

## 3 Branches and the Supreme Decisions

**WebQuest Description:** Strand 3:Civics/Government PO 2. Differentiate the roles and powers of the three branches of the federal government. The students will be able to differentiate between the three different branches of government and be able to tell the difference of each, while also describing how each group will have checks and balances on the other 2 branches and what they specifically are. It will answer the Essential Question: What are the major roles of the 3 branches of government, and how does each one affect our lives either directly or indirectly?

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Curriculum:** Social Studies

**Keywords:** Executive Branch Judicial Branch Legislative Branch Checks and Balances President Congress Senate House of Representatives Supreme Court

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### Introduction

What are the three major branches of Government? What are their roles? Who watches over them and makes sure that they are following the law and the Constitution? The United States has a 3 branch system with Checks and Balances in Place in order to make sure that all of the laws set down by Our Four Fathers in the United States Constitution are being upheld; too; the letter of the law. Essential Question: What are the major roles of the 3 branches of government, and how does each one affect our lives either directly or indirectly? This lesson takes into account how each of the branches were started, who is the leader of each branch, and the responsibility of each (including the checks and balances of each branch of government). It will compare each branch and provide games, writing and other activities throughout the week in order to complete this quest.

### Tasks

Upon this lesson you will be able to: 1. Explain the importance of the Executive Branch. Be able to describe its leaders, functions, and responsibilities to the United States government as well as what Checks and Balances that they may have for the other 2 branches. 2. Describe what a Bicameral legislation is. Describe why in the Legislative branch we do have a bicameral system. Describe what each part does and how a bill becomes a law. Telling what the checks and balances that they have for the other 2 branches of Government. 3. Look up the responsibilities of the United States Supreme Court. Describe the checks and balances that they provide on the other 2 branches. Do a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting all 3 branches of government. 4. Look up a major Supreme Court Case and write an essay for against the verdict. Include why or why not you would vote with the Justices or against them.

### Process

The above picture shows President Ronald Reagan with Antonin Scalia and William H. Rehnquist. Scalia was just appointed to replace Rehnquist as he was chosen to be the new Supreme Court Chief Justice. Why do you think Reagan would move Rehnquist above others, and what qualifications did Scalia have to become the new supreme court justice, and why did Reagan appoint Rehnquist to Chief Justice?

### Evaluation

The students will take their 5 page report on the Supreme Court case and present it in front of the class. They will then have to defend their decision when the other students hear what happened in the case and they will have to defend why they chose the side they did. They will present this in speech form and they will have 5-7 minutes to present their reasoning. Then there will be a question and answer session. The other major part will be the 10 question post test on the 3 major branches and what they learned on this webquest.

Category and Score	Poor	Needs Improvement	Average	Satisfactory	Score
5 paragraph essay on the Supreme Court Case	Does not have any information, or does not have the	Students has some of the facts. They do not have the 5 paragraphs written.	The Students have all of the paragraphs, but does not choose a side, and does not have all of the information needed.	The Student meets all of the requirements, has 5 paragraphs and takes a side and has all the information required to do the presentation	40%

Category and Score	Poor	Needs Improvement	Average	Satisfactory	Score
Oral Presentation	Refusal To do the speech, or reads from the paper and makes no eye contact and reads from the paper	Reads from the paper, Speaks low and can't hear or understand, No Eye contact	Reads from the paper half of the time, Makes some eye contact, voice is low and unhearable.	Great Voice control, Eye contact is constant little to no reading from the paper.	30%
Defending your choice	The student can not defend their point or decision.	The student has few facts and can not answer the questions when students have them.	The student has facts and point is taken, but they can not answer questions on why they have decided to choose the way they did.	Student has a full defense of their choices and is able to answer questions pertaining to that choice,.	30%
				Total Score	100%

## Conclusion

Look back at all of the things that we have learned in this unit. Think about what we have learned and how checks and balances are used in our government. Now take some time and think about the different ways that people you know (Friends and FAMILY) can help you check and balance your own life.

## Teacher Page

This is a quest that should take all week. It provides many different activities that can be used for differentiated instruction. It provides a pre and post test as well, as writing activities and games that are available to play, as well as extra activities such as Hangman.

### Standards

Strand 3: Civics/Government PO 2. Differentiate the roles and powers of the three branches of the federal government. The students will be able to differentiate between the three different branches of government and be able to tell the difference of each, while also describing how each group will have checks and balances on the other 2 branches and what they specifically are.

### VA. SOL

CE.10 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the judicial systems established by the Constitution of Virginia and the Constitution of the United States by

- describing the organization of the United States judicial system as consisting of state and federal courts with original and appellate jurisdiction;
- describing the exercise of judicial review;
- comparing and contrasting civil and criminal cases;
- explaining how due process protections seek to ensure justice.

CE.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the American constitutional government at the national level by

- describing the structure and powers of the national government;
- explaining the principle of separation of powers and the operation of checks and balances;

CE.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the American constitutional government at the state level by

- describing the structure and powers of the state government;
- explaining the relationship of state governments to the national government in the federal system;

CE.9 The student will demonstrate knowledge of how public policy is made at the local, state, and national levels of government

### Credits

Idiot's Guide to the Federal US Government:

Stephanie Clark: US History 1 teacher Jolliff Middle School Chesapeake Va.

Shelly Rigdon: Oscar Smith Middle School Chesapeake Va.

EED 465- Grand Canyon University Phoenix Arizona

### Other