

# BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

## READ & RESPOND COMPREHENSION PASSAGES

### The Judicial Branch

#### Part 2: The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. The Supreme Court hears cases that have made their way through the court system, but of the more than 7,500 cases that are sent to the Supreme Court each year, only about 80 to 100 cases are actually accepted. Once the Supreme Court makes a decision, it can only be changed by another Supreme Court decision. The Court can amend (changing) the Constitution. This is a very important power that can affect the lives of a lot of people. The main power of the Supreme Court is to decide if laws are against the Constitution, the Court must decide if the law really challenges the Constitution.

The Supreme Court is made up of nine Justices, one of whom is the Chief Justice. They are appointed by the President and approved by the Senate. Justices can serve until they resign, retire, or are impeached and removed from office by the Senate. There are no term limits for a Justice, but all have been transferred as members of Congress to the President's Cabinet.

#### Comprehension Check

T or F: The Supreme Court hears all cases that are brought to them.

T or F: The President is a Supreme Court Justice.

- L How many Supreme Court Justices are there?
- 10
  - 9
  - 8
  - 7

What document does the Court system use as a guide?

- the Constitution
- A voting ballot
- the Bible
- the Declaration of Independence

### The Executive Branch

#### Part 1: The Job of the Executive Branch

The executive branch of Government ensures that the laws of the United States are followed. The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of government. This branch is very large, so the President gets help from the Vice President, department heads (Cabinet members), and heads of independent agencies.

- **President:** Leader of the country and commands the military.
- **Vice President:** President of the Senate and becomes President if the President can no longer do the job.
- **Departments:** Department heads advise the President on issues and help carry out policies.
- **Independent Agencies:** Help carry out policy or provide special services.

#### Comprehension Check

1. Who is the head of the Executive Branch?

- the King
- Cabinet
- the President
- the Vice President

2. The members of the Executive Branch ensure that...

- Laws are written.
- Laws are followed.
- Laws are fair.
- Laws are changed.

3. If the President can no longer do his/her job, who will take over?

- Vice President
- Cabinet
- the Independent Agencies
- the First Lady

4. The President is the leader of the

# The Executive Branch

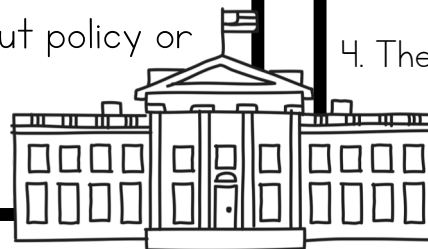
## Part I: The Job of the Executive Branch

The executive branch of Government ensures that the laws of the United States are followed. The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of government. This branch is very large, so the President gets help from the Vice President, department heads (Cabinet members), and heads of independent agencies.

- President: Leader of the country and commands the military.
- Vice President: President of the Senate and becomes President if the President can no longer do the job.
- Departments: Department heads advise the President on issues and help carry out policies.
- Independent Agencies: Help carry out policy or provide special services.

## Comprehension Check

1. Who is the head of the Executive Branch?
  - a. the King
  - b. Cabinet
  - c. the President
  - d. the Vice President
2. The members of the Executive Branch ensure that...
  - a. Laws are written.
  - b. Laws are followed.
  - c. Laws are fair.
  - d. Laws are changed.
3. If the President can no longer do his/her job, who will take over?
  - a. Vice President
  - b. Cabinet
  - c. the Independent Agencies
  - d. the First Lady
4. The President is the leader of the \_\_\_\_\_.



# The Executive Branch

## Part 2: The President's Job

The President is the head of the executive branch and plays a large role in making America's laws. His job is to approve the laws that Congress creates. When the Senate and the House approve a bill, they send it to the President. If he agrees with the law, he signs it and the law goes into effect. If the President does not like a bill, he can refuse to sign it. When he does this, it is called a veto. If the President vetoes a bill, it will most likely never become a law. Congress can override a veto, but to do so, two-thirds of the Members of Congress must vote against the President.

Why might the President veto a bill?

---

---

The president serves as the American Head of State, meaning that he meets with the leaders of other countries and can make treaties with them. The President is also the Chief of the Government. That means that he is technically the boss of every government worker.

Also, the President is the official head of the U.S. military. He can authorize the use of troops overseas without declaring war. To officially declare war, though, he must get the approval of the Congress.

The President and the Vice-President are the only officials chosen by the entire country. Not just anyone can be President, though. In order to be elected, one must be at least 35 years old. Also, each candidate must be a natural-born U.S. citizen and have lived in the U.S. for at least 14 years. When elected, the President serves a term of four years. The most one President can serve is two terms, for a total of eight years.

1. What will the President do if he dislikes or disagrees with a bill?
  - a. Throw away the bill.
  - b. Veto the bill.
  - c. Ask for a new bill.
2. How are the President and Vice President selected?
  - a. Citizens vote for them.
  - b. Congress appoints them.
  - c. They are part of the royal family.
  - d. Citizens randomly choose them.



# The Executive Branch

## Part 3: The Cabinet

Do you have friends that you turn to for advice? When the President wants advice he asks a group of people called the Cabinet. The purpose of the Cabinet is to advise the President. They are the President's closest and most trusted advisors. The Cabinet includes the Vice President, the heads of 15 executive branch departments, and other Government officials chosen by the President. The Cabinet meets at least once a week to discuss matters that affect the United States. The 14 Secretaries from the executive departments and the Attorney General are nominated by the President, and they must be approved by a majority of the Senate. Nominees cannot be a member of Congress or hold any other elected office. Executive department Secretaries and the Attorney General serve as long as the President is in office.

1. What is the job of the Cabinet?
  - a. To write laws
  - b. To veto laws
  - c. To select the President
  - d. To advise the President

## The Department Agencies

- Dept. of Agriculture
- Dept. of Education
- Dept. of Commerce
- Dept. of Defense
- Dept. of Energy
- Dept. of Health & Human Services
- Dept. of Homeland Security
- Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
- Dept. of the Interior
- Dept. of Justice
- Dept. of Labor
- Dept. of State
- Dept. of Transportation
- Dept. of the Treasury
- Dept. of Veterans Affairs



Which Department Agency would you be most interested in working with? Why?

---

---

---

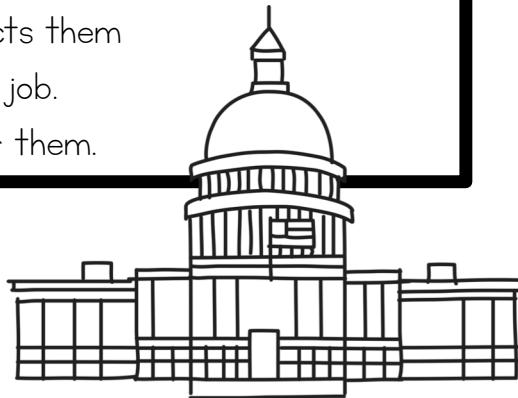
---

# The Legislative Branch

## Part I: The Basics of the Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of government is called Congress. Congress has two groups. Those groups are called the Senate and the House of Representatives. Americans vote for the people that they want to be members of Congress. Congress holds their meetings at the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The main job of Congress is to make laws.

1. What is the main job of Congress?
  - a. To select the President
  - b. To make laws
  - c. To ensure that people follow laws
  
2. How are members of Congress chosen?
  - a. The President selects them
  - b. They apply for the job.
  - c. Americans vote for them.



The main job of Congress is to make laws. Laws tell Americans what they can do and what they cannot do. Some laws protect us from crimes. Some laws are about money and taxes. Other laws protect our health. Congress works together to create ideas for new laws and make changes to old laws. These ideas are called bills. When Congress meets, they discuss bills. Many times members do not agree, because they have different ideas about what a bill should say. When the majority of the senators and a majority of the representatives agree, they send the bill to the President. When the President agrees with the bill, he signs it. He vetoes the bill if he does not agree with it. Sometimes it takes bills only a few days to become a law, but laws take a few years to make.

T or F: All bills become laws.

T or F: The President makes the laws.

T or F: A bill is an idea for a law.

T or F: Laws keep citizens safe and America orderly.

# The Legislative Branch

## Part 2: The Senate

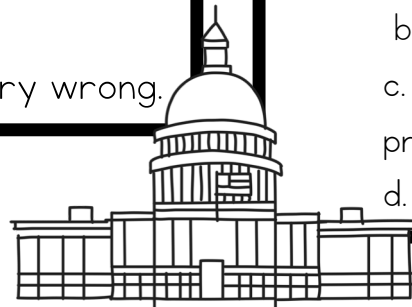
Each of the 50 states sends 2 people to the Senate, so there are a total of 100 senators. This means that each state has equal representation in the Senate.

Each senator serves a term of 6 years. When their 6-year term is over, the people from that state may choose to elect a new senator or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a senator can serve.

Senators must be at least 30 years old, be a U.S. citizen for the past 9 years, and live in the state that they represent. The Senate has special jobs that only it can do. It can say yes or no to any treaties that the President makes. Senate can say yes or no to any of the people that the President recommends for jobs. Also, Senate can hold a trial for a government official who does something very wrong.

## Comprehension Check

1. Every state has \_\_\_\_\_ Senators.
  - a. 4
  - b. 3
  - c. 2
  - d. 1
2. T or F: Senators can serve an unlimited number of terms of office.
3. How long is a Senator's term?
  - a. 1 year
  - b. 6 years
  - c. 2 years
  - d. 10 years
4. Which is not a job of a Senator?
  - a. Approving treaties made by the president.
  - b. Holding trials for officials who behave poorly.
  - c. Approving those appointed to jobs by the president.
  - d. Holding trials for those who break the law.



# The Legislative Branch

## Part 3: House of Representatives

In the House of Representatives, representation is based on the number of people living in each state. There are a total of 435 representatives in the House. Each member represents an area of the state, known as a congressional district. The number of representatives is based on the number of districts in a state. Therefore, states with larger populations have more representation than states with smaller populations. Each state has at least one congressional district and therefore one representative in the House. Representatives must be at least 25 years old, a citizen of the U.S. for the past 7 years, and live in the state that they represent.

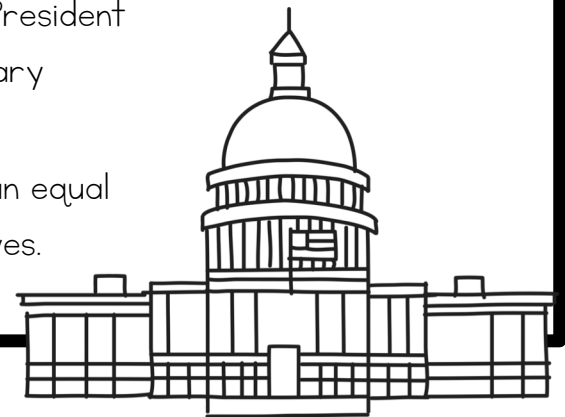
Each representative serves a term of 2 years. When the term is over, people from that state may choose to elect a new representative or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a representative can serve.

The House has special jobs that only it can do. It can start laws that make people pay taxes. The House can also decide if a government official should be put on trial before the Senate if she/he commits a crime against the country.

## Comprehension Check

- How many Representatives are in Congress?
  - 1,000
  - 500
  - 375
  - 435
- How long is a Representative's term of office?
  - 1 year
  - 2 years
  - 5 years
  - 6 years
- Which is a job of the House?
  - Hold trials for criminals
  - Write bills about taxes
  - Choose the President
  - Run the military

T or F: All states have an equal number of Representatives.



# The Judicial Branch

## Part I: The Basics of the Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch is made up of the nation's court system. Courts decide the meaning of laws, how they are applied, and whether they break the rules of the United States Constitution. The highest court in the United States is called the Supreme Court. It is located in Washington, D.C. Each state and county has its own court system. Each county has its own courthouse.

The Supreme Court is held in the Supreme Courthouse in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Courthouse is a national landmark for the United States. The Supreme Court Police watch over the building and the people who work there. In addition to the courtrooms and conference rooms, the Supreme Courthouse has its own dining room, library, and gym.

## Comprehension Check

1. Where is the Supreme Courthouse located?
  - a. Washington, DC
  - b. New York City
  - c. Philadelphia,, Pennsylvania
  - d. Los Angeles, California
2. What is the Judicial Branch made up of?
  - a. members of Congress
  - b. the nation's Court system
  - c. the President & Vice President
  - d. citizens
3. Which is not a job of the Courts?
  - a. Deciding how laws are applied
  - b. Deciding the meaning of laws
  - c. Writing new laws
  - d. Deciding if laws have been broken





# The Judicial Branch

## Part 2: The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. The Supreme Court hears cases that have made their way through the court system, but of the more than 7,500 cases that are sent to the Supreme Court each year, only about 80 to 100 cases are actually accepted. Once the Supreme Court makes a decision, it can only be changed by another Supreme Court decision or by amending (changing) the Constitution. This is a very important power that can affect the lives of a lot of people. Also, since the main power of the Supreme Court is to decide cases that challenge the Constitution, the Court must decide if the case they receive really challenges the Constitution.

The Supreme Court is made up of nine Justices. One of these is the Chief Justice. They are appointed by the President and must be approved by the Senate. Justices have their jobs for life, unless they resign, retire, or are impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate. There are no requirements in order to be appointed a Justice, but all have been trained to be lawyers. Many Justices served as members of Congress, governors, or members of the President's Cabinet.

## Comprehension Check

T or F: The Supreme Court hears all cases that are brought to them.

T or F: The President is a Supreme Court Justice.

- How many Supreme Court Justices are there?
  - 10
  - 9
  - 8
  - 7
- What document does the Court system use a guide?
  - the Constitution
  - A voting ballot
  - the Bible
  - the Declaration of Independence



# The Executive Branch

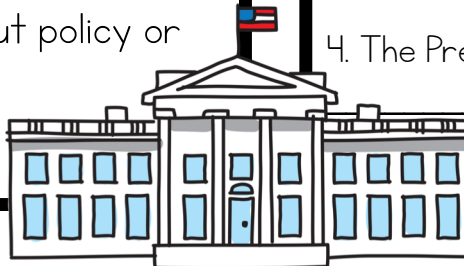
## Part I: The Job of the Executive Branch

The executive branch of Government ensures that the laws of the United States are followed. The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of government. This branch is very large, so the President gets help from the Vice President, department heads (Cabinet members), and heads of independent agencies.

- President: Leader of the country and commands the military.
- Vice President: President of the Senate and becomes President if the President can no longer do the job.
- Departments: Department heads advise the President on issues and help carry out policies.
- Independent Agencies: Help carry out policy or provide special services.

## Comprehension Check

1. Who is the head of the Executive Branch?
  - a. the King
  - b. Cabinet
  - c. the President
  - d. the Vice President
2. The members of the Executive Branch ensure that...
  - a. Laws are written.
  - b. Laws are followed.
  - c. Laws are fair.
  - d. Laws are changed.
3. If the President can no longer do his/her job, who will take over?
  - a. Vice President
  - b. Cabinet
  - c. the Independent Agencies
  - d. the First Lady
4. The President is the leader of the \_\_\_\_\_.



# The Executive Branch

## Part 2: The President's Job

The President is the head of the executive branch and plays a large role in making America's laws. His job is to approve the laws that Congress creates. When the Senate and the House approve a bill, they send it to the President. If he agrees with the law, he signs it and the law goes into effect. If the President does not like a bill, he can refuse to sign it. When he does this, it is called a veto. If the President vetoes a bill, it will most likely never become a law. Congress can override a veto, but to do so, two-thirds of the Members of Congress must vote against the President.

Why might the President veto a bill?

---

---

---

The president serves as the American Head of State, meaning that he meets with the leaders of other countries and can make treaties with them. The President is also the Chief of the Government. That means that he is technically the boss of every government worker.

Also, the President is the official head of the U.S. military. He can authorize the use of troops overseas without declaring war. To officially declare war, though, he must get the approval of the Congress.

The President and the Vice-President are the only officials chosen by the entire country. Not just anyone can be President, though. In order to be elected, one must be at least 35 years old. Also, each candidate must be a natural-born U.S. citizen and have lived in the U.S. for at least 14 years. When elected, the President serves a term of four years. The most one President can serve is two terms, for a total of eight years.

1. What will the President do if he dislikes or disagrees with a bill?
  - a. Throw away the bill.
  - b. Veto the bill.
  - c. Ask for a new bill.
2. How are the President and Vice President selected?
  - a. Citizens vote for them.
  - b. Congress appoints them.
  - c. They are part of the royal family.
  - d. Citizens randomly choose them.



# The Executive Branch

## Part 3: The Cabinet

Do you have friends that you turn to for advice? When the President wants advice he asks a group of people called the Cabinet. The purpose of the Cabinet is to advise the President. They are the President's closest and most trusted advisors. The Cabinet includes the Vice President, the heads of 15 executive branch departments, and other Government officials chosen by the President. The Cabinet meets at least once a week to discuss matters that affect the United States. The 14 Secretaries from the executive departments and the Attorney General are nominated by the President, and they must be approved by a majority of the Senate. Nominees cannot be a member of Congress or hold any other elected office. Executive department Secretaries and the Attorney General serve as long as the President is in office.

1. What is the job of the Cabinet?
  - a. To write laws
  - b. To veto laws
  - c. To select the President
  - d. To advise the President

## The Department Agencies

- Dept. of Agriculture
- Dept. of Education
- Dept. of Commerce
- Dept. of Defense
- Dept. of Energy
- Dept. of Health & Human Services
- Dept. of Homeland Security
- Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
- Dept. of the Interior
- Dept. of Justice
- Dept. of Labor
- Dept. of State
- Dept. of Transportation
- Dept. of the Treasury
- Dept. of Veterans Affairs



Which Department Agency would you be most interested in working with? Why?

---

---

---

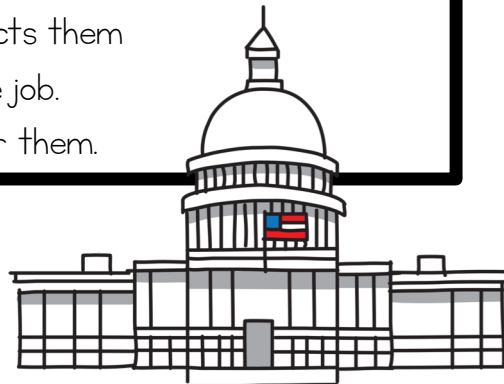
---

# The Legislative Branch

## Part I: The Basics of the Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of government is called Congress. Congress has two groups. Those groups are called the Senate and the House of Representatives. Americans vote for the people that they want to be members of Congress. Congress holds their meetings at the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The main job of Congress is to make laws.

1. What is the main job of Congress?
  - a. To select the President
  - b. To make laws
  - c. To ensure that people follow laws
  
2. How are members of Congress chosen?
  - a. The President selects them
  - b. They apply for the job.
  - c. Americans vote for them.



The main job of Congress is to make laws. Laws tell Americans what they can do and what they cannot do. Some laws protect us from crimes. Some laws are about money and taxes. Other laws protect our health. Congress works together to create ideas for new laws and make changes to old laws. These ideas are called bills. When Congress meets, they discuss bills. Many times members do not agree, because they have different ideas about what a bill should say. When the majority of the senators and a majority of the representatives agree, they send the bill to the President. When the President agrees with the bill, he signs it. He vetoes the bill if he does not agree with it. Sometimes it takes bills only a few days to become a law, but laws take a few years to make.

T or F: All bills become laws.

T or F: The President makes the laws.

T or F: A bill is an idea for a law.

T or F: Laws keep citizens safe and America orderly.

# The Legislative Branch

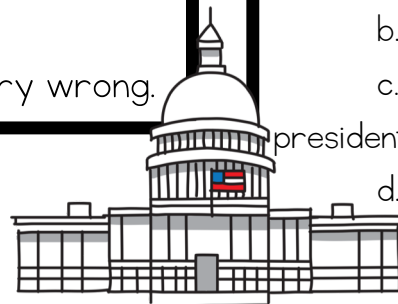
## Part 2: The Senate

Each of the 50 states sends 2 people to the Senate, so there are a total of 100 senators. This means that each state has equal representation in the Senate. Each senator serves a term of 6 years. When their 6-year term is over, the people from that state may choose to elect a new senator or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a senator can serve.

Senators must be at least 30 years old, be a U.S. citizen for the past 9 years, and live in the state that they represent. The Senate has special jobs that only it can do. It can say yes or no to any treaties that the President makes. Senate can say yes or no to any of the people that the President recommends for jobs. Also, Senate can hold a trial for a government official who does something very wrong.

## Comprehension Check

- Every state has \_\_\_\_\_ Senators.
  - 4
  - 3
  - 2
  - 1
- T or F: Senators can serve an unlimited number of terms of office.
- How long is a Senator's term?
  - 1 year
  - 6 years
  - 2 years
  - 10 years
- Which is not a job of a Senator?
  - Approving treaties made by the president.
  - Holding trials for officials who behave poorly.
  - Approving those appointed to jobs by the president.
  - Holding trials for those who break the law.



# The Legislative Branch

## Part 3: House of Representatives

In the House of Representatives, representation is based on the number of people living in each state. There are a total of 435 representatives in the House. Each member represents an area of the state, known as a congressional district. The number of representatives is based on the number of districts in a state. Therefore, states with larger populations have more representation than states with smaller populations. Each state has at least one congressional district and therefore one representative in the House. Representatives must be at least 25 years old, a citizen of the U.S. for the past 7 years, and live in the state that they represent.

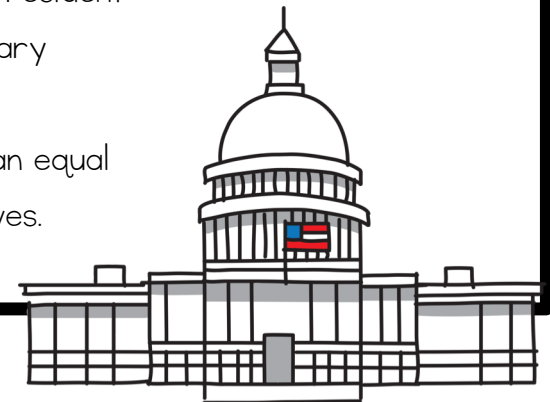
Each representative serves a term of 2 years. When the term is over, people from that state may choose to elect a new representative or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a representative can serve.

The House has special jobs that only it can do. It can start laws that make people pay taxes. The House can also decide if a government official should be put on trial before the Senate if she/he commits a crime against the country.

## Comprehension Check

1. How many Representatives are in Congress?
  - a. 1,000
  - b. 500
  - c. 375
  - d. 435
2. How long is a Representative's term of office?
  - a. 1 year
  - b. 2 years
  - c. 5 years
  - d. 6 years
3. Which is a job of the House?
  - a. Hold trials for criminals
  - b. Write bills about taxes
  - c. Choose the President
  - d. Run the military

T or F: All states have an equal number of Representatives.



# The Judicial Branch

## Part I: The Basics of the Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch is made up of the nation's court system. Courts decide the meaning of laws, how they are applied, and whether they break the rules of the United States Constitution. The highest court in the United States is called the Supreme Court. It is located in Washington, D.C. Each state and county has its own court system. Each county has its own courthouse.

The Supreme Court is held in the Supreme Courthouse in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Courthouse is a national landmark for the United States. The Supreme Court Police watch over the building and the people who work there. In addition to the courtrooms and conference rooms, the Supreme Courthouse has its own dining room, library, and gym.

## Comprehension Check

1. Where is the Supreme Courthouse located?
  - a. Washington, DC
  - b. New York City
  - c. Philadelphia,, Pennsylvania
  - d. Los Angeles, California
2. What is the Judicial Branch made up of?
  - a. members of Congress
  - b. the nation's Court system
  - c. the President & Vice President
  - d. citizens
3. Which is not a job of the Courts?
  - a. Deciding how laws are applied
  - b. Deciding the meaning of laws
  - c. Writing new laws
  - d. Deciding if laws have been broken





# The Judicial Branch

## Part 2: The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. The Supreme Court hears cases that have made their way through the court system, but of the more than 7,500 cases that are sent to the Supreme Court each year, only about 80 to 100 cases are actually accepted. Once the Supreme Court makes a decision, it can only be changed by another Supreme Court decision or by amending (changing) the Constitution. This is a very important power that can affect the lives of a lot of people. Also, since the main power of the Supreme Court is to decide cases that challenge the Constitution, the Court must decide if the case they receive really challenges the Constitution.

The Supreme Court is made up of nine Justices. One of these is the Chief Justice. They are appointed by the President and must be approved by the Senate. Justices have their jobs for life, unless they resign, retire, or are impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate. There are no requirements in order to be appointed a Justice, but all have been trained to be lawyers. Many Justices served as members of Congress, governors, or members of the President's Cabinet.

## Comprehension Check

T or F: The Supreme Court hears all cases that are brought to them.

T or F: The President is a Supreme Court Justice.

1. How many Supreme Court Justices are there?
  - a. 10
  - b. 9
  - c. 8
  - d. 7
2. What document does the Court system use a guide?
  - a. the Constitution
  - b. A voting ballot
  - c. the Bible
  - d. the Declaration of Independence



# The Executive Branch-*answer key*

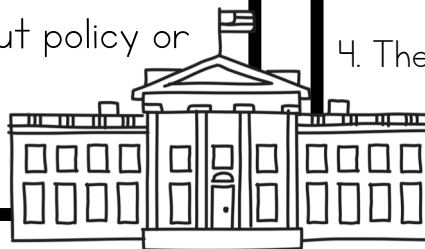
## Part I: The Job of the Executive Branch

The executive branch of Government ensures that the laws of the United States are followed. The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of government. This branch is very large, so the President gets help from the Vice President, department heads (Cabinet members), and heads of independent agencies.

- President: Leader of the country and commands the military.
- Vice President: President of the Senate and becomes President if the President can no longer do the job.
- Departments: Department heads advise the President on issues and help carry out policies.
- Independent Agencies: Help carry out policy or provide special services.

## Comprehension Check

1. Who is the head of the Executive Branch?
  - a. the King
  - b. Cabinet
  - c. the President
  - d. the Vice President
2. The members of the Executive Branch ensure that...
  - a. Laws are written.
  - b. Laws are followed.
  - c. Laws are fair.
  - d. Laws are changed.
3. If the President can no longer do his/her job, who will take over?
  - a. Vice President
  - b. Cabinet
  - c. the Independent Agencies
  - d. the First Lady
4. The President is the leader of the **Executive Branch**.



# The Executive Branch-answer key

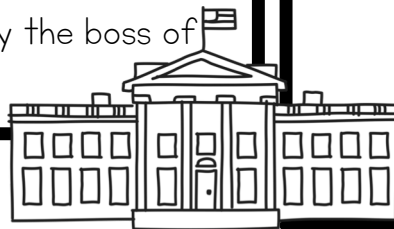
## Part 2: The President's Job

The President is the head of the executive branch and plays a large role in making America's laws. His job is to approve the laws that Congress creates. When the Senate and the House approve a bill, they send it to the President. If he agrees with the law, he signs it and the law goes into effect. If the President does not like a bill, he can refuse to sign it. When he does this, it is called a veto. If the President vetoes a bill, it will most likely never become a law. Congress can override a veto, but to do so, two-thirds of the Members of Congress must vote against the President.

Why might the President veto a bill?

**It may put the United States in danger. It may not agree with Constitution. It may be too costly for the United States.**

The president serves as the American Head of State, meaning that he meets with the leaders of other countries and can make treaties with them. The President is also the Chief of the Government. That means that he is technically the boss of every government worker.



Also, the President is the official head of the U.S. military. He can authorize the use of troops overseas without declaring war. To officially declare war, though, he must get the approval of the Congress.

The President and the Vice-President are the only officials chosen by the entire country. Not just anyone can be President, though. In order to be elected, one must be at least 35 years old. Also, each candidate must be a natural-born U.S. citizen and have lived in the U.S. for at least 14 years. When elected, the President serves a term of four years. The most one President can serve is two terms, for a total of eight years.

1. What will the President do if he dislikes or disagrees with a bill?
  - a. Throw away the bill.
  - b. Veto the bill.
  - c. Ask for a new bill.
2. How are the President and Vice President selected?
  - a. Citizens vote for them.
  - b. Congress appoints them.
  - c. They are part of the royal family.
  - d. Citizens randomly choose them.

# The Executive Branch-*answer key*

## Part 3: The Cabinet

Do you have friends that you turn to for advice? When the President wants advice he asks a group of people called the Cabinet. The purpose of the Cabinet is to advise the President. They are the President's closest and most trusted advisors. The Cabinet includes the Vice President, the heads of 15 executive branch departments, and other Government officials chosen by the President. The Cabinet meets at least once a week to discuss matters that affect the United States. The 14 Secretaries from the executive departments and the Attorney General are nominated by the President, and they must be approved by a majority of the Senate. Nominees cannot be a member of Congress or hold any other elected office. Executive department Secretaries and the Attorney General serve as long as the President is in office.

1. What is the job of the Cabinet?
- To write laws
  - To veto laws
  - To select the President
  - To advise the President**

## The Department Agencies

- Dept. of Agriculture
- Dept. of Education
- Dept. of Commerce
- Dept. of Defense
- Dept. of Energy
- Dept. of Health & Human Services
- Dept. of Homeland Security
- Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
- Dept. of the Interior
- Dept. of Justice
- Dept. of Labor
- Dept. of State
- Dept. of Transportation
- Dept. of the Treasury
- Dept. of Veterans Affairs



Which Department Agency would you be most interested in working with? Why?

**Various answers are acceptable.**

---

---

---

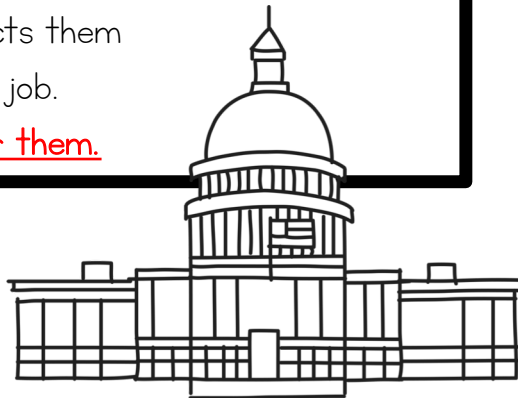
---

# The Legislative Branch-answer key

## Part I: The Basics of the Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of government is called Congress. Congress has two groups. Those groups are called the Senate and the House of Representatives. Americans vote for the people that they want to be members of Congress. Congress holds their meetings at the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The main job of Congress is to make laws.

1. What is the main job of Congress?
  - a. To select the President
  - b. To make laws
  - c. To ensure that people follow laws
  
2. How are members of Congress chosen?
  - a. The President selects them
  - b. They apply for the job.
  - c. Americans vote for them.



The main job of Congress is to make laws. Laws tell Americans what they can do and what they cannot do. Some laws protect us from crimes. Some laws are about money and taxes. Other laws protect our health. Congress works together to create ideas for new laws and make changes to old laws. These ideas are called bills. When Congress meets, they discuss bills. Many times members do not agree, because they have different ideas about what a bill should say. When the majority of the senators and a majority of the representatives agree, they send the bill to the President. When the President agrees with the bill, he signs it. He vetoes the bill if he does not agree with it. Sometimes it takes bills only a few days to become a law, but laws take a few years to make.

T or F: All bills become laws.

T or F: The President makes the laws.

I or F: A bill is an idea for a law.

I or F: Laws keep citizens safe and America orderly.

# The Legislative Branch-*answer key*

## Part 2: The Senate

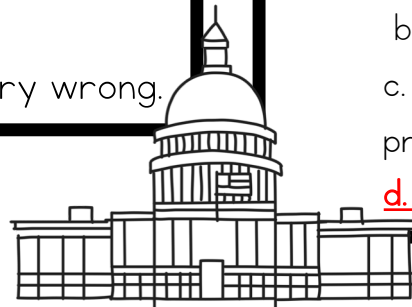
Each of the 50 states sends 2 people to the Senate, so there are a total of 100 senators. This means that each state has equal representation in the Senate.

Each senator serves a term of 6 years. When their 6-year term is over, the people from that state may choose to elect a new senator or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a senator can serve.

Senators must be at least 30 years old, be a U.S. citizen for the past 9 years, and live in the state that they represent. The Senate has special jobs that only it can do. It can say yes or no to any treaties that the President makes. Senate can say yes or no to any of the people that the President recommends for jobs. Also, Senate can hold a trial for a government official who does something very wrong.

## Comprehension Check

- Every state has \_\_\_\_\_ Senators.
  - 4
  - 3
  - 2
  - 1
- I or F: Senators can serve an unlimited number of terms of office.
- How long is a Senator's term?
  - 1 year
  - 6 years
  - 2 years
  - 10 years
- Which is not a job of a Senator?
  - Approving treaties made by the president.
  - Holding trials for officials who behave poorly.
  - Approving those appointed to jobs by the president.
  - Holding trials for those who break the law.



# The Legislative Branch-answer key

## Part 3: House of Representatives

In the House of Representatives, representation is based on the number of people living in each state. There are a total of 435 representatives in the House. Each member represents an area of the state, known as a congressional district. The number of representatives is based on the number of districts in a state. Therefore, states with larger populations have more representation than states with smaller populations. Each state has at least one congressional district and therefore one representative in the House. Representatives must be at least 25 years old, a citizen of the U.S. for the past 7 years, and live in the state that they represent.

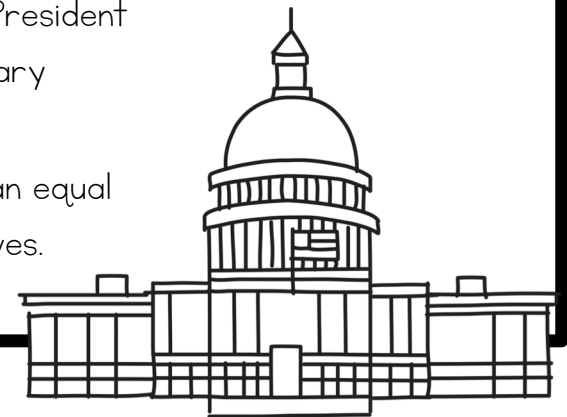
Each representative serves a term of 2 years. When the term is over, people from that state may choose to elect a new representative or keep the same one. There is no limit on the number of terms a representative can serve.

The House has special jobs that only it can do. It can start laws that make people pay taxes. The House can also decide if a government official should be put on trial before the Senate if she/he commits a crime against the country.

## Comprehension Check

- How many Representatives are in Congress?
  - 1,000
  - 500
  - 375
  - 435
- How long is a Representative's term of office?
  - 1 year
  - 2 years
  - 5 years
  - 6 years
- Which is a job of the House?
  - Hold trials for criminals
  - Write bills about taxes
  - Choose the President
  - Run the military

T or F: All states have an equal number of Representatives.



# The Judicial Branch-answer key

## Part I: The Basics of the Judicial Branch

The Judicial Branch is made up of the nation's court system. Courts decide the meaning of laws, how they are applied, and whether they break the rules of the United States Constitution. The highest court in the United States is called the Supreme Court. It is located in Washington, D.C. Each state and county has its own court system. Each county has its own courthouse.

The Supreme Court is held in the Supreme Courthouse in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Courthouse is a national landmark for the United States. The Supreme Court Police watch over the building and the people who work there. In addition to the courtrooms and conference rooms, the Supreme Courthouse has its own dining room, library, and gym.

## Comprehension Check

1. Where is the Supreme Courthouse located?
  - a. Washington, DC
  - b. New York City
  - c. Philadelphia,, Pennsylvania
  - d. Los Angeles, California
2. What is the Judicial Branch made up of?
  - a. members of Congress
  - b. the nation's Court system
  - c. the President & Vice President
  - d. citizens
3. Which is not a job of the Courts?
  - a. Deciding how laws are applied
  - b. Deciding the meaning of laws
  - c. Writing new laws
  - d. Deciding if laws have been broken





# The Judicial Branch-answer key

## Part 2: The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. The Supreme Court hears cases that have made their way through the court system, but of the more than 7,500 cases that are sent to the Supreme Court each year, only about 80 to 100 cases are actually accepted. Once the Supreme Court makes a decision, it can only be changed by another Supreme Court decision or by amending (changing) the Constitution. This is a very important power that can affect the lives of a lot of people. Also, since the main power of the Supreme Court is to decide cases that challenge the Constitution, the Court must decide if the case they receive really challenges the Constitution.

The Supreme Court is made up of nine Justices. One of these is the Chief Justice. They are appointed by the President and must be approved by the Senate. Justices have their jobs for life, unless they resign, retire, or are impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate. There are no requirements in order to be appointed a Justice, but all have been trained to be lawyers. Many Justices served as members of Congress, governors, or members of the President's Cabinet.

## Comprehension Check

T or **F**: The Supreme Court hears all cases that are brought to them.

T or **F**: The President is a Supreme Court Justice.

- How many Supreme Court Justices are there?
  - 10
  - 9**
  - 8
  - 7
- What document does the Court system use a guide?
  - a. the Constitution**
  - A voting ballot
  - the Bible
  - the Declaration of Independence



# THANK YOU

*for downloading!*

I truly appreciate your business! I hope that you enjoy this product and find it useful. If you love it, please leave feedback to earn TPT credits. I love hearing your feedback! If you don't love it, please email me so that I can make it right! Please remember that I spend a lot of time and work on my products, and that each page of this download is copyrighted. As always, please respect a fellow teacher and know that this document, both digitally and printed, is for one classroom only. You may not share with your colleagues or claim any part of it as your own. You may blog or post on social media about it, but please give me credit by linking back to my TPT store or blog.

Thanks again for choosing my work! - Lauren Maiorino [teachinginstripes@gmail.com](mailto:teachinginstripes@gmail.com)



# Clip Art Credits

Work from all of these excellent artists is used within my products. Check them out!

