

## TEACHER CRITICAL CONTENT NOTES

BENCHMARK
<p><b>SS.5.CG.3.1</b> <i>Describe the organizational structure and powers of the national government as defined in Articles I, II, and III of the U.S. Constitution.</i></p>
BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Students will identify legislative, executive, and judicial branch functions of the U.S. government as defined in Articles I, II, and III of the U.S. Constitution.</li> <li>■ Students will explain why the Constitution divides the national government into three branches.</li> </ul>

WHERE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN	
3rd Grade	<p>SS.3.CG.3.1 Explain how the U.S. and Florida Constitutions establish the structure, function, powers, and limits of government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will recognize that the U.S. Constitution and the Florida Constitution establish the framework for national and state government.</li> <li>● Students will recognize how government is organized at the national level (e.g., three branches of government).</li> <li>● Students will provide examples of people who make and enforce the laws in the United States (e.g., congress and president) and Florida (e.g., state legislature and governor).</li> </ul>
4th Grade	<p>SS.4.CG.3.1 Explain the structure and functions of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government in Florida.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will compare the powers of Florida’s three branches of government.</li> <li>● Students will explain how the Declaration of Rights in the Florida Constitution protects the rights of citizens.</li> </ul> <p>SS.4.CG.3.2 Compare the structure, functions, and processes of local and state government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students will identify how government is organized at the local and state level including, but not limited to, legislative branch (e.g., legislature, city/county commission), executive branch (e.g., governor, mayor) and judicial branch (e.g., county and circuit courts).</li> </ul>
WHERE STUDENTS ARE GOING	
Middle School Civics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">SS.7.CG.3.3</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">SS.7.CG.3.7</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">SS.7.CG.3.8</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">SS.7.CG.3.9</a></li> </ul>

TIMING/PACING NOTES
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- This benchmark may be taught at any point during the school year.
- When addressing the legislative branch portion of this benchmark, connections may be made to SS.5.CG.2.5, which has students identify the U.S. senators and U.S. representatives that represent them.

## UNDERSTANDING THE BENCHMARK

### → What to know:

- ◆ Describe and explain can mean: write, connect, define, or detail
- ◆ Identify can mean: name, match, connect, or list
- ◆ Separation of powers refers to the division of governmental powers between three separate branches of government (executive, legislative, and judicial)
- ◆ A system of checks and balances exists between the three branches of government to ensure one branch does not become more powerful than the others
- ◆ National government and federal government are synonymous in this context

### → Main concepts to teach:

- ◆ The U.S. Constitution divides the national government into three branches of government (legislative, executive, judicial)
- ◆ The structure, function, and powers of each branch of the national government
- ◆ The purpose behind dividing the national government into three separate branches of government

### → Examples:

- ◆ National (Federal) Government
  - Structure:
    - Three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial
    - Separation of powers
    - Checks and balances
  - Purpose:
    - Create an organized and safe society, ensure protection, protect individual rights, and help provide public goods and services
  - Powers:
    - Make, interpret, and enforce the laws of the country
  - Reason for division into three branches:
    - So that governmental power is shared equally to prevent the concentration of power in one branch of government
- ◆ Article I [**Legislative Branch**]
  - Establishes a bicameral (two-house) legislature known as the U.S. Congress
  - Representation in the U.S. House of Representatives is based on a state's population
  - Representation in the U.S. Senate is based on equal representation; No matter how large a state's population is, each state has two U.S. senators
  - Makes laws
  - All tax bills must begin in the House of Representatives
  - Powers include: tax, declare war, raise and support armies, regulate commerce, etc. (More powers in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S.)

Constitution)

◆ Article II [**Executive Branch**]

- Establishes the presidency, outlines the powers and duties of the office of the president, and determines the method of election into office (Electoral College) and if necessary, removal from office (impeachment process)
- Enforces laws
- Powers include: Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, nominations for high offices, negotiate treaties, pardon, etc.

◆ Article III [**Judicial Branch**]

- Shortest article on the branches
- Establishes a judicial system (Supreme Court and inferior courts)
- Interprets laws
- Powers include: determining jurisdiction of cases, oversees cases, oversees trials of impeachment
  - Determine the constitutionality of laws/actions (established in *Marbury v. Madison* and not in the U.S. Constitution)

## CONTENT BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Information on the structure and powers of the national government:

1. [FJCC Background Knowledge](#)
2. [U.S. Constitution](#)
3. [Constitution Center: Article I](#)
4. [Constitution Center: Article II](#)
5. [Constitution Center: Article III](#)
6. [National Archives: Constitution](#)