

YOU BE THE PRESIDENT!

As president, or the head of the executive branch, you have the power to:

- Propose laws to the Congress (the legislative branch);
- Sign bills into law;
- Veto bills from becoming laws;
- Negotiate treaties with foreign countries;
- Make executive appointments (to the Cabinet; to the Supreme Court; to federal agencies like the F.B.I.; etc.); and
- Grant pardons to federal offenders.

You can check the powers of Congress by:

- Proposing new legislation; and
- Vetoing bills from becoming laws.

You can check the powers of the Supreme Court by:

- Appointing judges who share your political viewpoints; and
- Enforcing the Court's decisions.

Directions for Part One: Read the role-play scenario below and familiarize yourself with your branch of government's goal. Then, brainstorm a list of actions/steps that your branch may take in order to accomplish your goal, based on your constitutional powers. An example is provided for you.

Scenario/Goal:

After a stop at your favorite fast-food restaurant, you decide that, maybe, just maybe, the secret to world peace can be found in a hamburger, fries, and a vanilla milkshake. With a burst of energy, you sprint back to the White House and head straight for the Oval Office. Inside, you begin brainstorming a series of actions you can take to make your favorite restaurant a major part of your presidency.

Actions to Accomplish Your Goal:

- *You propose a law to Congress requiring every school to replace the Pledge of Allegiance with the TV commercial jingle about your favorite restaurant.*
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Directions for Part Two: Think about the goals and proposed actions that the other two branches of government have presented to you. Brainstorm ways in which your assigned branch might use its constitutional power to check the actions of the branch that just presented.

Actions to Check Congress' Goal:

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Action to Check the Supreme Court's Goal:

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YOU BE CONGRESS!

As a member of Congress, or the legislative branch, you have the power to:

- Introduce new laws;
- Override a presidential veto;
- Coin money;
- Borrow money on behalf of the United States;
- Appropriate money to the executive branch;
- Declare war; and
- Impeach or remove the president.

You can check the powers of the president by:

- Overriding a presidential veto on a bill;
- Impeaching or removing the president;
- Approving (or not approving) treaties for ratification if you are in the Senate; and
- Approving presidential appointments to the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, and federal agencies (like the F.B.I.).

You can check the powers of the Supreme Court by:

- Confirming judicial appointments to the Court;
- Impeaching or removing justices; and
- Proposing new amendments to the Constitution.

Directions for Part One: Read the role-play scenario below and familiarize yourself with your branch of government's goal. Then, brainstorm a list of actions/steps that your branch may take in order to accomplish your goal, based on your constitutional powers. An example is provided for you.

Scenario/Goal:

After a very long debate, you and some of your fellow members of the Congress have decided that seatbelts should be removed from all cars because they tend to wrinkle your new suits and don't really protect you all that much anyway. You begin brainstorming actions you can take to accomplish this goal within a year's time.

Actions to Accomplish Your Goal:

- *You introduce a bill that bans seatbelts from all cars sold in the United States after 2013.*
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Directions for Part Two: Think about the goals and proposed actions that the other two branches of government have presented to you. Brainstorm ways in which your assigned branch might use its constitutional power to check the actions of the branch that just presented.

Actions to Check the President's Goal:

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Actions to Check the Supreme Court's Goal:

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YOU BE THE SUPREME COURT!

As a member of the Supreme Court, or the highest court in the judicial branch, you have the power to:

- Declare laws unconstitutional through the power of judicial review; and
- Interpret the meaning of laws.

You can check the powers of the president by:

- Declaring executive actions unconstitutional.

You can check the powers of Congress by:

- Declaring laws unconstitutional.

Directions for Part One: Read the role-play scenario below and familiarize yourself with your branch of government's goal. Then, brainstorm a list of actions/steps that your branch may take in order to accomplish your goal, based on your constitutional powers. An example is provided for you.

Scenario/Goal:

You and your fellow Supreme Court justices have been asked to hear several cases related to claims that the president and members of Congress are abusing their power through the privilege of "franking," which means they can send all of their business-related mail for free.

Actions to Accomplish Your Goal:

- *You rule in favor of Mr. Manic Mailman in Manic Mailman v. United States (2011), a case in which a frustrated postal worker sues the U.S. government for theft of stamps.*
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Directions for Part Two: Think about the goals and proposed actions that the other two branches of government have presented to you. Brainstorm ways in which your assigned branch might use its constitutional power to check the actions of the branch that just presented.

Action to Check the President's Goal:

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Action to Check Congress' Goal:

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