

Branches of Government

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The student will diagram the three branches of the U.S. government and explain the concept of checks and balances.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Poster board or large paper
- Ruler
- Markers
- Scissors
- Construction paper (3 colors)

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Cut 3 large shapes (circles or rectangles) out of construction paper, one color for each branch: Legislative, Executive, Judicial.
2. Glue or arrange the 3 shapes in a triangle on your poster board, with lines connecting each shape to the other two.
3. Inside each shape, list that branch's main job and its key part (example: Legislative — Congress, makes laws; Executive — President, enforces laws; Judicial — Courts, interprets laws).
4. On each connecting line, write one specific example of how that branch can check (limit the power of) the branch it connects to (example: the President can veto a law Congress passes).
5. Add a title: 'Checks and Balances' at the top of your poster.

QUESTIONS

1. Name the three branches of the U.S. government and their main jobs.
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2. Give one example of how one branch can check another branch's power.
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3. Why did the framers of the government create three separate branches instead of one?

4. What is the term for this system of branches limiting each other's power?
