

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Branches of Government

The Founding Fathers, who were the framers of the Constitution, wanted a government that ensured that any one person did not have too much power, authority, or control. After having experienced the rule of the British king, they felt that having one person with so much power was a bad system. They thought that a strong centralized government was needed, but they also wanted to have a balance of power.

As a result, the Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution, which provided for a separation of power. This provided for three separate branches of government. Each branch has its own function and responsibilities, but they all work together to make the country run smoothly. These branches work together to ensure that the rights of the people are not ignored. This creates the balance necessary for a solid government.

A branch of government may use its power to check the power of one of the other branches of government. This is called a system of checks and balances. Checks and balances means that each branch of government has limits because each branch has the right to amend the acts of the other branches.

The three branches of the United States' government are the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judicial branch. Each branch has its own function, and all three branches are equally important to government.

The legislative branch of government is made up of Congress and government agencies that provide assistance and support to Congress (like the Library of Congress). Article One of the Constitution established this branch of government and gave Congress the power to make laws. Congress has two parts, the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The executive branch of government ensures that the laws are obeyed. The head of the executive branch of government is the President of the United States. This branch of government is large and includes the Vice President, Cabinet members, and the heads of independent agencies.

The judicial branch of government is made up of the court system. The highest court in the United States is the Supreme Court. Article Three of the Constitution established the Supreme Court. All other federal courts were created by Congress. The courts are important because they make decisions about the meaning of laws and how they are applied. They also determine if laws break the rules of the Constitution.

These three branches of government are separate, but they work together to ensure that there is a balance of power in the United States. This means that power cannot be abused by any one branch, because the other branches are there to keep watch through the system of checks and balances that we mentioned earlier.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Branches of Government Questions

### Fill In:

1. The highest court in the United States is called: \_\_\_\_\_. All other courts were created by \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ means that each branch of government has limits because each branch has the right to amend the acts of the other branches.
3. The three branches of government are:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. This document provided for the separation of power in government: \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The three branches of government work together to ensure that the \_\_\_\_\_ of the people are not ignored.
6. Article Three of the Constitution provided for which branch of the government: \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Article Three of the Constitution provided for which branch of the government: \_\_\_\_\_.
8. This branch of government makes decisions about the meaning of laws and how they are applied. They also determine if laws break the rules of the Constitution: \_\_\_\_\_.

### True or False:

- \_\_\_ 8. The three branches of government are separate, but they work together to ensure that there is a balance of power in the United States.
- \_\_\_ 9. Congress is the head of the executive branch of government.
- \_\_\_ 10. Congress has two parts - the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- \_\_\_ 11. A branch of government may use its power to check the power of one of the other branches of government.

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## Branches of Government Answers

### Fill In:

1. The highest court in the United States is called: the Supreme Court. All other courts were created by Congress.
2. Checks and balances means that each branch of government has limits because each branch has the right to amend the acts of the other branches.
3. The three branches of government are:  

legislative  
executive  
judicial
4. This document provided for the separation of power in government: the Constitution.
5. The three branches of government work together to ensure that the rights of the people are not ignored.
6. Article Three of the Constitution provided for which branch of the government: judicial.
7. Article Three of the Constitution provided for which branch of the government: legislative.
8. This branch of government makes decisions about the meaning of laws and how they are applied. They also determine if laws break the rules of the Constitution: judicial.

### True or False:

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