

American Government

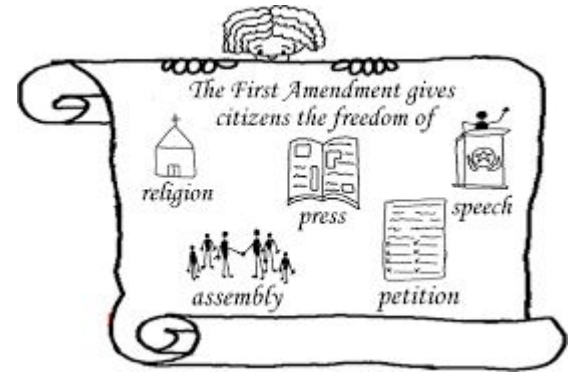


Question

1. Why is our government called a representative democracy and not a direct democracy?

I) The Constitution

- **Sets up our government system.**
 - Where the laws are written
 - Limits the government's power.
- Can be changed or **“amended”**
 - Has been amended 27 times.
 - First 10 amendments are called the Bill of Rights.



Question/Activity

2. What does it mean for the Constitution to be amended?

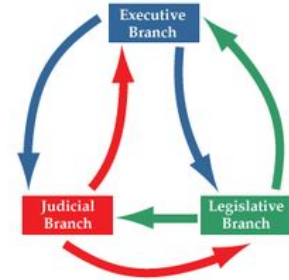
Click on this link and answer the question below

https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_government/second_amendment.php

3. What does the second amendment to the Constitution say? (summarize the amendment)

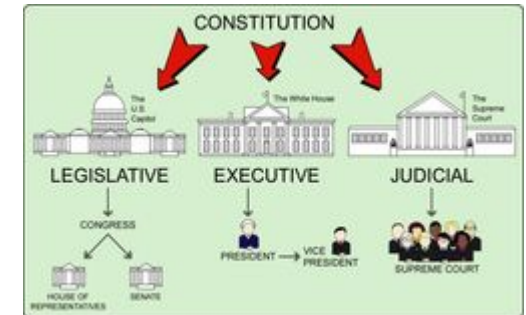
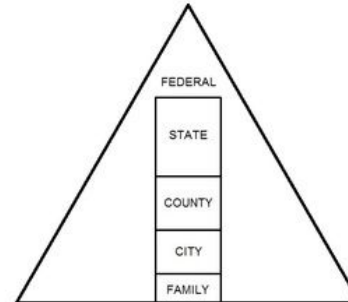
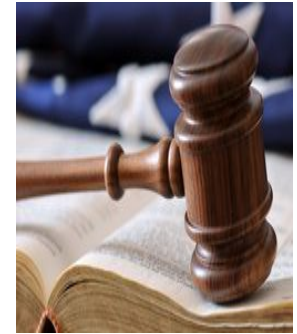
II) 6 Basic Principles

- The Constitution has 6 main ideas.



The 6 Basic Principles are:

1. Popular Sovereignty (the people rule)
2. Separation of Powers
3. Limited Government
4. Checks and Balances
5. Judicial Review
6. Federalism

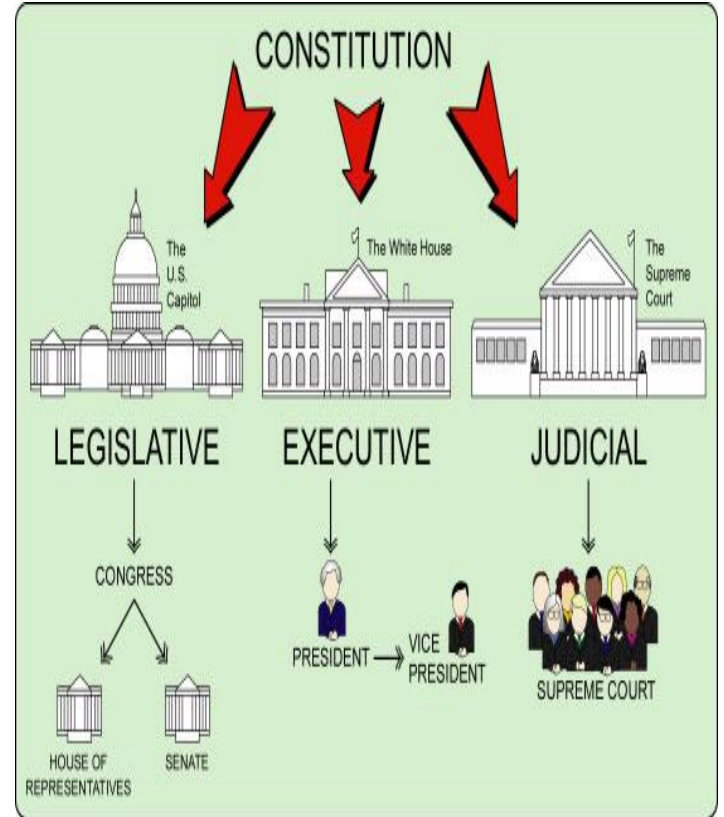


III) Separation of Powers

-There are three separate but equal branches of government.

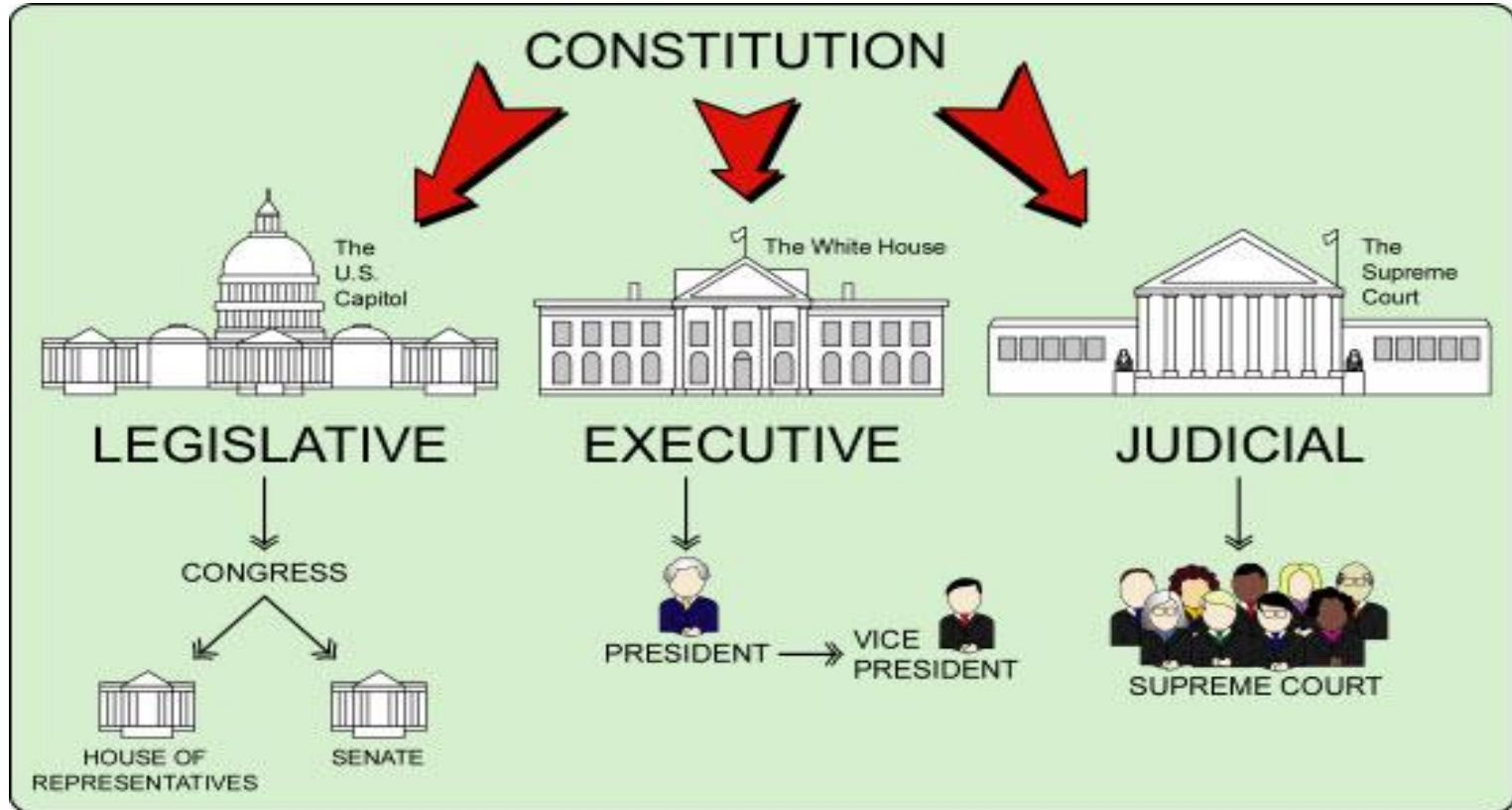
- Each has different powers.

- **No branch** of government is more **powerful** than the others.



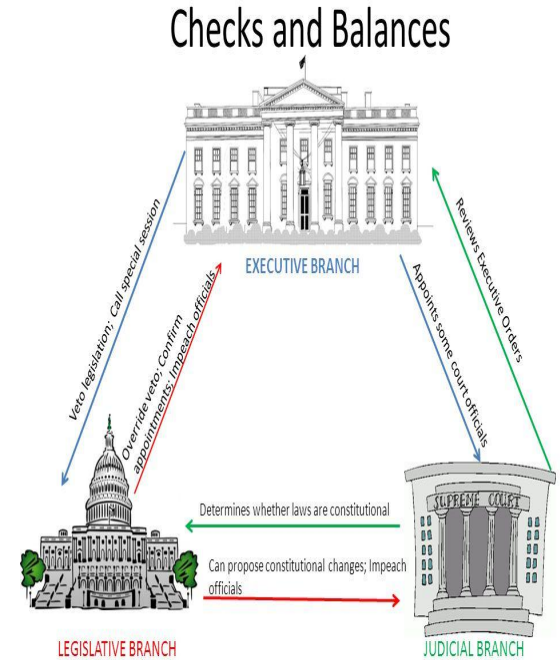
Activity

Draw the image on this slide



IV) Checks and Balances

- Each branch of government has the power to **“check”** the actions of the other branches.
- The President has the power to **veto**, cancel, an action or Congress.
- Congress has the power to **override** or cancel the president’s veto.
- The Supreme Court has the power to rule a law passed by Congress **unconstitutional**, or illegal.



*******DO NOT WRITE THIS*******

CHECKS AND BALANCES

<p>Executive Branch (President carries out laws)</p> 	<p>Checks on the Legislative Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can propose lawsCan veto lawsCan call special sessions of CongressMakes appointmentsNegotiates foreign treaties	<p>Checks on the Judicial Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Appoints federal judgesCan grant pardons to federal offenders
<p>Legislative Branch (Congress makes laws)</p> 	<p>Checks on the Executive Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can override President's vetoConfirms executive appointmentsRatifies treatiesCan declare warAppropriates moneyCan impeach and remove President	<p>Checks on the Judicial Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Creates lower federal courtsCan impeach and remove judgesCan propose amendments to overrule judicial decisionsApproves appointments of federal judges
<p>Judicial Branch (Supreme Court interprets laws)</p> 	<p>Check on the Executive Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can declare executive actions unconstitutional	<p>Check on the Legislative Branch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can declare acts of Congress unconstitutional

Questions

Use the Checks and Balances chart on the previous slide to answer the following questions.

4. What is one check the Legislative Branch has on the Executive Branch?
5. What is one check the Executive Branch has on the Judicial Branch?
6. What is one check the Judicial Branch has on the Legislative Branch?

V) The Legislative Branch

☆ Also known as Congress

Made up of **two “houses”**

1. Senate

2. House of Representatives

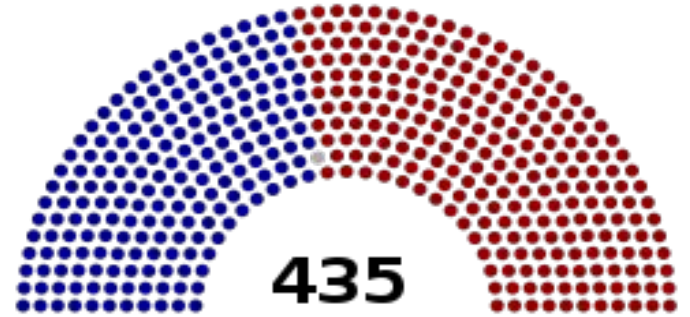
☆ Main job: **make laws**



Legislative Branch continued

House of Representatives

- ☆ 435 representatives
- ☆ Each **representative** serves for **2 years**
- ☆ States get representatives based on the **size of their population.**



Legislative Branch continued

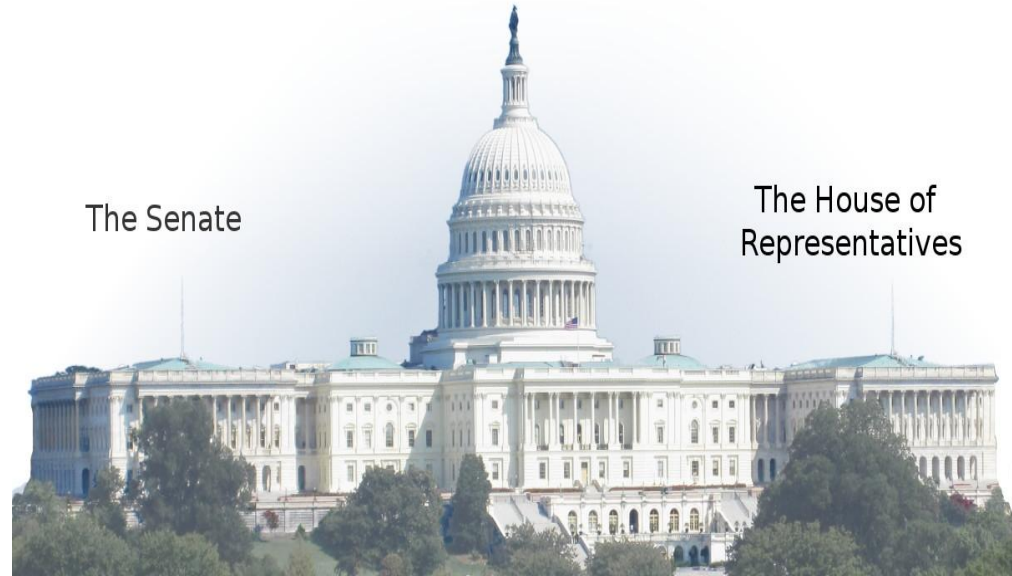
The Senate

- **100 senators**
- **2 senators per state** no matter the population
- Senators serve for 6 years
- They must live in the state they represent.



Legislative Powers (Do not write)

- Make Laws
- Declare War
- Collect Taxes
- Set up Post Offices
- Create Money
- Regulate Trade
- Set up Lower Federal Courts
- Protect Patents
- Create new States
- Create Post Offices
- And many, many more!!!



The Senate

The House of
Representatives

Question

7. What do you believe is the most important power Congress has? Why do you believe this is this the most important power?

Optional Challenge Question (answer if you think you can!)

Why do you think Congress is split up into the House of Representatives and Senate?

VI) The Executive Branch

The **President** and **cabinet members**

- ☆ Main job: **Enforce laws**
- ☆ Serves for **4 years**
 - At least 35 years old
- ☆ **Citizen** of the United States



Executive Powers (Do not write)

- Enforce the law
- Head of the Armed Forces
- Nominate Supreme Court Judges
- Meet with Leaders of other Countries
- Manage the Nation's Economy (not in the Constitution)
- Protect American Overseas
- Carry out the Day-to-Day functions of the US Government

The President's Cabinet



Department of
Agriculture



Department of
Commerce



Department of
Defense



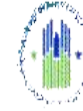
Department of
Education



Department of
Energy



Department of
Health and
Human Services



Department of
Housing and Urban
Development



Department of
the Interior



Department of
Justice



Department of
Labor



Department of
State



Department of
Transportation



Department of
the Treasury



Department of
Veterans Affairs

Question

8. What is the most important power of the Executive Branch?
Why do you believe this is the most important power?

9. According to the line of presidential succession, who takes over after the Vice President?

Line of Presidential Succession

- ★ Vice President
- ★ Speaker of the House
- ★ President *pro tempore* of the Senate
- ★ Secretary of State
- ★ Secretary of the Treasury
- ★ Secretary of Defense
- ★ Attorney General
- ★ Secretary of the Interior
- ★ Secretary of Agriculture
- ★ Secretary of Commerce
- ★ Secretary of Labor
- ★ Secretary of Health and Human Services
- ★ Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- ★ Secretary of Transportation
- ★ Secretary of Energy
- ★ Secretary of Education
- ★ Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- ★ Secretary of Homeland Security*

*The order of this position may change, pending congressional legislation.
Source: thomas.loc.gov.

VII) Judicial Branch

- **Supreme Court**- Highest Court
- All other courts in the US
- Main Job: **Decide what laws mean (Interpret)**
- Supreme Court has **9 Justices** (judges)
 - Serve for **life**



Supreme Court Justices (Do not write)

John G. Roberts, Jr., Chief Justice of the United States, (G. W. Bush, 2005)

Anthony M. Kennedy, Associate Justice, (Reagan 1988)

Clarence Thomas, Associate Justice, (Bush, 1991)

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Associate Justice, (Clinton, 1993)

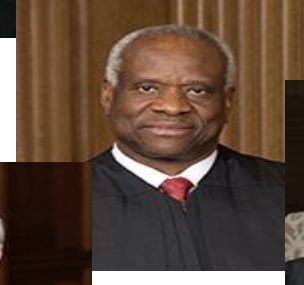
Stephen G. Breyer, Associate Justice, (Clinton, 1994)

Samuel A. Alito, Jr., Associate Justice (G.W. Bush, 2006)

Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice, (Obama, 2009)

Elena Kagan, Associate Justice, (Obama, 2010)

Neil M. Gorsuch, Associate Justice, (Trump, 2017)



Questions

10) What is the main job of the Judicial Branch?

11) Why do you think there are nine judges on the Supreme Court?

12) How many women are on the Supreme Court? Who are they?

13) Who is the longest serving justice on the Supreme Court? When did they take office?