

Branches and Checks and Balances

Grade 5 • SOCIAL-STUDIES • Students explain the powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches and how checks and balances limit government power. • Standards: D2.Civ.1.3-5

Read each question carefully and write the correct answer. Think about which branch of government has each power and how the branches can check each other.

1. Which branch of government makes the laws for our country?
2. Which branch of government includes the president?
3. Which branch of government includes federal courts and judges?
4. Congress passes a new law about protecting rivers. Which branch has the power to approve or veto this law?
5. The president chooses a new judge for the Supreme Court. Which branch must approve this choice before the judge can serve?
6. Congress passes a law, but the president vetoes it. What can Congress do to still make it become a law?
7. A federal court decides that a new law passed by Congress goes against the Constitution. What is this power called?
8. The president signs a treaty with another country. Which branch must approve the treaty before it becomes official?
9. If the president breaks the law or abuses power, which branch has the power to impeach and remove the president from office?
10. Congress creates a new government agency to protect wildlife. Which branch will run this agency and carry out its daily work?

Answer Key — Branches and Checks and Balances

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. Legislative branch (or Congress) *(The legislative branch, made up of Congress, has the power to make laws.)*
2. Executive branch *(The president leads the executive branch.)*
3. Judicial branch *(The judicial branch is made up of federal courts and judges.)*
4. Executive branch (or the president) *(The president can sign a law to approve it or veto it to reject it.)*
5. Legislative branch (or Congress or the Senate) *(The Senate, which is part of Congress, must approve the president's choice of judges.)*
6. Override the veto with a two-thirds vote *(Congress can override a presidential veto if two-thirds of both the House and Senate vote for the law.)*
7. Judicial review *(Judicial review is the power of courts to declare laws unconstitutional.)*
8. Legislative branch (or Congress or the Senate) *(The Senate must approve treaties signed by the president.)*
9. Legislative branch (or Congress) *(The House of Representatives can impeach, and the Senate can remove the president through a trial.)*
10. Executive branch *(The executive branch enforces laws and runs government agencies created by Congress.)*