Name	Date

The Three Branches of Government

What are the Three Branches of Government?

The three branches of government are the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative branches. Our founding fathers that wrote the Constitution decided to have three branches so that there wouldn't be one person or group that had too much power. The branches of government exist at the state level and the federal level.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Branch?

The **Executive Branch** includes:

President of the United States- The citizens of the United States elect the President to be our leader and to be Commander in Chief of the military. The President must be a born citizen and have lived in the United States for at least 14 years. He or she must be at least 35 years old. A presidential term lasts 4 years.

Vice President of the United States- He is the President of the Senate. Executive Department Agencies- Leaders from these agencies advise the President about important issues. Some examples of these departments are: Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of Transportation, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Education.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the Judicial Branch?

The **Judicial Branch** includes:

The **Supreme Court**- The President picks 9 people to be Supreme Court Justices. Their power is higher than any other judge in the country. They decide if laws and other court decisions are constitutional and they also decide if parts of the Constitution should be changed. A Supreme Court Justice's term is unlimited. There are no rules on age, residency, or citizenship.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the Legislative Branch?

The **Legislative Branch** includes:

Congress- Members are elected to make laws. Congress is divided into two parts-

1. **House of Representatives**- Each state elects people to "represent" them in Congress. These representatives must live in the state he or she represents, be at least 25 years old and a citizen for the last 7 years. The larger the population the state has, the more representatives it can have. The House of Representatives vote on tax laws.

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2. **Senate**- Each state elects 2 people to the Senate. They are called Senators. A Senator must live in the state he or she represents, be at least 30 years old and a citizen for the last 9 years. The Senate looks at decisions the President has made and decides if they agree with the President. The Senate also has the power to impeach the President.

What are Checks and Balances?

Even though there are Three Branches of Government, they are not are not at all separate. Checks and Balances allow each branch to check on other braches to make sure they are doing what is constitutional.

Executive Branch- The President checks on the courts by deciding who gets to be the judges and he can also give pardons to people who committed a federal crime. The President also checks on Congress by calling special sessions, suggesting new laws, and he also has the power to veto any laws Congress has made.

Judicial Branch- The Supreme court checks on the President by making sure he doesn't make any unconstitutional acts. The Supreme Court also makes sure the Congress remains constitutional with any of their acts.

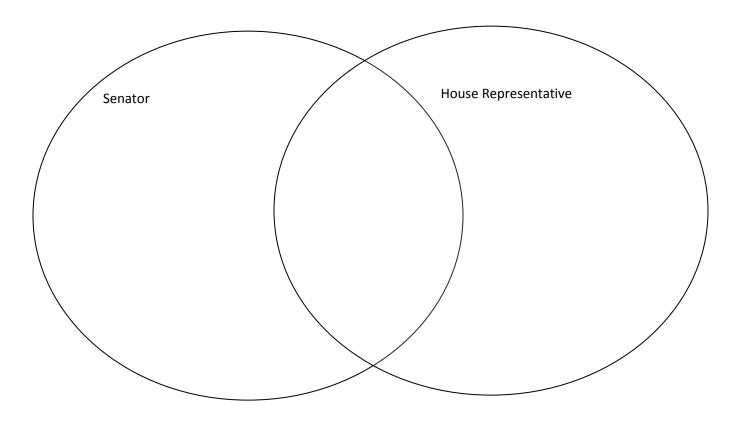
Legislative Branch- Congress can impeach the President and federal judges. Congress can also override presidential decisions.

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Questions for Reflection	
1. What is the purpose of having three branc	ches of government?
2. What branch would the governor of a stat	e belong to? Why?
3. Name two advantages to limiting terms of	f government offices:
4. Complete the chart:	

FEDERAL OFFICE TERMS AND REQUIREMENTS

	Term Limit	Minimum Age	Residency Requirements	Citizenship Rules
President				
Supreme Court Justice				
Representative				
Senator				

5. Compare and contrast a House Representative to a Senator:



Open-Response:

In what ways are the Supreme Court and Congress alike? In what ways are they different? Give two details from the text to support how they are alike. Give two details from the text to support how they are different.		

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Three Branches of Government

KEY-

- 1. The purpose for having three Branches of Government are to ensure peoples' constitutional rights are protected and that not one person or group could not have too much power or control.
- 2. The governor of a state would be a part of the executive branch on the state level because it is equivalent to the president on the federal level.
- 3. Two advantages to limiting terms (answers could vary some). Here are some possibilities: New people to office means new laws, new ideas, a different perspective or point of view on issues

4.

	Term Limit	Minimum Age	Residency Requirements	Citizenship Rules
President	4 years	35	live in United States 14 years	Natural- born citizen
Supreme Court Justice	Unlimited	None	None	None
Representative	2 years	25	Live in state in which elected	7 years
Senator	6 years	30	Live in state in which elected	9 years

5. House	Alike	Senate
Must be 25	live in state elected	Must be 30
2 year term	make laws	6 year term
Citizen 7 years	elected to office	citizen 9 years
state population effects # of representatives		state only elects 2 Senators
vote on tax laws		has power to impeach

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Possible answers for the open response-

The Supreme Court and Congress are alike:

They both do checks and balances on the Executive Branch. Examples from the text are "The Supreme court checks on the president by making sure he doesn't make any unconstitutional acts" and "Congress can also override presidential decisions."

The Supreme Court and Congress are different:

Congress makes the laws and can "impeach any of the Supreme Court Judges."

The Supreme Court decides if the laws are unconstitutional and "also makes sure the Congress remains constitutional with any of their acts."