



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: US History/Ms. Brown

Homeroom:



7<sup>th</sup> Grade US History  
Standard # – Do Now – Day #77

**Aims:** SWBAT define “separation of powers” and “checks and balances”  
 SWBAT identify and explain how each branch of government checks each other  
 SWBAT compare and contrast the Articles of Confederation

### DO NOW

**Directions:** Answer the following questions in complete and historically accurate sentences. Write **at least two** examples of what each branch CAN do and **at least one** example of what each branch CANNOT do. You must attempt each question, there should be absolutely no blank spaces. Be sure to provide examples and evidence to support your answers.

**The President Can...**

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**Congress Can...**

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**The Supreme Court Can...**

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**I. Top 5 (most important facts)**

1. The Constitution set up three branches of government to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of each branch. With the principal of checks and \_\_\_\_\_, each branch \_\_\_\_\_ or checks the powers of the other \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Each branch should have an \_\_\_\_\_ amount of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The legislative branch – also known as \_\_\_\_\_ - can check, or limit the power of both other branches. Congress can check the executive branch by \_\_\_\_\_ which means to \_\_\_\_\_ the President. The legislative branch limits the \_\_\_\_\_ branch because it has to \_\_\_\_\_ judges.
4. The executive branch – led by the \_\_\_\_\_ - limits the other two branches. The executive branch can check the legislative branch by \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ to a law passed by Congress. The executive branch limits the judicial branch when it \_\_\_\_\_, or selects, \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ branches limit each other through \_\_\_\_\_ and balances. Each branch has \_\_\_\_\_ power. Checks and balances are important because it \_\_\_\_\_ one branch from getting too much power?



**II. Vocabulary**

**Directions:** With your shoulder partner (at less than whisper volume!) define the following key terms based on our notes and your civic knowledge. Be prepared to share out.

1. Separation of powers \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Checks and balances \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**III. Overview: The Purpose of the System**

The system of separation of powers and checks and balances helps ensure that government power is limited. Because constitutional governments are organized in complicated ways, getting things done may take time. Although it might seem strange, this is often considered an advantage. Many people that that these complications make it more likely that when government does finally make a decision, it will be a well thought out one.

**IV. Videos: How do the branches check each other?**

- 1. How can the Executive Branch (the President) “check” the Legislative Branch after they pass a law?

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- 2. How does the Legislative Branch “check” the President’s appointments of government officials?

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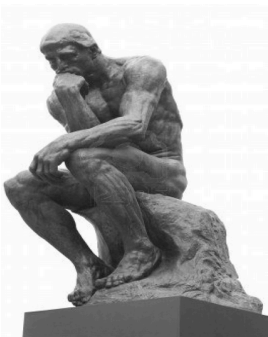
- 3. How can the Legislative Branch “check” the Judicial Branch (Supreme Court)?

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**Think:** Based on the powers given the Supreme Court, what is one way the Judicial branch can “check” the Legislative Branch?



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Political Science BRAINIAC Challenge: Why was it important to the Founding Fathers to include a system of checks and balances to the Constitution? (Think back to America prior to the Revolution)

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## V. Competition

**Directions:** As each scenario is given decide if your branch can perform this action. You have 15 seconds to make a decision. When 15 seconds is up your branch will let the class know if it's your power using your signal. Record the answers for each circumstance.

Circumstances:

A. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

E. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

F. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

G. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_

H. Power: \_\_\_\_\_ Checked by: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Checks and Balances HOMEWORK

\_\_\_\_\_/11 Mastered/Passing/Not Mastered

1. List whether each responsibility belongs to the Executive, Legislative or Judicial Branch

a. Make Laws:

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Enforce Laws:

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Declare laws unconstitutional:

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Communicate with foreign leaders:

\_\_\_\_\_

e. Raise an army:

\_\_\_\_\_

f. Protect the Constitution:

\_\_\_\_\_

g. Coin Money:

\_\_\_\_\_



2. Congress has a \_\_\_\_\_ legislature

- a. Unicameral
- b. Bicameral
- c. Parliamentary
- d. Tyrannical

3. The Electoral College was created to choose

- a. Senators
- b. House of Representatives
- c. The President
- d. Supreme Court Judges

4. What is one way each branch of government can check each other.

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## Checks and Balances EXIT TICKET

\_\_\_\_\_/7 Mastered/Passing/Not Mastered

Complete the diagram by writing each of the following checks and balances in the correct arrow

- Congress can impeach the President
- President calls special sessions of Congress
- Supreme Court can declare executive actions unconstitutional
- President nominates Supreme Court justices
- Congress can override vetoes
- Congress can impeach federal judges
- Congress approves Supreme Court justices

