which branch is being checked? **executive, judicial**

6. Approves treaties with other countries.

Which branch has this power? **legislative**

Which branch is being checked? **executive**

LIMITED GOVERNMENT

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Limited government controls the people who rule a community so that no person or group can get too much power. In the United States, government is divided into three branches. Power is also spread out between the local, state, and national governments.



Power is shared between local, state, and federal governments. A great example of this is roads. Some roads are maintained by your town or city, others by the state, and others (like the interstate highways) by the federal government. That means that when it snows, there are three different agencies plowing roads in New Hampshire!

Government responsibilities are split up between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The



legislative branch is in charge of making the laws. The executive branch is in charge of putting the laws into action and making sure that people follow the laws. The judicial branch is in charge of giving punishments to people who break the laws. All the levels of government – local, state, and federal – are split up into these three branches.

The government can't control our personal choices. Want to dye your hair (or antlers) pink? Go ahead – as long as your parents say you can! The government doesn't get a say in who our



friends are, what we do for a job, where we live or travel, or how we spend our time. As long as we aren't hurting someone else or taking away their rights, we can do what we want.

Nobody can force you to belong to a religion or stop you from following your religious beliefs.



The government is also not allowed to make decisions based on any one religion's beliefs.

As long as your religion doesn't violate the Constitution, you have the freedom to practice whatever religion you want. And, if you don't want to belong to a religion, that's fine too!

HOW DOES THIS GET COMPLICATED?

Sometimes local, state, and federal governments can make laws that contradict one another or that people think go against the Constitution. In these cases, the judicial system steps in and the courts decide which laws will stay and which must change.



THE TREE OF LIBERTY

The U.S. Constitution was written so that no part of the American government could become too powerful and overwhelm the other parts. During the Revolutionary War, patriots in Boston staged a protest by a big elm tree, so the tree became a symbol of fighting for a new, better country. We can describe the way the U.S. government is organized as a tree — a tree of liberty!

LIMITED GOVERNMENT
THROUGH SEPARATION OF POWERS

LIMITED GOVERNMENT THROUGH SEPARATION OF FEDERAL, LOCAL, AND STATE GOVERNMENTS

The **federal** government's most important job is to protect the rights that the Constitution promises to all people. The federal government also helps solve arguments between states, negotiates with other countries, and makes laws about things that cross state borders.

The **state** government makes most of the ordinary laws that affect people who live in that state. States can choose to protect MORE rights than the federal government. Some things controlled by states include education, driver's licenses, benefits like unemployment, and property laws.

Local governments have the biggest impact on the daily lives of Americans. They run schools, police and fire departments, maintain roads, and give permission to build or change buildings in town. In New Hampshire, local governments have even more responsibility than in other U.S. states.

The **people** are the soil of the American government! All the branches of the government are rooted in the will of the people.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
The People

STATE GOVERNMENT

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Legislative Branch
(Congress)

Judicial Branch
(courts)

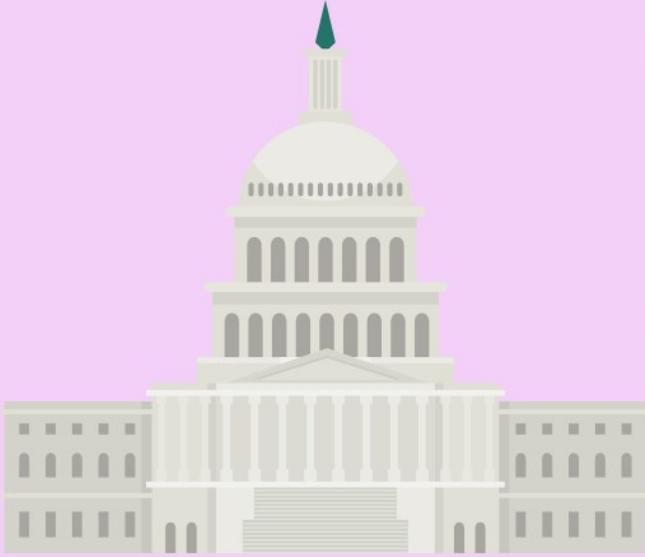
Executive Branch
(President)



Moose
on the
Loose

1. Why is a tree a good way to describe the organization of the U.S. government?
2. What are some of the positives of limited government? What are some of the problems that could happen?
3. Why is the soil that the tree is planted in a good metaphor for the American people?
4. Think of an issue important to you. How could the decisions of the local government affect that issue? How about the state government? The federal government?

THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT



Legislative



*makes
the
laws*



Executive



*carries out
the
laws*



Judicial



*evaluates
the
laws*



ORGANIZATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

THE U.S. CONGRESS

(See Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution)

U.S. House of Representatives

- ◆ 435 members representing all 50 states

U.S. Senate

- ◆ 100 members, with 2 members from each of the 50 states



EXECUTIVE BRANCH

THE PRESIDENT

(See Article 2 of the U.S. Constitution)

U.S. President

- ◆ Office of the White House

Departments

- ◆ 15 departments

Independent Agencies



JUDICIAL BRANCH

THE COURTS

(See Article 3 of the U.S. Constitution and the Judiciary Act of 1789)

U.S. Supreme Court

- ◆ 9 justices appointed to life terms

Federal Court System

- ◆ District courts
- ◆ Appeals courts
- ◆ Special courts

