



YONKERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

US History and Government  
Regents Review

The Three Branches  
Separation of Power  
Checks and Balances

## Separation of Powers

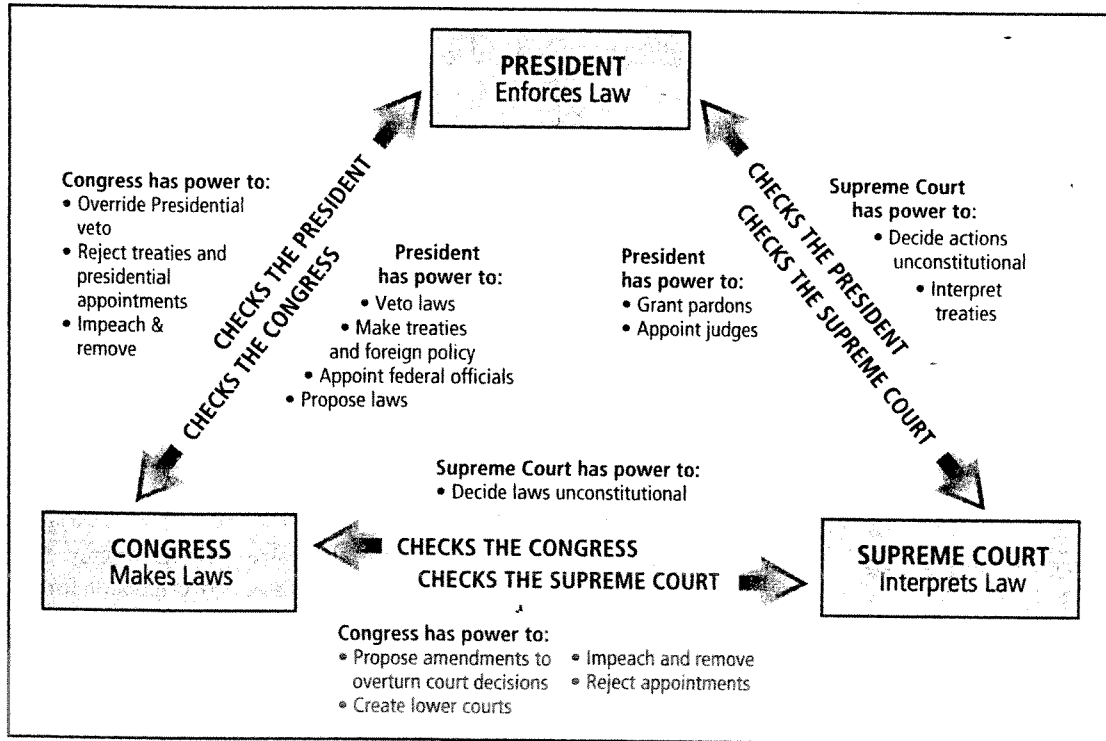
The Constitution establishes the **separation of powers**, meaning that power to govern is divided among the legislative, executive, and

judiciary branches to ensure that no single branch can dominate the government. Each branch takes its power directly from the Constitution, not from another branch.

## Checks and Balances

The system of **checks and balances** gives each branch of the national government ways to check, or control, the other branches. This prevents too much power from falling into the hands of any one part of the government.

### The Checks and Balances System



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) Which historical event *best* demonstrates the operation of checks and balances?
- 1) South Carolina seceded from the Union over the issues of slavery and States rights.
  - 2) President George Washington used the Army to suppress a tax rebellion by Pennsylvania farmers.
  - 3) The Senate approved the appointment of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court.
  - 4) President Dwight D. Eisenhower sent Federal troops to enforce the integration of public schools in Little Rock, Arkansas.
- 2) An essay examining *both* President Andrew Johnson's impeachment and President Franklin Roosevelt's plan to enlarge the Supreme Court would *most* likely focus on the
- 1) conflict between the Federal Government and the states
  - 2) operation of checks and balances in the nation's history
  - 3) modern applications of judicial review
  - 4) heritage of common law in the United States
- 3) "There can be no liberty if the same man or the same group has executive, legislative, and judicial control."
- Which political idea would the author of this statement most likely support?
- 1) States rights
  - 2) federalism
  - 3) socialism
  - 4) separation of powers
- 4) A major argument against granting the President the line-item veto was that it
- 1) encouraged Congress to be wasteful
  - 2) prevented balanced budgets
  - 3) reduced "pork barrel" spending
  - 4) violated the principle of checks and balances

- 5) **"President Roosevelt Proposes Wide Range of New Deal Programs"**  
**"Supreme Court Orders President Nixon To Release Watergate Tapes"**  
**"Congress Calls Cabinet Member To Testify"**

Which concept is *best* illustrated by these newspaper headlines?

- 1) federalism
  - 2) States rights
  - 3) the elastic clause
  - 4) separation of powers
- 6) A system of checks and balances was included in the United States Constitution because the authors were concerned about
- 1) the states having too much power
  - 2) the people having a voice in government
  - 3) one branch of government becoming too strong
  - 4) the military gaining control of the United States
- 7) Which headline *best* illustrates the system of checks and balances?
- 1) **"State Legislature Fails to Adopt Budget on Time"**
  - 2) **"Congress Votes to Reduce Income Taxes"**
  - 3) **"United States Peacekeeping Troops Sent to Bosnia"**
  - 4) **"Senate Rejects Supreme Court Nominee"**
- 8) Separation of powers and federalism are constitutional principles that
- 1) settle conflicts between state and national authorities
  - 2) increase the power of the national government and decrease the power of the states
  - 3) ensure legislative and executive equality
  - 4) establish limits on the powers of government