

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Legislative Branch of the U.S. Government



Objective

In this lesson, you will describe how the legislative branch of the United States government works.

Why the Constitution Limits Federal Power

THE CONSTITUTION & THE CONGRESS

In the U.S. government, _____ is _____ between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, which is known as the system of _____ and balances. No one branch has unlimited powers. The framers didn't want their new _____ for government to become like the one they had recently revolted against, where a _____ was the central figure of _____.

LAX TAX COLLECTION LEADS TO WAR

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the British government had an unofficial policy called _____ where they avoided enforcing trade laws they had enacted in the North American colonies. This lax approach led to a _____ independence. Britain starting taxing the colonies and enforcing strict governmental regulations. This change eventually led to the _____ and American _____.



MARKET ECONOMY

After years of struggle, _____ government became viewed as essential for a nation's economy to thrive. With little government involvement, _____ and _____ could drive markets to be more productive and competitive. Private companies and individuals could play more of a central role than the government. This is called a _____ economy.

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Constitution describes the structure and power of Congress in Article ____ because the _____ thought people would be more comfortable with a _____ executive if they first saw legislative _____ on executive powers. Congress would be the first branch of the new government. The _____ and the _____ make up the legislative branch.

FEDERALISM AND THE SEPARATION OF POWERS

The framers wanted to make sure that the Constitution protected state _____. They created a system called _____, or the sharing of _____ between national and state governments. The _____ and _____ Amendments were added to the Constitution because the states insisted on a Bill of Rights.

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THE NINTH AMENDMENT

It _____ that though some _____ on federal power are spelled out, that _____ mean the federal government has _____ power in areas that are not spelled out. Founder James Madison indicated his goal was preventing the federal government from _____ its power and wanted the Ninth Amendment to be a brake on _____ power.

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THE TENTH AMENDMENT

It says that the _____ government is _____ to the powers that are specifically _____ in the _____. All other powers are _____ for the states and the people. Some scholars believe that the Tenth Amendment was intended to limit the power of _____. Yet the Tenth Amendment still leaves gray areas and has resulted in _____ about which rights belong to the states and which to the federal government.

Congress: Structure and Powers

THE LAWMAKING BRANCH

- The legislative branch is made up the _____ and the _____.
- These two legislative bodies form the United States _____.
- Within Congress, each house is a _____ on the other.



THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representatives	There are _____ elected members. The number of representatives from each state is based on _____.
	Members must be
	House members are elected every _____ years.

<p>The Speaker of the House</p>	<p>The _____ elect this presiding officer. The _____ of the House is _____ in succession to the presidency.</p>
<p>House Leadership</p>	<p>The House _____ leader ranks second to the Speaker and is elected by the majority party. The _____ leader is elected by the minority party and speaks for that party and its policies. _____ are elected to assist leadership on behalf of their parties.</p>
<p>Exclusive Powers</p>	<p>Only the House can initiate tax and spending bills (the “power of the purse”).</p>
	<p>Only the House can</p>
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THE SENATE

<p>Senators</p>	<p>There are ____ senators. Every state has ____ senators.</p>
	<p>Senators must be</p>
	<p>Senators are elected to _____ terms.</p>
	<p>At first, senators were elected by state _____. In 1913, the _____ Amendment was passed, which allowed for a _____ election of senators.</p>

Senate Majority Leader	
Vice President	
Senate Leadership	The Senate minority leader is the head of the _____ party. _____ assist the floor leaders and are also elected by their parties.
Exclusive Powers	Only the Senate can confirm presidential nominations to roles such as judgeships and ambassadorships.

THE POWERS OF CONGRESS

Congressional powers are expressed, inherent, or implied.

_____ powers are those that are stated in the Constitution.

_____ powers are not expressly granted in the Constitution but come from the _____ Clause, a clause in the Constitution that grants Congress the power to pass laws that are “_____ and _____” to carry out its duties.

_____ powers are those powers Congress exercises naturally as the government of a _____ country.

EXPRESSED POWERS OF CONGRESS

- raising _____
- declaring _____
- _____ money
- charging a federal income _____
- establishing _____ offices
- establishes the government's annual _____
- _____



IMPLIED POWERS OF CONGRESS

- _____ the Americans with Disabilities Act
- creating the Internal Revenue Service
- _____
- _____ tobacco and alcohol
- establishing the minimum _____ law

INHERENT POWERS OF CONGRESS

- establishing _____ relations with other countries
- regulating _____
- acquiring new _____
- controlling _____
- defending itself against _____

POWERS FORBIDDEN TO CONGRESS



The Constitution does _____ Congress from enacting certain powers.

- _____ the Writ of Habeas Corpus. A person can't be _____ for no reason or imprisoned _____ appearing before a judge.
- Passing ex post facto laws. Congress can't make an act illegal _____ it's been done.
- Issuing Bills of Attainder. Congress can't make a _____ to punish a person without a _____.

Congress: Elections, Sessions, and Committees

HOW IS CONGRESS ELECTED?

There are _____ voting members in Congress: _____ representatives and _____ senators.

The number of representatives a state has in the House depends on its _____.

The _____ a state's _____, the _____ representatives it has. Every _____ years, the Constitution requires a _____. At the end of the census, the results are used to calculate how many House seats a state gets. This is called _____.

Census results are also used to redraw district boundaries. One risk when state governments redistrict is _____ which is when political parties in power _____ voting _____ to weaken the power of votes for their opponents. The House has the power to refuse to seat a member if excessive gerrymandering is suspected.

CONGRESSIONAL SESSIONS

The Constitution requires that Congress assemble at least _____ a _____.

A meeting of one or both houses is called a session. Types of sessions include

Annual Session	
Occasional Joint Session	
Special Session	

CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Most of the work of Congress is done in committees. Committees

The most important function of committees is _____ the thousands of _____ proposed in each session. Political _____ assign newly elected Congressmembers to _____ committees after each congressional election. The _____ party controls _____ and membership.

TYPES OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committees	Select Committees	Joint Committees
permanent		like _____ committees
review and _____ most proposed _____	created for special purposes, such as investigation	made up of members from both the _____ and the _____
conduct _____	study _____	
Examples:	Example:	Example:
operate based on the rules of their chamber	don't normally draft legislation	Conduct research and make recommendations