

BENCHMARK SS.7.C.1.7

Strand	C Civics and Government
Reporting Category	Origins and Purposes of Law and Government
Standard	Demonstrate an understanding of the origins and purposes of government, law, and the American political system.
Benchmark	SS.7.C.1.7 Describe how the Constitution limits the powers of government through separation of powers and checks and balances.
Benchmark Clarifications	<p>Students will explain the concept of limited government as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.</p> <p>Students will describe and distinguish between the concepts of separation of powers and checks and balances.</p> <p>Students will analyze how government power is limited by separation of powers and/or checks and balances.</p> <p>Students will be able to recognize examples of separation of powers and checks and balances.</p>
Stimulus Attribute	Items addressing the constitutional limits of powers may use historical and contemporary documents and other relevant stimuli (e.g., maps, timelines, charts, graphs, tables).
Content Focus	These terms are given in addition to those found in the standards, benchmarks, and benchmark clarifications. Additional items may include, but are not limited to, the following: constitutional government.

Sample Item 7**SS.7.C.1.7****Content Focus**

Checks and Balances

The passage below is from *Federalist No. 47*, written by James Madison in 1788.

. . . Montesquieu was guided . . . in saying “There can be no liberty where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or body” . . . he did not mean that these departments ought to have . . . no CONTROL over, the acts of each other.

Source: Public Domain / Project Gutenberg

Based on this passage, which constitutional principle does Madison describe?

- A. separation of powers
- ★ B. checks and balances
- C. popular sovereignty
- D. judicial review