

Constitution Webquest

Part 1: Read the background to the Constitution and answer the questions that follow.

Background to the Constitution



The **Constitution** of the United States is the supreme (highest) law of the United States of America. The **Constitution** is referred to as our government's instruction manual; it declares what the government can and cannot do. The **founding fathers** wanted a limited government where citizen's rights were promised. They wanted a democratic style of government where a harsh ruler could not rise up and treat people unfairly.

The Constitution comes with **three parts**: the Preamble (introduction), seven articles and 27 amendments. The first **10 amendments** are the **Bill of Rights**. The first **three Articles** of the Constitution establish the three branches of the federal government with checks and balances and separation of powers. The power of the government is separated into **three branches**: Legislative Branch (Congress), the Executive Branch and Judicial Branch.

The Constitution was adopted (approved) on September 17, 1787. The **goals** of the Constitution are stated in the **Preamble**:

"We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Prosperity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

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1. Read the first paragraph and explain what the founding fathers wanted the Constitution to do.
 2. What are the three main sections of the Constitution?

3. What do the three articles of the Constitution establish?
4. The Preamble says what the goals of the Constitution are. Read the Preamble of the Constitution. What are some of the goals of the Constitution?

Part 2: Constitutional Principles

The Constitution is based on some key ideas, or principles. Look up each of the 6 basic principles of the Constitution and write down the meaning of each.

Principles

1. Popular Sovereignty is:
2. Limited Government is:
3. Separation of Powers is:
4. Checks and Balances is:
5. Judicial Review is:
6. Federalism is:

Part 3: The Three Branches

The Three Branches of our government are set up in the first three Articles of the Constitution. **Click the following link** (or copy and paste it in a new window) and **answer the questions below**. Be sure you **write out the sentence** in your notebooks and **underline** the word that fills in each blank.

<http://www.myschoolhouse.com/courses/O/1/129.asp>

1. The national government runs the _____.

2. The US national government is made up of three parts called _____.
3. The three branches of the US government are made up of, the _____ Court, _____, and the President.
4. Congress is made up of two houses called the House of _____ and the _____.
5. Congress makes and passes _____.
6. The Supreme Court settles _____ about the laws.
7. The _____ makes sure laws are carried out and that new laws are made.
8. The President is the _____ in _____ of the armed forces.
9. It is important that the three branches of the US government work _____.

Click (or copy and paste) the following link and answer the questions:

The Executive Branch

https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_executive_branch.php

10. Read "The President". What two roles (jobs) does the President have?
11. Besides enforcing the laws, what other powers does the President have?
12. What are the requirements to be President of the United States?

The Legislative Branch

https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_legislative_branch.php

13. What are the different powers of the Legislative Branch?
14. What are the requirements to be in the House of Representatives?
15. What are the requirements to be in the Senate?

The Judicial Branch

https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_judicial_branch.php

16. How are federal judges chosen?
17. Why are judges allowed to serve for life?
18. When would someone appeal their case to a higher court?

Play "Do I Have a Right?"

Click the following link to play a game that tests your knowledge of our rights guaranteed us by the Constitution.

www.icivics.org/games/do-i-have-right

Check out the Constitution!

Click the link below to see a copy of our United States Constitution:

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>