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SL 49. Branches of Government

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Instructor: _____ Level: _____ Date: _____

For media links in this activity, visit [the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Upper Level SDLAs](#). Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

Section 1: Do you know?

Let's see how much you know about the United States government by answering the following questions. Take a guess. Or search for the answers. Keep a list of words you do not know. You will use them in Section 4.



1. What is the Constitution of the United States?
2. Who makes the laws in the US?
3. What is a bill?
4. Where do bills come from?
5. Who gets to veto laws?
6. Who interprets the laws?





Section 2: Introduction to the 3 Branches of Government

Answer the questions below. Afterwards, you will watch a video to check your answers.

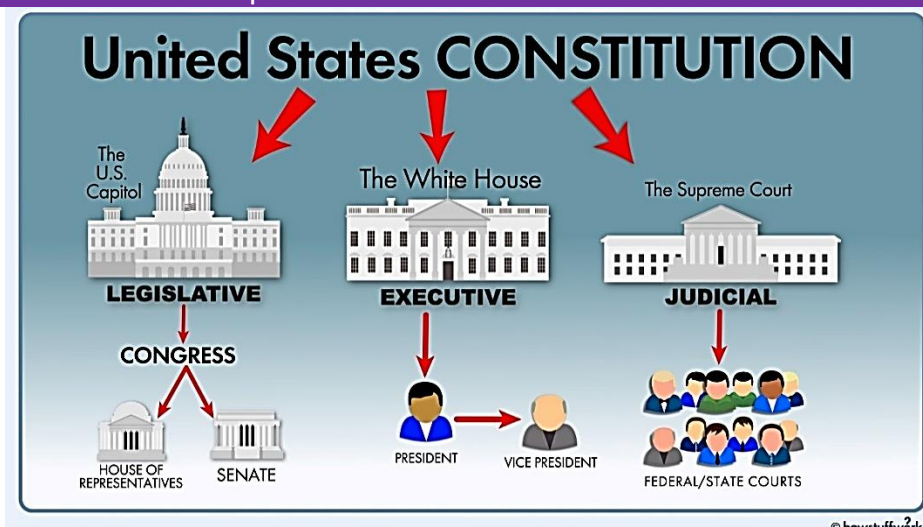
Trivia Time

1. Which branch of the United States government is responsible for making laws?
 - a. The Judicial Branch
 - b. The Legislative Branch
 - c. The Executive Branch
2. Who is the leader of the executive branch?
 - a. The President
 - b. The Supreme Court
 - c. Congress
3. Who reviews laws in the judicial branch?
 - a. Congress members
 - b. American citizens
 - c. Court judges

Now, [watch an introductory video on the 3 branches of government](#) in the United States and see if you answered correctly.



Section 3: Responsibilities of the 3 Branches of Government





The United States Constitution is the supreme law. However, these 3 branches of the U.S. government work together through a system known as **checks and balances**. One branch is able to **check** on other branches to make sure that one branch does not become more powerful than the other branches. It keeps each branch **balanced** in their power.

Below are the 3 branches with their responsibilities.

Executive Branch	Legislative Branch	Judicial Branch
Powers of the President (President, Vice President, and the Cabinet)	Powers of Congress (The House of Representatives and the Senate)	Powers of the Supreme Court (Judges to the Supreme Court)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Makes treaties (that must be approved by the Senate) — Appoints judges and ambassadors (who must be approved by the Senate) — Enforces laws — Vetoes bills — Supports legislation — Issues executive orders, rules that don't need Congress's approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Creates bills that can be voted into laws — Overrides the president's vetoes with a two-thirds majority — Confirms or rejects the president's appointments — Confirms or rejects the president's treaties — Declares war — Impeaches the president — Controls all the money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Decides if the laws passed by Congress or executive orders signed by the president are constitutional and legal — Declares acts from the president and Congress "unconstitutional" — Hears cases whose rulings in lower courts have been challenged

Section 4: Vocabulary Practice

Were there words you did not know in this SDLA? Find the definitions in the dictionary. Make a sentence or a question with the word. The LLC tutor will go over your sentences with you.

Word	Definition	Sentence
Example: treaties	An agreement made by negotiation usually between two countries or states	The treaty allowed the two countries to trade goods without restrictions.





Word	Definition	Sentence

Section 5: Speaking practice with questions

Decide which branch has authority over these tasks and decisions. These will be discussed with a tutor at your tutoring appointment.





1. Which branch makes bills?
2. Which branch makes agreements between states and countries?
3. Which branch makes sure the laws are followed?
4. Which branch interprets the laws?
5. Which branch decides how the government's money will be used?
6. Which branch can reject a bill?
7. Which branch can impeach the president?
8. Which branch can listen to court cases from lower courts?





Section 6: What Did I Learn

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this YET. 	I can do this WITH help. 	I can do this WITHOUT help. 	I can TEACH this to a classmate. 
I can name the three branches of the US government.				
I can explain "checks and balances" related to the three branches.				
I can describe the main responsibilities of each branch..				

Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

Good job!

- ☐ Now go to the [LLC Tutoring Website](#) and make an appointment with a tutor.
- ☐ Visit the [Virtual LLC](#) at the time of your appointment.




Section 7: Practice with a Tutor!

After completing the self- assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. The tutor will review your work with you. Also, **the tutor will ask you the questions in Section 5.** Be prepared to discuss those questions with the tutor.





Grading Rubric

Possible Points	Need Practice  (0-1 Point)	Good Job  (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work  (4-5 Points)
Content	Not enough information provided in responses and often does not use correct vocabulary.	Provides most important information in responses and some of the time uses correct vocabulary.	Provides all necessary information in responses and most of the time uses correct vocabulary.
Skill: Speaking	More than 6 mistakes saying words; needs guessing more than 3 times.	Not more than 5 mistakes saying words; needs guessing on 1-2 words or sentences.	Not more than 2 mistakes saying words; needs no guess about meaning.
Oral Fluency	Speaks mostly in phrases, individual words; many pauses.	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences; several pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences; a couple pauses okay.

*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on

Possible Points: _____ / 15

Tutor Comments:

☐ **Congratulations! Keep going.**

You have successfully completed this SDLA and are ready to continue to the next.

☐ **Work on this more.**

You have not yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that you complete it again.

Tutor Signature: _____

Date: _____

