

**The Almost Painless Guide to the Branches of Government  
The Executive Branch**

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**THE ALMOST PAINLESS GUIDE  
TO THE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT  
Unit of Study  
Grades 5-Up**

**INTRODUCTION**

This three-part Unit of Study examines the three branches of the American federal government. The three programs (“The Executive Branch,” “The Legislative Branch,” and “The Judicial Branch”) may be used independently, or as a Unit of Study, intended to present a comprehensive approach to all three branches, their independent functions, and their extensive interactions, especially the system of “checks and balances” between the branches.

The Unit of Study includes Unit Goals, which govern the entire three-part package; Unit Assessment Tools, intended to be used prior to and after the presentation of all three lessons; and Unit Culminating Activities, intended to provide closure for the Unit. The Unit of Study materials and goals are delineated at the beginning of this Teacher’s Guide, and the individual lessons are presented thereafter.

The individual programs include lesson assessment tools, intended to be used prior to and after the presentation of each lesson. Each program has its own Teacher’s Guide, which follows the Unit of Study information. The Guide presents the contents of the program, Student Objectives for the lesson, and ensuing activities for each lesson.

**MATERIALS IN THE UNIT OF STUDY**

- Three video programs;
- Three teacher’s guides, including lesson plans, student objectives, follow-up activities, and scripts;
- Unit pre- and post-tests, unit goals, and unit culminating activities

Student Preparation

The students should be supplied with the necessary copies of blackline masters required to complete the activities supplied. Teachers can extend any of the lessons on the Constitution by analyzing current events articles.

**UNIT GOALS**

Unit goals for student comprehension govern the entire three-part Unit of Study. Unit assessment tools and culminating activities reflect these goals.

After participating in all three lessons included in this Unit of Study, students should be able to:

- Identify and explain the basic function of the three branches of federal government

- Explain how the powers of the national government are distributed, shared, and limited
- Explain how the three opening words of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, “We the People...,” embody the principle of the people as sovereign, the ultimate source of authority
- Explain how legislative, executive, and judicial powers are distributed and shared among the three branches of the national government.
- Explain how each branch of government can check the powers of the other branches.

### UNIT BLACKLINE MASTERS

**The following blackline masters present the Unit Assessment Tools and Culminating Activities. A Unit Answer Key may be found on pages 3-6 of this Guide.**

1. Unit Blackline Masters #1a-1b: Unit of Study Pre-test is a Unit Assessment Tool to be used before you present any of the materials in the Unit Study. This tool should clarify student knowledge and misconceptions prior to the commencement of the Unit, and may be contrasted with Blackline Masters #6a-6h: Unit of Study Post-Test to gauge student comprehension of the Unit Goals, stated above, after the Unit has been completed.
2. Unit Blackline Master #2: Political Cartoon asks students to interpret a political cartoon based on the division of power between the branches of government.
3. Blackline Masters #3, 4, and 5: Checks and Balances, More Checks and Balances, and Still More Checks and Balances asks students to delineate between the powers and responsibilities of the three branches of government.
4. Unit Blackline Masters #6a-6h: Unit of Study Post-test provides a Unit Assessment Tool based on the Unit Goals, and should be administered after the completion of all three components of the Unit of Study and its Culminating Activities.

### UNIT ANSWER KEY

#### **Unit Blackline Masters #1a-1b: Pre-Test**

1. A
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. A
6. C
7. A
8. D
9. A
10. D

### **Unit Blackline Master #3: Checks and Balances**

1. A. legislative, B. executive, C. judicial
2. A. executive, B. legislative, C. judicial
3. A. judicial, B. executive, C. legislative
4. The different powers guarantee that no one branch of the government can become too powerful. While the legislative branch and executive branch are both elected the source of their constituency is different. The executive branch must gain support nationally while the legislative branch need only gain the support of the members of the states they represent. This helps to guarantee that issues will be viewed from both a national and state point of view. In addition, Supreme Court justices are appointed by the executive branch and confirmed by the legislative branch. Also, the term of office for the legislative branch and executive branch are limited so that the people may control how powerful these officials become. This is especially true of the legislative branch which does not have term limits. Lastly, the term for a member of the judicial branch is for life so as to prevent them from being influenced by political elections or reappointment.

### **Unit Blackline Master #4: More Checks and Balances**

1. executive
2. legislative
3. judicial
4. legislative
5. executive
6. legislative
7. judicial
8. legislative
9. executive
10. judicial
11. legislative
12. executive
13. legislative
14. legislative
15. executive

### **Unit Blackline Master #5: Still More Checks and Balances**

1. Possible actions taken by the executive branch: The president would have two basic options; (1) sign the bill into law, or (2) veto the bill.
2. Possible actions taken by the legislative branch: If the president vetoed the bill, the legislative branch could override the veto with a two-thirds majority vote. Because the bill passed with so much support in both the House and Senate, this probably would occur.
3. Possible actions taken by the judicial branch: If a court case made its way through the lower courts to the Supreme Court, the Supreme Court could decide to hear the case. If the

Supreme Court decided to hear the case, it could rule the law as either constitutional or unconstitutional because it violates the Second Amendment of the Constitution.

**Unit Blackline Masters #6a-6h: Post-Test**

- |           |       |                              |
|-----------|-------|------------------------------|
| 1. true   | 21. C | 41. bicameral                |
| 2. false  | 22. D | 42. electoral college        |
| 3. true   | 23. D | 43. Speaker of the House     |
| 4. false  | 24. C | 44. House of Representatives |
| 5. true   | 25. A | 45. judicial review          |
| 6. false  | 26. D | 46. appellate jurisdiction   |
| 7. false  | 27. B | 47. impeach                  |
| 8. false  | 28. C | 48. Congress                 |
| 9. true   | 29. D | 49. original jurisdiction    |
| 10. false | 30. C | 50. veto                     |
| 11. true  | 31. B | 51. E                        |
| 12. false | 32. B | 52. L                        |
| 13. false | 33. D | 53. J                        |
| 14. false | 34. A | 54. L                        |
| 15. false | 35. B | 55. E                        |
| 16. true  | 36. D | 56. L                        |
| 17. false | 37. D | 57. J                        |
| 18. true  | 38. B | 58. L                        |
| 19. true  | 39. A | 59. E                        |
| 20. true  | 40. D | 60. J                        |

61. legislative branch: make laws; executive branch: enforce laws; judicial branch: interpret laws
62. The President appoints a candidate to fill a vacancy. This candidate is then confirmed by the Senate (legislative branch). The term of the justice is for life; therefore, he is immune from any influences by the other two branches.
63. The executive branch (President) can either sign the bill or veto the bill. If so, the legislative branch can override this veto with a 2/3 majority vote. In this case, the bill will be signed into law. If the law is challenged, it will go to the federal judicial system, which is the judicial branch. The case can eventually be appealed until it reaches the Supreme Court. In which case they can declare it constitutional or unconstitutional.
64. Answers will vary.

**THE ALMOST PAINLESS GUIDE  
TO THE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT**

**The Executive Branch  
Grades 5-Up  
Running Time: 20 minutes**

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM**

The Almost Painless Guide to the Branches of the Government: The Executive Branch uses contemporary footage, archival footage and photographs, original graphics, and dialog narration to provide students in grades five and up with information on the Executive Branch of the federal government.

Although the program focuses on the executive branch, it is considered in context with the legislative branch and the judicial branch to examine how each branch checks the others to create a balance of power.

The program looks at the United States Constitution as the foundation of federal government and the concept of “We the People” as the ultimate authority. The system of checks and balances is examined in detail with various graphic and video examples provided. Additionally, we see how power is divided between state and federal governments.

The creation of the executive branch and the office of the President is studied along with the powers and responsibilities that the office entails. We also look at the requirements of the Presidency, how he is elected, the process of impeachment, and the role the Vice-President plays in the executive branch.

The program concludes with “The Almost Painless Review,” which offers an excellent synopsis of the entire program. Also, a Video Quiz is provided after the closing credits.

**INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES**

It is suggested that you preview the video and read the related Suggested Instructional Procedures before involving your students in the lesson activities. In this way, you will become familiar with the materials and be better prepared to adapt the program to the needs of your class.

You will probably find it helpful to follow the video and lesson activities in the order in which they are presented in this Teacher’s Guide, but this is not necessary.

It is also suggested that the video presentation take place before the entire class and under your direction. The lesson activities focus on the content of the video; therefore, the presentations should be a common experience for all students.

As you review the instructional program outlined in the Teacher’s Guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, deletions, or additions to fit the specific needs of

your students. We encourage you to do so, for only by tailoring this program to your students will they obtain the instructional benefits afforded by the materials.

## SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

### Teacher Preparation

- Preview the video The Executive Branch
- Duplicate any blackline masters you intend to use.
- Read the descriptions of the blackline masters.

### Student Preparation

The students should be supplied with the necessary copies of blackline masters required to complete the activities supplied. Teachers can extend any of the lessons on the Constitution by analyzing current events articles.

## STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After viewing the program, The Executive Branch, and participating in the follow-up activities, students should be able to:

- Define the powers of the executive branch as the power to:
  - \* Veto laws passed by congress;
  - \* Nominate members of the federal judiciary
- Describe and define the following:
  - \* The establishment by the Constitution of the executive branch;
  - \* The powers of the executive branch
  - \* Requirement for holding the office of president

## FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES BLACKLINE MASTERS

The following duplicable blackline masters are included with this guide. An Answer Key appears on pages 11-13.

1. **Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test** is an assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the Objectives prior to the launching of the executive branch lesson, which includes the video and the ensuing activities. The results of the Pre-Test may be contrasted with the results of the Post-Test (Blackline Masters #8a-8c) to assess the efficacy of the lesson in achieving the Student Objectives.
2. **Blackline Master #2: Video Quiz** is a printed copy of the questions which appear at the end of the video presentation. The Video Quiz is intended to reinforce the salient points of the



video immediately following its completion and may be used for assessment or as a catalyst for discussion.

3. **Blackline Master #3: Vocabulary** is a list of pertinent terms and definitions.
4. **Blackline Masters #4a-4b: Powers of the President** defines the roles and powers of the President.
5. **Blackline Masters #5a-5e: Electoral College Activity** simulates a mock Presidential election. It is a game that can be played by two individual players or two teams. Each game will need a die and a copy of the electoral college map. The rules and procedures of the game are enumerated on Blackline Master #5a.
6. **Blackline Master #6: Your Own Candidate** requests that students profile their own Presidential candidates, providing demographic information that will be contrasted to the data presented in **Blackline Master #8: Presidential Profiles**.
7. **Blackline Masters #7a-7b: Presidential Profiles** provides students with demographic information about American Presidents through Bill Clinton. It asks students to compile and analyze the data presented and determine if their candidates, profiled in **Blackline Master #6** fit the typical demographic profile of a President.
8. **Blackline Masters #8a-8c: Post-Test** is an assessment tool to be administered after the lesson (Pre-Test, video, and follow-up activities) have been completed.

#### **EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITY**

The following activity may be assigned to more advanced students:

Read Article II sections 2 and 3 of the Constitution. Of the eight roles of the Presidency, which two are not described in the Constitution? In a 100- to 200-word essay, explain why these roles exist, even though they are not outlined in the Constitution.

## ANSWER KEY

### Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test

1. false
2. true
3. false
4. true
5. true
6. false
7. true
8. false
9. false
10. true

### Blackline Master #2: Video Quiz

1. A
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. D
7. D
8. A
9. B
10. D

### Blackline Master #4a: Powers of the President

1. G
2. H
3. B
4. F
5. C
6. D
7. E
8. A

### Blackline Master #4b: More Powers of the President—part 1

1. B
2. A
3. A
4. D
5. B
6. C

Blackline Master #4b: More Powers of the President—part 2

1. This Presidential power allows the President to enforce, put into effect, and carry out laws that are passed by Congress. In addition the President is responsible for planning the economic policies of the government.
2. This Presidential power allows the President to make treaties with the consent of two-thirds of the Senate, and to appoint ambassadors to other nations as well as other diplomatic officers, subject to Senate confirmation. It also allows the President to determine the nations foreign policy.
3. This Presidential power places the nation's armed forces under the control of the President.
4. This Presidential power allows the President to suggest legislation that he/she wishes to see enacted. In addition, this power gives the President the ability to veto laws passed by Congress.

Blackline Master #8a-8c: Post-test

- |       |                        |
|-------|------------------------|
| 1. A  | 11. G                  |
| 2. B  | 12. D                  |
| 3. A  | 13. B                  |
| 4. B  | 14. F                  |
| 5. B  | 15. A                  |
| 6. D  | 16. commander-in-chief |
| 7. B  | 17. chief legislator   |
| 8. D  | 18. chief diplomat     |
| 9. D  | 19. chief executive    |
| 10. A | 20. chief-of-state     |

essay: answers will vary

**The Executive Branch**  
**Script of Narration**

HARLAN:  
Marie? Can we actually say that?

MARIE:  
What, Harlan?

HARLAN:  
You know—that this video will be a painless guide to the branches of government?

MARIE:  
Absolutely, it's really a very interesting subject.

HARLAN:  
Well, you were a good student, but when I was in school...

MARIE:  
And you were just learning to walk upright....

HARLAN:  
Very funny. To me, learning about the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch of government seemed like torture. Actually worse— required torture!

MARIE:  
Maybe you didn't really pay close attention, Harlan.

HARLAN:  
Well, I was a bit distracted.

MARIE:  
I remember. I think her name was Lesley wasn't it?

HARLAN:  
Actually, I was very busy with football and soccer and...

MARIE:  
Never had any trouble remembering your sports game plans did you?

HARLAN:  
Well, no...

MARIE:  
So, let's look at the branches of the U.S. government like one big game plan, only for the whole country.

HARLAN:

Makes sense, at least to me. So the “teams” would be the executive branch, the judicial branch, and the legislative branch. And then the “players” would be the President, The Supreme Court justices, and Congressmen and women. And the “rule book” would be the Constitution!

MARIE:

In a way, yes! And by the way, as times change, the rules can change through “amendments,” or additions, to the Constitution.

HARLAN:

Got it.

MARIE:

See, even you are never too old to learn something!

HARLAN:

I’ll ignore that.

MARIE:

Well, today we’re going to talk about the Presidency, how and why the office was created, and just what powers the executive branch possesses.

HARLAN:

But first we’ll dig down deep to see how the seeds of democracy sprouted into the strong roots of government and then branched out to the...

MARIE:

Harlan, don’t even start with the tree analogies.

HARLAN:

Sorry, you were saying?

MARIE:

Well, in a nutshell...

HARLAN:

Hold it! That sounds suspiciously like a tree analogy.

MARIE:

Please! Honestly sometimes you can’t see the forest for the...

HARLAN:

That’s two...

MARIE:

Stop barking at me!

HARLAN:

I shall remain silent and well-grounded, while you give us the dirt.

MARIE:

First, we have to mention the most important players in our system of government.

HARLAN:  
Who are they?

MARIE:  
Us.

HARLAN:  
Us?

MARIE:  
We, the people.

HARLAN:  
I love it when you sound so, so, “historically literate,” Marie. But, haven’t I heard that phrase before somewhere?

MARIE:  
Well, I certainly hope so! Those three words are vitally important to understanding our entire system of government, Harlan. They’re the first three words to the Preamble of our Constitution. Unlike other countries, we the citizens of the United States granted our government and its leaders the privilege of governing us for our common good. But, and this is very important, “we the people” are the ultimate authority.

HARLAN:  
Ah, yeah. No kings, queens, or dictators for us!

MARIE:  
Got it! So the framers of the Constitution designed the government with a system of checks and balances built in, so that no one branch of the government that we established, could become too powerful.

HARLAN:  
So, the branches operate like sort of like “referees” for each other.

MARIE:  
You could say that.

HARLAN:  
Just did. I hate to admit it, but I am interested in how this all came to be.

MARIE:  
Back in 1788, our Constitution went into effect, creating a federal government, a period I know YOU remember. Then, in 1789, George Washington was elected our first President and...

HARLAN:  
Question! Why is it called a “federal government?” Why not the “Acme Government,” or, better yet, “Laws Are Us?”

MARIE:

You know that's a good question. (I'm stunned) A central federal system of government shares its power and responsibilities with the individual states.

HARLAN:

So that's why a state like say, Delaware, doesn't print its own money, or decide to declare war on New Zealand.

MARIE:

Right. You won't see "Delaware dimes" or the "First State Flotilla," but at the same time, the states reserve many powers for themselves, like operating schools, setting local laws, collecting taxes...

HARLAN:

They're real good at that.

MARIE:

No comment. Now, at the Constitutional Convention...

HARLAN:

Held in beautiful Beverly Hills...

MARIE:

Held in Philadelphia! Now, as I was saying, at the Constitutional Convention, the individual colonies were understandably very concerned about creating too strong a central government.

HARLAN:

Naturally, they'd just finished a war over the tyrannical rule of England.

MARIE:

So, to protect and preserve the states' rights, but, at the same time, establish an effective national government, a federal system was designed in which the three main functions of government would be held by three separate branches. The legislative branch, or Congress, was empowered to make laws; the President, through the offices of the executive branch, was charged with assuring that the laws were faithfully executed; and the judicial branch, or The Supreme Court, was established to interpret the laws as they apply to the Constitution. Their powers were clearly defined, and limited, at the Constitutional Convention.

HARLAN:

And that provided the system of checks and balances that you mentioned.

MARIE:

Wow, you were actually listening.

HARLAN:

Don't sound so surprised.

MARIE:

You're right though. For example, while the President is our Commander-In-Chief of the armed forces, only Congress can declare war.

HARLAN:

Check! Congress is the legislative branch, right?

MARIE:

Right. And The Supreme Court can check Congress and the President by declaring laws unconstitutional.

HARLAN:

Check! And since the Senate approves nominees to the Supreme Court, that provides the legislative branch a check of the judicial branch.

MARIE:

Check mate! Just kidding. And while Congress is empowered to create laws, the President can veto any law passed by Congress. But, Congress can override a veto, with a two-thirds majority vote, or they can even impeach the President.

HARLAN:

How do they do that?

MARIE:

Well, the House of Representatives must vote on the charges brought against the President. These are called the "Articles of Impeachment." In order for the President to be impeached, a majority of representatives must vote in favor of these Articles.

HARLAN:

And out he goes!

MARIE:

No, not necessarily. If the President is impeached, a trial is then conducted in the Senate with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as judge and the Senators as jurors. A two-thirds majority of all senators must vote to convict the President in order to remove him from office.

HARLAN:

You're right. Marie. I remember when William Jefferson Clinton was impeached by the House in 1998, but not convicted by the Senate the following year. Has any President actually been impeached and removed?

MARIE:

Well, in 1868, impeachment proceedings were begun against President Andrew Johnson, who succeeded Abraham Lincoln after his assassination. But, the Senate failed by only one vote to convict him. And, in 1974, the House Judiciary Committee approved articles of impeachment against Richard M. Nixon. However, he resigned before the full House could consider them. Shhhh....listen:

PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON

I shall resign the Presidency effective at noon tomorrow. Vice President Ford will be sworn in as President at that hour, in this office.



HARLAN:

Wow, that's serious stuff! So the checks and balances system really seems to work, Marie. The convention guys did good!

MARIE:

Well. They did well. So well, in fact, that the government laid out by our Constitution is the oldest continual form of government in use today! And, Harlan, most people prefer to call them the "framers of the Constitution," and not "the convention guys."

HARLAN:

Whatever.

MARIE:

Of course, there was a lot of debate over what type of executive branch to establish at the convention and how much power to grant the President. Some favored a strong Chief Executive, others favored a weak "figurehead President." Some wanted Congress to elect the President. And one delegate to the Constitutional Convention even proposed that we import a king from some other country to govern!

HARLAN:

You're kidding!

MARIE:

Nope. But, when all was said and done, Article Two, Section One of the Constitution simply said, "The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America."

HARLAN:

Now wait a minute, does the Constitution define just what this "executive power" that the President has, is?

MARIE:

Yes, although people do disagree from time to time over the interpretation of those powers. Here's a good example of the executive's powers, Harlan. Let's look at Article Two, Section Two, the Constitution says, "The President would be Commander-In-Chief of the army, navy, and militia of the several states when Congress called them into service."

HARLAN:

And the President was granted the power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States. And the President has the power to conduct foreign affairs, make treaties, and appoint ambassadors...

MARIE:

With the consent of the Senate, one of the two parts of the legislative branch of government.

HARLAN:

The old...

HARLAN & MARIE:

Checks and balances.

HARLAN:  
I said it first.

MARIE:  
Actually, John Adams, our second President, said it first.

HARLAN:  
Such a know-it-all.

MARIE:  
And, with the consent of the Senate, the President has the power to appoint other executive officials, as well as justices of the Supreme Court.

HARLAN:  
The third branch, as I recall—the judicial branch.

MARIE:  
Very good. The President is also expected to play a role in the legislative process by recommending laws and programs, submitting an annual budget, and giving Congress information on the state of the union.

HARLAN:  
You know, it seems to me, Marie, that the most important job of the President is right here in the oath of office: “I do solemnly swear...”

PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY  
“That I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States...

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH  
...and will to the best of my ability...preserve, protect...

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON:  
...and defend the Constitution of the United States

CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM RHENQUIST:  
So help me God.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON:  
So help me God.

MARIE:  
I couldn't agree more, Harlan. You know, our first President, George Washington, at his swearing in, added the phrase “So help me God” spontaneously to his oath, and every President since has said it.

HARLAN:  
Well, in all seriousness, I guess that shows just how big and difficult a job it is to be the Chief Executive.

MARIE:  
Right. And there are so many other duties and responsibilities of the Executive that, although not specifically spelled out by the Constitution, have become parts of the President's job. For openers, he

appoints and manages his Cabinet, his group of advisors. Since 1939, the President has been assisted by an organization called the Executive Office of the President, to deal with all of this.

HARLAN:

Wow! Being President is a huge responsibility, but I'm thinking I could handle it, so where do I apply?

MARIE:

Well, you don't apply, Harlan. You're elected.

HARLAN:

So every citizen of the U.S., at least 18 years of age and registered to vote, stops by their local neighborhood polling place, casts their ballot, then they count 'em up and the winner —me—moves in to the White House, where I get to meet ambassadors and famous people. And the pay is pretty good, too!

MARIE:

The actual election of the President is more complicated than that, Harlan. In fact, most people find this part a little difficult, so try, just this once, to pay attention.

HARLAN:

I promise.

MARIE:

Two words: Electoral College.

HARLAN:

Never heard of em'. Do they have a football team?

MARIE:

No, but the Electoral College actually votes and elects the President. Each state legislature appoints as many members as the total of its representatives and senators in Congress to the Electoral College. They're called "electoral delegates." During a Presidential election, the delegates pledge their votes to the candidate who wins the state's popular vote. Whichever candidate gets the most electoral votes nationwide, wins, even if he doesn't win the popular vote.

HARLAN:

I like my method better.

MARIE:

Well, at the time the Constitution was written, there were no computers, voting machines, or even telephones, so it's generally felt that the Electoral College was instituted because the mechanics of counting actual, individual votes would take too long, and cost too much. In fairness, the College usually reflects the popular vote.

HARLAN:

Maybe we should modernize the system? Didn't you mention that the Constitution can be changed through amendments?

MARIE:

Right, and in fact President Jimmy Carter, in 1979, strongly recommended to the Senate an amendment to abolish the Electoral College, but it didn't receive enough votes. In the future, who knows?

HARLAN:

Ok, so I want to be President. What other job qualifications are there? Oh, and how long can I keep the job?

MARIE:

Well, longer than any of the other jobs you've had, I'm sure. You must be a native born-citizen of the United States, 35 years of age, and have lived in the United States for at least 14 years. Your term of office is four years.

HARLAN:

Hang on, I'd do such a great job, I'm sure the people would want to reelect me

MARIE:

Must be nice to live in a fantasy world. But if, in the unlikely event, you were reelected, you can serve two terms.

HARLAN:

That's what it says in the old "rule book?"

MARIE:

Not really. The Constitution didn't originally set a limit on the number of times you could serve as President. George Washington set the example though, by not seeking a third term.

HARLAN:

How can that be? My mom told me she voted for Franklin Roosevelt four times.

MARIE:

And I'm sure she'll be thrilled you told the world her secret vote!

HARLAN:

Sorry, Mom.

MARIE:

Remember amendments? Well, in 1951, the twenty-second amendment to the Constitution was ratified, limiting the terms of the office of President to two.

HARLAN:

Any easier getting elected Vice President? And by the way what does the Vice President do anyway?

MARIE:

Same rules, different job description. And it's not an easy job either.

HARLAN:

I was afraid of that.

MARIE:

Former Vice President Hubert Humphrey once said, "The President has only 190 million bosses. But the Vice President has 190 million and one!" However, it is true that the only official duty of the Vice President is to preside over the Senate.

HARLAN:

So, you'd have to show up then?

MARIE:

Yes, Harlan, the Vice President has to show up, even though he doesn't take part in the Senate's deliberations. Except in the case of an impeachment vote, he does cast the deciding vote in the case of a tie.

HARLAN:

Geez, you have to wear a tie?

MARIE:

Oh, you are hopeless! In recent times, beginning with President Harry S. Truman, the Vice President has been a member of the National Security Council, and most Presidents actively seek to involve their Vice Presidents in their administrations. The Constitution states that the Vice President becomes President in the event of the President's death. And the twenty-fifth amendment, which was adopted in 1967, provides for the Vice President to act as President should the President be temporarily incapable of performing his duties.

HARLAN:

Boy, all this talk about the President and Vice President and the White House, I'm starting to get that strange urge I...

HARLAN & MARIE:

...always seem to get about now...

HARLAN:

FIELD TRIP!!!

HARLAN:

Well, here we are! It's big, it's white, and, as a taxpayer, it's mine! I wonder if anyone's home?

MARIE:

Do you think they'll let me use the bathroom?

HARLAN:

Wow! Do you think those guys work for the President?

MARIE:

Yes, they work for the President. Ohhhh, nice doggies!

HARLAN:

Woof, woof, woof! Check out this great souvenir I got! What'd you get?

MARIE:

Just this.

HARLAN:

Only you could turn a fun-filled field trip into a learning experience. Well, at least I can safely say, "George Washington slept here."

MARIE:

No.

HARLAN:

No?

MARIE:

No, no, no. Martha and George Washington had to put up with a cramped, rented house in New York City.

HARLAN:

New York City!

MARIE:

John and Abigail Adams, our second President and his wife, moved here in November, 1800. Oh, and by the way, at the time everybody called it the "Presidential Palace."

HARLAN:

I like "The White House." Twelve fireplaces, lots of bathrooms, great front lawn. Boy, it must take the President all day Saturday just mowing it! Or is that the Vice President's job? Shoot, we're almost out of time.

HARLAN & MARIE:

Home!

MARIE:

That was fun, but I'm glad to be back and I'm ready for one of our soon-to-be-famous painless reviews.

HARLAN:

Oh, joy.

MARIE:

What?

HARLAN:

I said, "Oh, boy!"

MARIE:

Ready? I promise this won't hurt a bit: The executive branch has a President, chosen by the Electoral College, who serves for a maximum of two four-year terms, charged with enforcing all federal laws and supervising administrative agencies. That person must be native-born, at least 35 years old, and a resident of the United States for 14 years. The President can grant reprieves and pardons and negotiates treaties with foreign governments with a two-thirds agreement from the Senate. He is also Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, keeps Congress informed of the need for new legislation, and on the state of

the union. He nominates judges to the Supreme Court, with approval of the Senate. And, when Congress passes laws, the President can veto them, unless the Congress overrides him with a two-thirds vote in both houses.

HARLAN:

Wow! Painless and fast!

MARIE:

Thank you, and I think pretty interesting, as well.

HARLAN:

Particularly the field trip. I love Washington, D.C.!

MARIE:

I can't wait to go back.

HARLAN:

Take a look at this, Marie! See, if you turn it over, it snows on Washington!

MARIE:

Look at this picture of Martha Washington. They called her "Lady Washington." So that's where the term "First Lady" came from!

The Almost Painless Guide to the Branches of Government

UNIT OF STUDY

BLACKLINE MASTERS

[Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test](#)

[Blackline Master #2: Political Cartoon](#)

[Blackline Masters #3: Branches of Government](#)

[Blackline Masters #4: More Branches of Government](#)

[Blackline Masters #5: Still More Branches of Government](#)

[Blackline Master #6: Post-Test](#)



Activity: **Pre-Test**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **Branches of Government**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS: Read the following statements and indicate the correct answer.**

1. The executive branch is made up of the president and his/her cabinet.  
 True  
 False
  
2. The judicial branch is made up of solely the Supreme Court.  
 True  
 False
  
3. The President of the United States cannot be removed from office.  
 True  
 False
  
4. The legislative branch is made up of two houses: the Senate and the House of Representatives.  
 True  
 False
  
5. The majority of the work that is accomplished by the legislative branch is done in committees.  
 True  
 False
  
6. Which of the following is not a branch of the federal government?
  - A. executive branch
  - B. legislative branch
  - C. military branch

D. judicial branch

7. This was created in order to prevent any one branch of the federal government from becoming too powerful.
  - A. checks and balances
  - B. the Bill of Rights
  - C. the office of the president
  - D. the Supreme Court
  
8. According to the U.S. Constitution, which of the following qualifications is not needed to become president.
  - A. be at least 35 years of age
  - B. be a naturalized citizen
  - C. live in the U.S. for fourteen years
  - D. be a male
  
9. The role of the legislative branch is to:
  - A. make laws
  - B. interpret laws
  - C. enforce laws
  - D. suspend laws
  
10. Supreme Court justices serve for:
  - A. four years
  - B. six years
  - C. twelve years
  - D. life

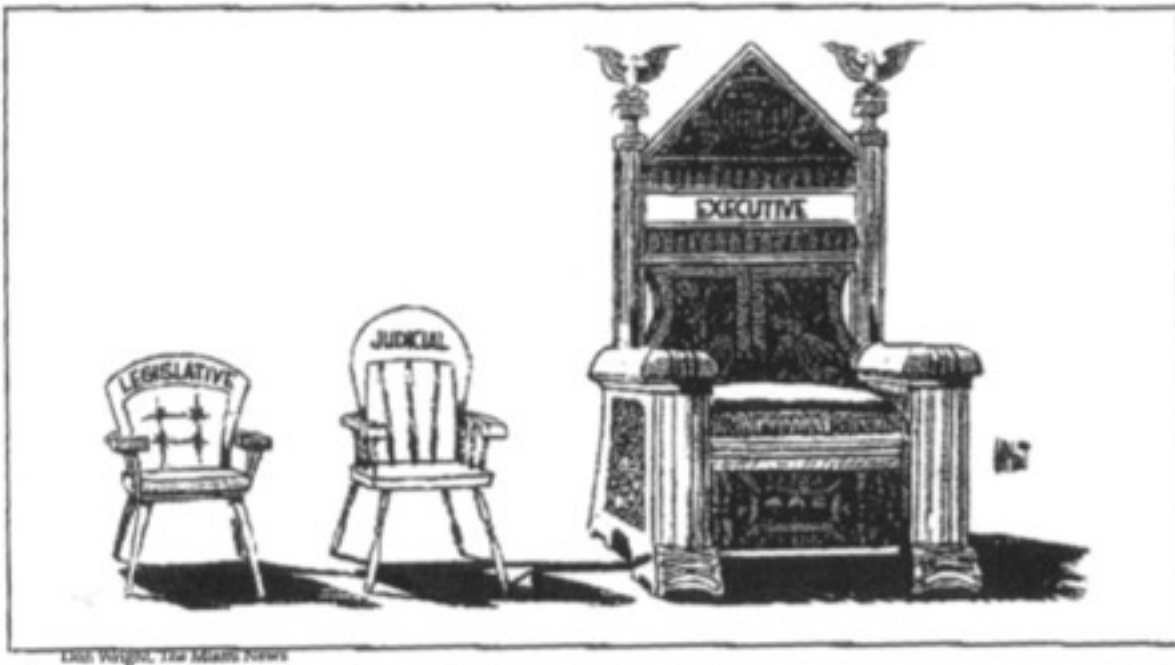
Activity: **Political Cartoon**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **Branches of Government**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Analyze the political cartoon below and answer the questions in the spaces provided. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.



1. What do all three chairs represent?
2. What is the intended message of the cartoonist?
3. What does this message say about the checks and balances system in U.S. government?
4. Do you agree or disagree with the message of the cartoon? Explain your opinion.

Activity:     **Checks and Balances**                      Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject:     **Branches of Government**                  Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the questions carefully and write either executive, legislative or judicial.

1. Write the name of the branch of government that has each of the following responsibilities.
  - A. to write laws and establish policies for the government
  - B. to carry out, administer, and enforce the policies of government
  - C. to interpret the laws of the government
  
2. Write the name of the branch of government next to the body of people who elects them.
  - A. elected in a national election using an electoral college
  - B. elected in a state election by residents of that state
  - C. members of this branch are appointed not elected
  
3. Write the name of the branch of government next to the appropriate length of term.
  - A. length of term is for life
  - B. length of term is for four years
  - C. length of term is for either two or four years
  
4. How do all of these differences help to create a system of checks and balances?

Activity: **More Checks and Balances**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **Branches of Government**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Listed below are some of the checks and balances of the three branches of government. In the spaces provided write “E” if it is a power possessed by the executive branch; “L” if it is a power possessed by the legislative branch; and “J” if it is a power possessed by the judicial branch.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Can veto acts of Congress
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Can impeach and remove the president or vice-president
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Can declare executive acts unconstitutional
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Can propose amendments to overturn court decisions
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Appoints judges
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Can override a presidential veto
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Appointed for life, so as to be free from executive control
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Can refuse to confirm presidential appointments
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Can suggest laws or policies
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Can declare acts of Congress to be unconstitutional
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Can refuse to ratify treaties
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Can pardon federal offenders
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Can impeach and remove federal judges
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Can declare war
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Can call special sessions of Congress

Activity: **Still More Checks & Balances** Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **Branches of Government** Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS: Read the following scenario. What actions might the executive, legislative, and judicial branches take if such a scenario were to occur.**

Congress has passed a law making all guns illegal. The House of Representatives approved the law by a vote of 415 to 20. The Senate approved the law by a vote of 80 to 20. The president is strongly against this law.

1. Possible actions by the executive branch:

2. Possible actions by the legislative branch:

3. Possible actions by the judicial branch:

Activity: **Post Test**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **Branches of Government**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**TRUE OR FALSE**

**DIRECTIONS: Indicate if each statement is true [T] or false [F].**

1. The term of office for a Supreme Court justice is for life.  
[ ] True  
[ ] False
  
2. The legislative branch may override a presidential veto only if the judicial branch agrees.  
[ ] True  
[ ] False
  
3. Most of the work that is done by the legislative branch is done in committees.  
[ ] True  
[ ] False
  
4. Supreme Court justices are voted on by popular vote.  
[ ] True  
[ ] False
  
5. In order to become President of the United States, an individual must be a native-born citizen.  
[ ] True  
[ ] False
  
6. The President does not have the power to “check” the judicial branch.  
[ ] True  
[ ] False

7. The legislative branch plays no role in the filling of Supreme Court vacancies.
- True
- False
8. Every state has the same number of votes (members) in the legislature.
- True
- False
9. The Supreme Court can “check” Congress and the President by declaring a law “unconstitutional.”
- True
- False
10. The Senate has more committees than the House of Representatives.
- True
- False
11. The New Jersey Plan required that each state receive the same number of seats in the federal legislature.
- True
- False
12. The President is elected to a six-year term of office.
- True
- False
13. The President is elected when he receives a majority of the popular vote.
- True
- False



14. The judicial branch is made up solely of the Supreme Court.

True

False

15. Reapportionment is when seats in the House of Representatives are redistributed based upon the most recent census of state populations.

True

False

16. An amendment is a law which changes the Constitution.

True

False

17. A Supreme Court justice must be at least thirty years of age.

True

False

18. A Supreme Court justice can be impeached.

True

False

19. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States.

True

False

20. The Executive Branch is made up of the President and his or her Cabinet.

True

False

## MULTIPLE CHOICE

DIRECTIONS: Read the question then choose the letter of the answer which is correct.

21. Which of the following is not true of the House of Representatives?
- A. It has 435 members.
  - B. A term for a representative is two years.
  - C. Each state gets the same number of seats in the House.
  - D. A representative must be a resident of the state and district which he or she represents.
22. According to the current law (the Presidential Succession Act of 1947), which of the officers follows the President in the line of presidential succession?
- A. the Speaker of the House
  - B. the Majority Whip
  - C. the Secretary of State
  - D. the Vice-President
23. According to the Constitution, which of the following qualifications is not needed to become president?
- A. be at least thirty-five years of age
  - B. be a naturalized citizen
  - C. live in the United States for at least fourteen years
  - D. be a male
24. The members of Congress do not do which of the following things?
- A. make laws
  - B. represent their constituents
  - C. enforce laws
  - D. serve on committees

25. The \_\_\_\_\_ nominates individuals to be Supreme Court justices and the \_\_\_\_\_ approves the.
- A. President/Congress
  - B. Congress/President
  - C. Congress/Supreme Court
  - D. President/Supreme Court
26. One of the duties of the \_\_\_\_\_ is to insure that laws created by Congress are constitutional.
- A. Congress
  - B. President
  - C. Pentagon
  - D. Supreme Court
27. The outcome of a Supreme Court decision is determined by a:
- A. 1/2 vote
  - B. majority vote
  - C. 3/4 vote
  - D. unanimous vote
28. Which of the following is not a lower court in the federal court system?
- A. U.S. Court of Appeals
  - B. U.S. District Courts
  - C. U.S. Grand Jury Court
  - D. U.S. Claims Court
29. The means by which the Supreme Court has the authority to rule on the constitutionality of federal and state laws is called:
- A. appeals review
  - B. supreme decision

- C. ultimate authority
- D. judicial review

30. The Constitution requires that a member of the House of Representatives be at least \_\_\_\_\_ years of age and a Senator be at least \_\_\_\_\_ years of age.

- A. 21/25
- B. 21/35
- C. 25/30
- D. 20/20

31. Another term for a legislative body that has two houses is:

- A. federalism
- B. bicameral
- C. bilegislature
- D. capitalism

32. Which of the following is not true of the Senate?

- A. it has 100 members
- B. the term for a senator is four years
- C. a senator must be a resident of the state that he or she represents
- D. a senator must be a citizen of the U.S. for at least nine years

33. The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is the:

- A. President
- B. Vice-President
- C. Majority Whip
- D. Speaker of the House

34. When the President refuses to sign a bill that is passed by Congress, this is called:

- A. a veto
- B. an executive order
- C. executive privilege
- D. impeachment

35. The number of electoral college votes that each state receives is determined by the:

- A. number of senators from each state
- B. number of sets each state has in Congress
- C. executive branch
- D. Bill of Rights

1. Which of the following positions are appointed by the President?

I. Cabinet members   II. Speaker of the House   III. National Security Council   IV. Senators

- A. I, II, IV
- B. II, III
- C. II, III, IV
- D. I, III

37. Which of the following is not a role of the President?

- A. chief legislator
- B. chief of staff
- C. commander and chief
- D. chief of the senate

38. Which of the following are not presidential powers?

- A. legislative power
- B. congressional power
- C. executive power
- D. military power

39. There are \_\_\_\_\_ electoral college votes available. In order for a presidential candidate to win the presidency he or she must win at least \_\_\_\_\_ electoral votes?
- A. 538/270
  - B. 450/450
  - C. 500/250
  - D. 300/200
40. When the President nullifies individual items on a bill it is called a:
- A. veto
  - B. presidential veto
  - C. pocket veto
  - D. line item veto

**FILL IN THE BLANK**

**DIRECTIONS: Use the terms below as a list of choices to place in the blank spaces for the definitions that follow.**

appellate jurisdiction	bicameral	Congress
Electoral College	House of Representatives	impeach
judicial review	jurisdiction	legislature
original jurisdiction	pocket veto	redistricting
Senate	Speaker of the House	veto

41. \_\_\_\_\_ is a two-house legislative body.
42. \_\_\_\_\_ is a group of persons (presidential electors) chosen in each State and the District of Columbia every four years who make a formal selection of the President and Vice-President.
43. \_\_\_\_\_ is the presiding officer of the House of Representatives, chosen by and from the majority party in the House.
44. \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the two law-making bodies in Congress and its representation is based upon state population.

45. \_\_\_\_\_ is the power of the courts to determine the constitutionality of the actions of the legislative and executive branches of government.
46. \_\_\_\_\_ is the authority of a court to review decisions (hear appeals) of a lower court.
47. \_\_\_\_\_ is to accuse a public official of misconduct in office.
48. \_\_\_\_\_ is the law-making body of the government.
49. \_\_\_\_\_ is the authority of a court to hear and decide a case for the first time.
50. \_\_\_\_\_ is the refusal by the President to approve a law.

### **CHECKS AND BALANCES**

**DIRECTIONS:** Listed below are some of the checks and balances of the three branches of government. In the spaces provided write “E” if it is a power possessed by the executive branch, “L” if it is a power possessed by the legislative branch, and “J” if it is a power possessed by the judicial branch.

51. \_\_\_\_\_ can veto acts of Congress
52. \_\_\_\_\_ can impeach and remove the President or Vice-President
53. \_\_\_\_\_ can declare executive acts unconstitutional
54. \_\_\_\_\_ can propose amendments to overturn court decisions
55. \_\_\_\_\_ appoints judges
56. \_\_\_\_\_ can override a presidential veto
57. \_\_\_\_\_ appointed for life, so as to be free from executive control
58. \_\_\_\_\_ can refuse to confirm presidential appointments
59. \_\_\_\_\_ can suggest laws or policies
60. \_\_\_\_\_ can declare acts of Congress unconstitutional

## **SHORT ANSWER**

**DIRECTIONS: Answer each of the following questions in the spaces provided. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.**

61. What are the three branches of government and what are each of their major responsibilities with respect to laws?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
62. How is the appointment of a Supreme Court justice an example of checks and balances?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
63. If a bill were to be passed by Congress that legalized prayer in schools, what would be some possible actions that the (1) executive branch, (2) legislative branch, and (3) judicial branch could take concerning the bill?

## **ESSAY**

**DIRECTIONS: Answer the following question as completely as possible. Make sure that you use specific examples to support your thoughts.**

64. The Preamble of the Constitution starts off with the words, "We the People..." How do the three branches of government embody this idea?



The Almost Painless Guide to the Branches of Government

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

BLACKLINE MASTERS

[Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test](#)

[Blackline Master #2: Video Quiz](#)

[Blackline Master #3: Vocabulary](#)

[Blackline Masters #4:a-4b: Powers of the President](#)

[Blackline Masters #5a-5b: Electoral College Activity](#)

[Blackline Master #6: Your Own Candidate](#)

[Blackline Masters #7a-7b: Presidential Profiles](#)

[Blackline Masters #8a-8b: Post-Test](#)

Activity: **Pre-Test**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the following statements and mark true or false.

1. A veto occurs when the House of Representatives votes to remove the president from office.

True

False

2. In order to become President of the United States an individual must be a native-born citizen.

True

False

3. The president does not have the power to “check” the judicial branch.

True

False

4. The president can only serve two four-year terms in office.

True

False

5. The impeachment process is started in the House of Representatives.

True

False

6. The president has the power to appoint members to Congress.

True

False

7. One of the roles of the president is commander-in-chief.

True

False

8. In the case of the death of the president a new election will be held immediately.

True

False

9. The president is elected by a popular vote.

True

False

10. The president has many offices and departments underneath his direct supervision.

True

False

Activity: **Video Quiz**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the following statements and mark the correct answer

1. The executive branch is made up of the president and his or her Cabinet.  
 True  
 False
  
2. The President of the United States cannot be removed from office.  
 True  
 False
  
3. The president is elected to a six-year term in office.  
 True  
 False
  
4. The president is elected when he or she receives a majority of the popular vote.  
 True  
 False
  
5. The president has the power to nominate Supreme Court justices.  
 True  
 False
  
6. According to the current law, which of the officers follows the president in the line of presidential succession?
  - A. the Speaker of the House
  - B. the majority whip
  - C. the secretary of state
  - D. the vice-president

7. According to the Constitution, which of the following qualifications is not needed to become president?

- A. be at least thirty-five years of age
- B. be a naturalized citizen
- C. live in the U.S. for fourteen years
- D. be a male

8. When the president refuses to sign a bill that is passed by Congress this is called:

- A. a veto
- B. an executive order
- C. executive privilege
- D. impeachment

9. The number of electoral college votes that each state receives is determined by:

- A. number of senators from each state
- B. number of seats a state has in Congress
- C. the executive branch
- D. the Bill of Rights

10. Which of the following positions are appointed by the president? (You may choose more than one.)

- I. cabinet members   II. Speaker of the House   III. National Security Council   IV. Senators*
- A. I, II, IV
  - B. II, III
  - C. II, III, IV
  - D. I, II

Activity: **Vocabulary**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

amendment—a change to the Constitution

checks and balances—the system whereby each branch of the government exercises some control over the others

Congress—consists of a bicameral, or two-house, legislature. The House of Representatives represents the people by population, and the Senate represents them by state. The role of Congress is to translate public will into public policy in the form of laws.

constitution—a body of supreme law, setting out the basic principles, structures, processes, and functions for a government and placing limits upon its actions

electoral college—a group of persons (presidential electors) chosen in each state and the District of Columbia every four years who make a formal selection of the President and Vice-President

executive branch—consists of the President of the United States and his cabinet

federal system—a system that divides the powers of government between national government and state, or provincial, governments

impeach—to accuse a public official of misconduct in office

judicial branch—a system of national courts which consists of the Supreme Courts and lower federal courts

legislative branch—the law-making agencies of the government; this consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate

Activity: **Powers of the President**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Listed below on the left side of the page are eight roles of the President.

Listed on the right side are the eight definitions. Match the definitions with the roles.

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. chief-of-state         | A. All of the nation's armed forces are under the control of the president.   |
| _____ 2. chief executive        | B. The president directs the foreign policy of the United States, making the key decisions about the nation's relations with other countries. |
| _____ 3. chief diplomat         | C. The acknowledged leader of the political party in charge of the executive branch.  |
| _____ 4. chief legislator       | D. The president is responsible for planning the economic policies of the government, which includes submitting a federal budget.             |
| _____ 5. chief-of-party         | E. The president represents all the American people.  |
| _____ 6. chief economic planner | F. The president is expected to suggest legislation that he or she wishes to see enacted. This will help guide Congress in its policy-making. |
| _____ 7. chief citizen          | G. The ceremonial head of the United States   |
| _____ 8. commander-in-chief     | H. The president sees that the laws of Congress are carried out and executed.   |

Activity: **More Powers of the President** Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch** Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 1**

**DIRECTIONS: Match the appropriate presidential role to the appropriate presidential power.**

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ 1. chief-of-state         | A. executive power                 |
| _____ 2. chief executive        | B. diplomatic power                |
| _____ 3. chief economic planner | C. military power                  |
| _____ 4. chief legislator       | D. legislative and judicial powers |
| _____ 5. chief diplomat         |                                    |
| _____ 6. commander-in-chief     |                                    |

**PART 2**

**DIRECTIONS: Using the information from Blackline Master #4a and the section above, define the following presidential power in the spaces provided. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.**

1. executive power:

2. diplomatic power:

3. military power:

4. legislative and judicial powers:



Activity: **Electoral College Activity**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** The electoral college activity simulates a mock presidential election. The activity requires two participants or two teams, one die, an electoral college map of the U.S., and a tally sheet per game. Once the activity begins, be sure to keep accurate records. These records will be used at the end of the activity.

### How to Play

1. The object of the activity is to capture as many electoral votes as possible, thus winning a presidential election. In order to win the election, a participant or team must capture at least 270 electoral college votes.
2. Write both participants' or teams' name on the two spaces provided on the tally sheet.
3. Roll the die to see who goes first.
4. The winner of the first roll selects a state in which s/he/they wish to campaign. Record this state on the tally sheet.
5. Once a state has been selected, both players or teams roll the die. The numbers that are rolled should be recorded on the tally sheet. These numbers represent the popular vote.
6. The person or team who rolls the higher number wins all of the electoral college votes from that state. These votes should then be recorded on the tally sheet.
7. The winner of the previous state then selects the next state in which s/he/they wish to campaign. Steps 4 and 5 are then repeated until all the 50 states electoral college votes have been decided.
8. In the event of a tie during the die roll, each player or team will re-roll until the tie is broken. The student or team that wins the re-roll(s) captures all of the electoral votes from that state.
9. Once all 538 of the electoral college votes have been decided, add up the columns on the tally sheet. These totals should then be recorded on the tally sheet.
10. The person or team with at least 270 electoral college votes wins the presidential election.

Activity: **Electoral College Activity**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

State	Electoral Votes	Number Rolled	Electoral Votes	Number Rolled
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				

State	Electoral Votes	Number Rolled	Electoral Votes	Number Rolled
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				
31				
32				
33				
34				
35				
36				
37				
38				
39				
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41				
42				
43				
44				
45				
46				
47				
48				
49				
50				
51				
<b>TOTALS</b>				

Activity: **Electoral College Activity**

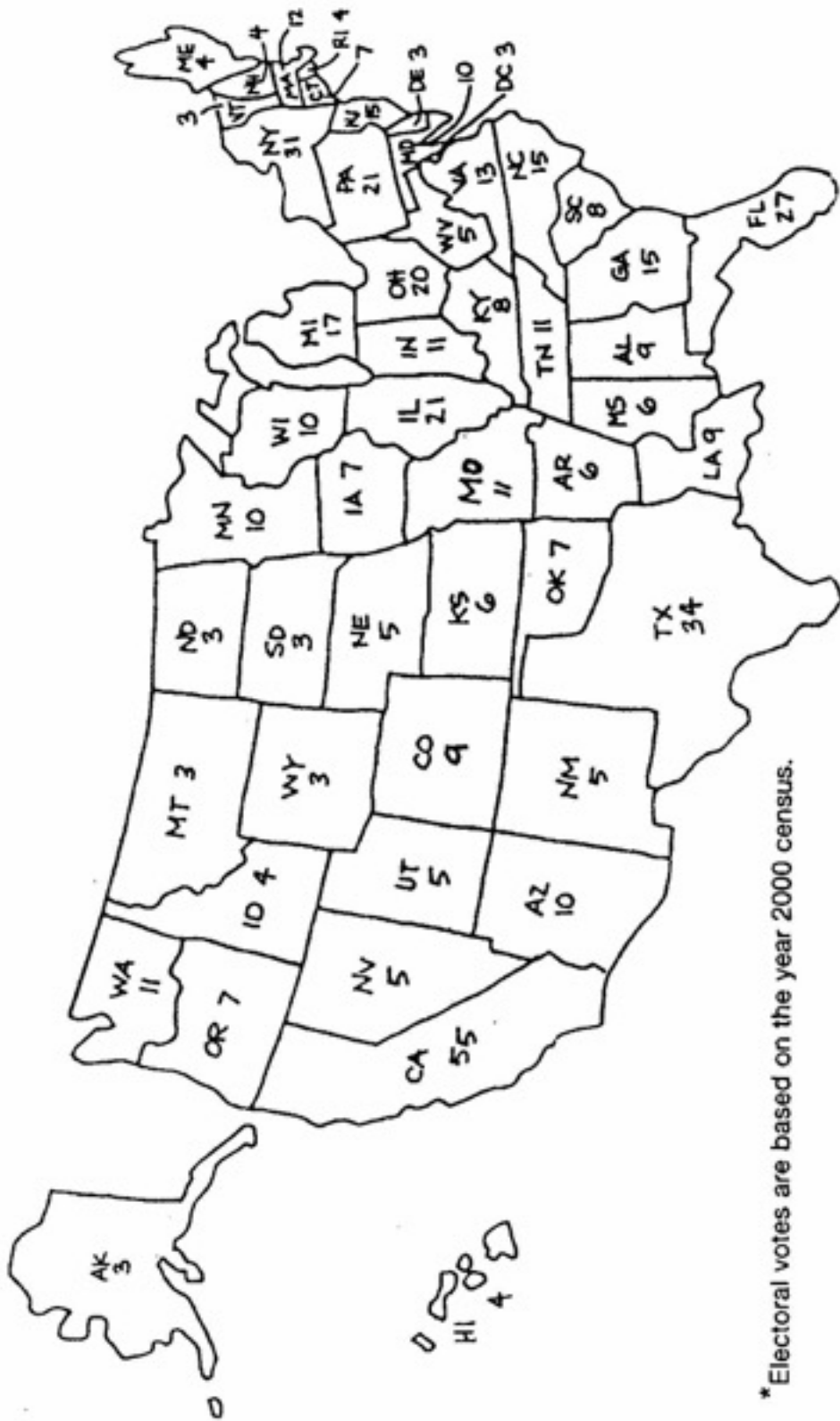
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Using the tally sheet from the Electoral College Activity, answer the following questions in the spaces provided. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

1. What were the first five states selected at the start of the activity?
2. Why were these states selected first?
3. How might the number of electoral votes that each state has impact a real presidential campaign?
4. Was the popular vote (die total) as close as the electoral college vote?
5. Was the winner of the popular vote also the winner of the electoral college vote?
6. Did the electoral vote accurately reflect the popular vote?
7. What would be the lowest number of states that a candidate would need to win in order to become President?
8. Does the electoral college process represent the phrase, "We the people..."? Explain your answer.



\*Electoral votes are based on the year 2000 census.

Activity: **Your Own Candidate** Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch** Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Based upon the qualifications that it takes to become president, create your own candidate for president. Use the categories listed below as a guide.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Home State: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Ancestry: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity: **Presidential Profiles**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Using the presidential biographical information, answer the following questions in the spaces provided. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

1. In what range of age do most of the presidents fall?
2. From what region of the country did a majority of the presidents come—north, south, east or west?
3. What were some of the most common occupations held by the presidents?
4. What was the most common ancestry of the presidents?
5. What were some of the most common religious backgrounds that the presidents have had?
6. What were some characteristics that the presidents have shared?
7. Compare and contrast these characteristics to the presidential candidate that you have created on Blackline Master #6. Does your candidate fit the traditional profile of a president? Explain your response.

Activity: **Presidential Profiles**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Using the presidential biographical information, answer the following questions in the spaces provided. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

Name	Born In	Elected From	Age*	Occupation	Religion	Ancestry
George Washington	VA	VA	57	planter, soldier	Anglican	English
John Adams	MA	MA	61	lawyer	Unitarian	English
Thomas Jefferson	VA	VA	57	planter, lawyer		Welsh
James Madison	VA	VA	57	politician	Episcopal	English
James Monroe	VA	VA	58	politician, lawyer	Episcopal	Scots
John Q. Adams	MA	MA	57	lawyer	Unitarian	English
Andrew Jackson	SC	TN	61	lawyer	Presbyterian	Scots-Irish
Martin Van Buren	NY	NY	54	lawyer	Dutch Reformed	Dutch
William H. Harrison	VA	OH	68	soldier	Episcopal	English
John Tyler	VA	VA	51	lawyer	Episcopal	English
James K. Polk	NC	TN	49	lawyer	Presbyterian	Scots-Irish
Zachary Taylor	VA	LA	64	soldier	Episcopal	English
Millard Fillmore	NY	NY	50	lawyer	Unitarian	English
Franklin Pierce	NH	NH	48	lawyer	Episcopal	English
James Buchanan	PA	PA	65	lawyer	Presbyterian	Scots-Irish
Abraham Lincoln	KY	IL	52	lawyer		English
Andrew Johnson	NC	TN	56	tailor, politician		Scots-Irish, English
Ulysses S. Grant	OH	IL	46	farmer, soldier	Methodist	English, Scots
Rutherford B. Hayes	OH	OH	54	lawyer		English
James Garfield	OH	OH	49	lawyer, politician	Disciples of Christ	English, French
Chester A. Arthur	VT	NY	50	lawyer	Episcopal	Scots-Irish, English



Name	Born In	Elected From	Age*	Occupation	Religion	Ancestry
Grover Cleveland	NJ	NJ	47	lawyer	Presbyterian	Irish, English
Benjamin Harrison	OH	IN	55	lawyer	Presbyterian	English, Scots
William McKinley	OH	OH	54	lawyer	Methodist	Scots-Irish, English
Theodore Roosevelt	NY	NY	42	author, politician	Dutch Reformed	Dutch, Scots, English
William H. Taft	OH	OH	51	lawyer		English, Scots-Irish
Woodrow Wilson	VA	VA	56	college professor	Presbyterian	Scots-Irish
Warren G. Harding	OH	OH	55	newspaper editor, publisher	Baptist	English, Scots-Irish
Calvin Coolidge	VT	MA	51	lawyer	Congregationalist	English
Herbert Hoover	IA	CA	54	geologist	Quaker	Swiss-German
Franklin Roosevelt	NY	NY	51	lawyer	Episcopal	Dutch
Harry S. Truman	MO	MO	60	farmer, politician	Baptist	Scots-English
Dwight D. Eisenhower	TX	NY	62	soldier	Presbyterian	Swiss-German
John F. Kennedy	MA	MA	43	author, politician	Roman Catholic	Irish
Lyndon B. Johnson	TX	TX	55	teacher, politician	Disciples of Christ	English
Richard M. Nixon	CA	NY	55	lawyer, politician	Quaker	English, Scots-Irish
Gerald R. Ford	NE	MI	61	lawyer, politician	Episcopal	English
Jimmy Carter	GA	GA	52	businessman, politician	Baptist	English
Ronald Reagan	IL	CA	69	actor, politician	Christian Church	English-Scots-Irish
George H.W. Bush	MA	TX	64	businessman, politician	Episcopal	English
William J. Clinton	AR	AR	46	professor, lawyer, politician	Baptist	English
George W. Bush	CT	TX	55	businessman, politician	Episcopal	English
Barack Obama	HI	IL	47	college professor, politician	Christian	Kenyan-Scots-Irish

Activity: **Post-Test**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: **The Executive Branch**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**MULTIPLE CHOICE AND TRUE/FALSE**

**DIRECTIONS:** Indicate the correct answer by circling its letter

1. In order to become President of the United States an individual must be a native-born citizen.  
A.  True B.  False
  
2. The president does not have the power to “check” the judicial branch.  
A.  True B.  False
  
3. One of the roles of the president is commander-in-chief.  
A.  True B.  False
  
4. The president is elected to a six-year term in office.  
A.  True B.  False
  
5. The president is elected when he receives a majority of the popular vote.  
A.  True B.  False
  
6. According to the current law, which of the officers follows the president in the presidential line of succession?  
A. speaker of the house  
B. majority whip  
C. secretary of state  
D. vice-president
  
7. The number of electoral college votes that each state receives is determined by:  
A. the number of senators from each state  
B. number of seats a state has in Congress  
C. the executive branch  
D. the Bill of Rights

8. Which of the following is not a role of the president?
- A. chief legislator
  - B. chief-of-state
  - C. commander-in-chief
  - D. chief-of-senate
9. Which of the following are not presidential powers?
- A. legislative power
  - B. congressional power
  - C. executive power
  - D. military power
10. There are \_\_\_\_\_ electoral college votes available. In order for a presidential candidate to win the presidency, he or she must win at least \_\_\_\_\_ electoral votes.
- A. 538/270
  - B. 450/450
  - C. 500/250
  - D. 300/200

## MATCHING

**DIRECTIONS: Match the title to the responsibility by placing its letter in the corresponding blank.**

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| _____ 11. chief-of-state     | A. All of the nation's armed forces are under the control of the president.   |
| _____ 12. chief executive    | B. The president directs the foreign policy of the United States, making the key decisions about the nation's relations with other countries. |
| _____ 13. chief diplomat     | C. the acknowledged leader of the political party in charge of the executive branch.  |
| _____ 14. chief legislator   | D. The president is responsible for planning the economic policies of the government, which includes submitting a federal budget.             |
| _____ 15. commander-in-chief | E. The president represents all American citizens.  |
|                              | F. The president is expected to suggest legislation that he or she wishes to see enacted. This helps Congress in its policy making.           |
|                              | G. the ceremonial head of the United States   |
|                              | H. The president sees that the laws of Congress are carried-out and executed.   |

**FILL IN THE BLANK**

**DIRECTIONS:** Identify the following statements with one of the four presidential powers: **commander-in-chief, chief legislator, chief diplomat, chief executive, chief-of-state.**

16. President Obama sent American troops to Afghanistan. \_\_\_\_\_

17. President Johnson vetoed a bill that would cut healthcare benefits. \_\_\_\_\_

18. President Washington negotiated a peace treaty with England. \_\_\_\_\_

19. President Truman proposed his 1949 budget to Congress. \_\_\_\_\_

20. President Clinton represented the U.S. at an trade conference. \_\_\_\_\_

**ESSAY**

**DIRECTIONS:** In the space provided, answer the following question in a clear and concise manner. Use the back of the sheet if necessary.

Does the electoral college process reflect the phrase, "We the people..."?

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