



Summer Assignment 2022 U.S. Government and Politics (*Grade 12*)

Directions: The U.S. federal government is designed to make sure that no one person has all of the power. This Webquest follows a law from start to finish to help students learn how each of the three branches is involved.

Academic Integrity: All work should be completed independently and without the assistance of unapproved resources. Any work violating academic integrity will be subject to a “0” and any additional consequences as outlined in the Knox Academic Integrity Policy attached to this assignment.

Due Date: Your work is due the first day of your (course name) class. All late work will be subjected to a grade reduction or penalty as outlined in the course syllabus and copied below:

All major assignments not submitted on the due date will face a 10% deduction of max points per day for up to five (5) days and up to a 50% deduction.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this assignment, please contact the History Department Chair, Mrs. Mandia, at kmandia@knoxschool.org or the Dean of Academics, Mrs. Pergola, at dpergola@knoxschool.org .

Name:

Mrs. Mandia

Grade 12 U.S. GoPo

Date:

Three Branches: Laws in Action

It Starts With an Idea.

Let’s say YOU are an IDEA. But you are not just any old idea. You are an idea for a new law. You’re going to be making your way through the process of actually becoming a law that everyone has to follow! So who needs to act to make you transform from a great little idea into a big strong law? The President? A member of Congress? The U.S. Supreme Court?

Read the excerpts, follow the Webquest links and then answer the questions that follow using complete sentences; proper sentence structure; correct capitalization, spelling, grammar and punctuation:

Checks and Balances

The U.S. government was created in a way that divides the power to make decisions. Why, you ask? So no one person in the government could become all-powerful.

WebQuest Link: [Checks and Balances](#)

1. Why is this system known as “checks” and “balances”?

Three Branches

The U.S. government is divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. Each branch has specific responsibilities it must carry out. Let’s see how this works when it comes to turning you from an idea into a law!

WebQuest Link: [Three Branches](#)

2. In three sentences, list one power that is held by each branch of the U.S. government.

Agenda Setting

As it turns out, you are an idea in the head of the U.S. President. He proposes you in his yearly State of the Union address. In this speech every year, the President sets the agenda for the nation. That means he proposes new ideas just like you to be considered by Congress that year.

Pictured to the right is President Barack Obama delivering his State of the Union address in 2010.

WebQuest Link: [State of the Union Address](#)

3. When is the State of the Union address usually given? Look at the link for help.

Passing Bills

You may be a really wonderful idea in the head of the President, but only Congress has the ability to write and pass bills. And that is how our laws get made. Congress is our government's legislative branch, and it includes two parts, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Members of Congress must gain support for the ideas in a bill and make compromises so that, when it comes time to vote, enough people vote yea!

Click on the link to see a description of how bills are made and passed.

WebQuest Link: [Bills Becoming Laws](#)

4. Explain the first step a member of Congress needs to take to make a law.

Veto Power

Wait a minute, if Congress makes the laws, it must have all the power, right? Not so fast! After you – the idea – are passed as a bill, the President has a choice. He or she can approve you and sign the bill into law. Or the President can **veto** you, which means the bill is not approved.

WebQuest Link: [Presidential Veto Power](#)

5. What needs to happen to override the President's veto so that you can become a law even if you are vetoed?

The Referee

So, you are now a *real* law that everyone has to live by. But wait! Remember that all three branches have a say. Now it's the judicial branch's turn. The judicial branch doesn't review all laws, but when it does, it can make some very important decisions. Someone has said that *you* – now a law – go against the Constitution, our official rulebook! The U.S. Supreme Court will make the final decision.

There are two outcomes that can happen. The Supreme Court may uphold you as a law, and you will be carried out. Or, if the Supreme Court finds you unconstitutional, you'll be struck down. That means the process starts all over, and Congress needs to pass a new bill.

Click on the link to learn more about the Supreme Court.

WebQuest Link: [The Supreme Court](#)

6. When and how was the Supreme Court founded?