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GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES

Volume 3: Branches of Government

- Legislative Branch
- Executive Branch
- Judicial Branch

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Introduction

About This Book

The activities provided in this booklet are created to enrich government classes. They provide hands-on activities and lessons that engage students in exploring the branches of government that are covered in all government curriculums.

This volume introduces the basic concepts of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government. These activities clarify the terms, concepts, and procedures that students learn about through class lectures and readings.

These government activities were created during the development of a reformatted government course at the high school level. The suggestions provided in textbooks and other supplemental material did not offer complete hands-on approaches sought by the course instructor. As the class was to be taught in a school utilizing block scheduling (ninety and seventy-five minute classes), lessons that kept students active and interested while demonstrating the key components of government were developed. The classroom lessons and materials were used and refined over a two-year period during which six sections of the new government course were taught.

The essential goals for each activity were to make them easy to use, to involve and engage the students, and to clarify key government concepts.

The topics covered in this booklet, and other *Government Activities* volumes, parallel general government textbooks and should be used as a supplemental aid. The activities and demonstrations clarify basic government concepts and allow students to work with material in ways that interest them.

All lessons were created with the teacher and student in mind. The purpose for each lesson is clearly stated and a specific list of materials required for each lesson is provided. Procedures are written in a step-by-step format to allow for easy implementation into a block or typical schedule format. Hints or tips are offered throughout the booklet to assist teachers in adapting lessons to fit their needs or the ability level of students. The Glossary, which concludes each booklet, defines government terms used throughout the lessons. Student handouts include all necessary instructions and directions as well as material to assist in grading. Finally, the material is organized in such a way that incorporating the lessons into an existing curriculum is easy and enjoyable.

Current research indicates that students who are actively engaged in the learning process retain information better than those who are passive participants in the

classroom. *Government Activities* was created with this concept in mind. The hands on approach to Government that this booklet offers will spark and maintain student interest. Being involved in the lessons allows students to become an active part of their own learning. Participation in these activities also provides students with an episodic memory of a classroom experience, strengthening the concepts being taught and therefore improving learning. Most importantly, when students are actively engaged, they have more fun. These activities make the study of government an enjoyable experience for everyone!

About the Author

Kathleen M. Glusick graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison with a Bachelor's degree in Broad Field Social Studies and a minor in Psychology. She completed her Master's of Education through Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She taught World Cultures, Citizenship, Sociology, Experimental Psychology, and Government during her high school teaching career. After completing her thesis, *The Impact of Brain-Compatible Physical Structures on Classroom Learning*, Peanut Publishing was created to enhance involvement in the classroom by providing teachers with student centered activities.

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LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

LESSON 1: HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

PURPOSE:

- Allow students to experience the process of law-making
- Simulate governmental procedures and processes
- Illustrate the working relationship between the Senate and the House of Representatives

MATERIALS:

- Copies of student role labels, page 2
- Copies of “Student Handout: Bill to Law Flowchart,” page 3
- Copies of Bills, page 4
- Copies of Hearing Speaker roles, page 5

PROCEDURE:

- Distribute the student handout, “Bill to Law Flowchart,” (p. 23). Discuss the general process of how a bill becomes a law.
- Explain to students that they will be given a role in simulating how a bill becomes a law. They will either be a House committee member, a Senate committee member, or a speaker for House and Senate hearings. Students who are good at speaking and improvisation may want to consider a hearing speaker role.
- Assign roles or have students choose a role. Distribute the student role labels accordingly. There are six speaker roles (three for each bill) with the remaining students being divided into four groups (2 House committees and 2 Senate committees).
- Distribute
 - a copy of Bill #1 to a House committee and a Senate Committee.
 - a copy of Bill #2 to the other House committee and the other Senate committee.
 - the hearing speaker roles to the six student speakers.
- Instruct
 - the committees to discuss the bill.
 - the speakers to review their position and prepare to speak.
- Conduct the hearings with the speakers testifying and committee members asking questions.
- Instruct committees to proceed with “markup.” They should alter the bill so they agree on the wording and intent.
- Both committees should reconvene (the speakers can now be split up as additional legislators) and one person should give a brief explanation of the bill.
- For “Floor Consideration,” take a hand count vote for each bill. If the bills pass, the House and Senate committees should meet as a Conference Committee. They should reach a compromise regarding the wording of the bills. If the bills do not pass, explain that they then die.

- After the Conference committees meet, separate again into the House and Senate and re-vote on the two bills. It is rare for a bill not to pass at this time.
- The bills should then be passed on to the teacher (the President) for action. Review the president's options with the class and rule on the bills.



HINT: This is a good time to point out democrat and republican differences. For example, how would a democrat president rule versus a republican president?

STUDENT ROLE LABELS

SPEAKER FOR HEARING – BILL #1

SPEAKER FOR HEARING – BILL #2

HOUSE COMMITTEE – BILL #1

SENATE COMMITTEE – BILL #1

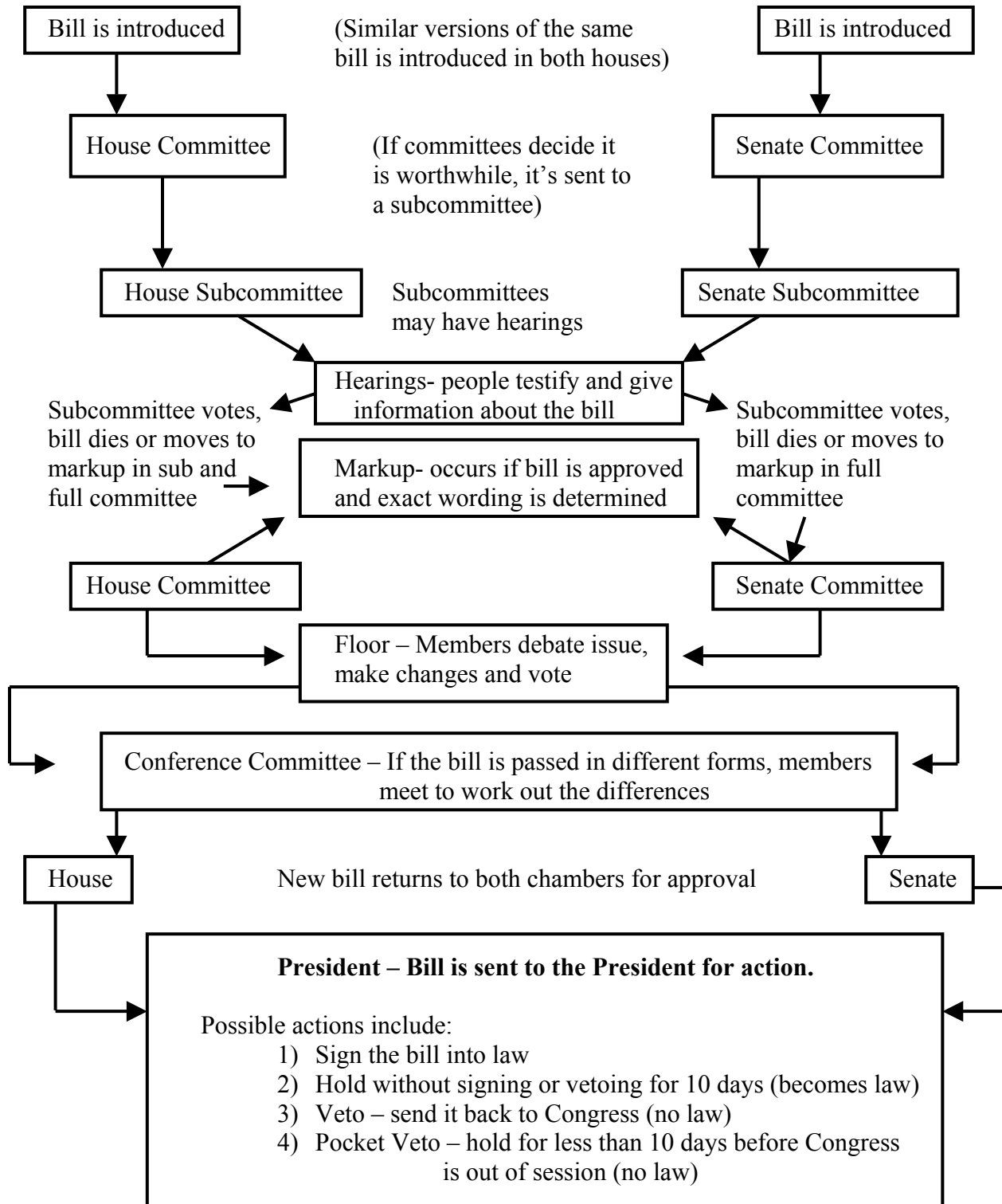
HOUSE COMMITTEE – BILL #2

SENATE COMMITTEE – BILL #2

STUDENT HANDOUT: BILL TO LAW FLOWCHART

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SENATE



Bill #1: Sexual Predator Notification

Any person convicted of two sexual assaults or any two sexual crimes against children shall be held to the standards listed below upon release from incarceration. Violation of any of the following terms shall result in a life sentence.

- The offender shall notify authorities of planned and actual residence.
- The offender's residence shall be public information to those who inquire.
- The offender's residence shall be made known to those living in a two-block radius.
- The offender's residence shall be made known to schools within a 10-mile radius.
- The offender shall commit to a sex-offender's treatment program.
- The offender shall be suspect to unannounced drop-in visits from parole officers.
- The offender shall have no unsupervised contact with children.

Bill #2: Federal Funding Allowance for High-Performing Schools

Additional funds will be made available for schools who meet the criteria listed below. If any of the criteria are not met, the school is not qualified to receive any additional funding. (Meeting *some* criteria does not mean *some* funding will be given.) The funds can be spent at the school administrator's discretion. The following criteria must be met to receive funding:

- The drop-out rate for the school must be 1% or less.
- The graduation rate must be 97% or higher.
- More than 80% of graduating seniors need to be accepted at an institution of higher learning.
- More than 50% of the faculty of the school must have Master's degrees.
- The school must have a diverse population (one race or ethnic group may make up no more than 40% of the population).
- The standardized test scores must fall in the top 20% of state scores.

Speakers for the hearing on Bill #1**A. Judge Thorton**

You have been sentencing criminals for 25 years. You have seen many repeat offenders – sexual offenders – during your time on the bench. You are disgusted by the fact that people serve time and then are out in the community with no forewarning to the people of that neighborhood. Many times they offend again and you could do nothing to warn the people that they may be in danger.

B. Maria Contrasa

Your daughter was assaulted by a convicted sexual offender who was out on parole. You had no idea that the man in the unit next to yours was once in prison for a sexual crime. If you had known you would have taken more severe security precautions in protecting your daughter.

C. Julia Mabel

You were friends with a man who was convicted of a sexual crime and feel he has changed completely. If this Bill becomes law, the people who have been rehabilitated will be unfairly marked as criminals in their community. They will be mistreated and not given a chance to start over like other offenders released on parole.

Speakers for the hearing on Bill #2**A. Trevor Scott**

You are a teacher who has concerns about this Bill. You feel the expectations are too strict and that if one requirement is not met, the entire school will not benefit. You also feel that schools in low-income areas are at a disadvantage right from the start as they are measured against test scores from high-income areas around the state.

B. Mervin Hamble

You are a teacher who feels this Bill will pump more money into education, one way or another. The process might not be entirely fair, but if Congress is willing to give schools money, they better take it. Programs are being cut all over the place – sports, art programs, debate – activities that kids need and perhaps this funding can save some of those programs.

C. Lisa Juniper

You are a student who hopes that this Bill will mean more money for your school. Your school has faced serious cuts in the last year which have raised class sizes and cut several extra-curricular programs. You feel this Bill will motivate you and your classmates to excel and gain back some of what has been taken from you.

LESSON 2: STATE ISSUES

PURPOSE:

- Demonstrate the diversity of state demographics
- Illustrate the difficulty in meeting all the needs of U.S. citizens

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Student Handout: State Demographics,” page 8
- Copies of “Student Handout: Representative Vote Sheet,” page 9

PROCEDURE:

- Explain to students that they are going to become a state representative and cast their vote on several policies being considered in the House of Representatives.
- Break students into eight groups with the following number of people in each group (Representative numbers are based on state population. Adjust the numbers to fit your class size. Be sure to keep some states with few representatives and some with many representatives.):

State 1: 2 people	State 5: 4 people
State 2: 2 people	State 6: 5 people
State 3: 3 people	State 7: 5 people
State 4: 3 people	State 8: 6 people
- Distribute student handout, “State Demographics,” (p. 8) and have students meet in their group to review the data about their constituents and state.
- Distribute student handout, “Representative Vote Sheet,” (p. 9) but instruct students not to cast their vote at this time.
- Students should discuss the issues with their other state representatives and determine which vote would be best for their constituents.
- After appropriate discussion time, take a verbal vote on each of the issues. After all representatives of a state have voted, allow them to explain, as a state, why they voted the way they did.
- Students should now have a period of time (5-10 minutes) to walk around the room and discuss the issues with other states’ representatives. If there are issues that their state lost on, they should attempt to convince others to change their vote to align with their state. (They should lobby for votes.)
- Students can then cast their paper ballot (or a verbal count could be taken again) to reflect any changed opinions. The tallied votes should be announced to the class.
- Proceed to Discussion questions (p. 7).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Did having the demographic information help determine how to vote on the issues?
- What information was helpful for each issue?
- Did your other state representative(s) usually agree on which way to vote? If no, what were some of the problems you ran into?
- Did you personally want to vote differently than what your constituents would have probably wanted on some issues? What do you think representatives do in cases like this?
- Is it fair that state population determines the number of representatives and that some states have fewer representatives than others?
- How did the small states feel in the voting process?
- How did the large states feel in the voting process?
- What techniques did you use to try to convince others to align with your vote?
- What techniques did others use on you?
- What techniques worked?
- What techniques didn't work?
- Why did some people change their mind?
- Would you have voted differently if your vote was to be kept secret?
- Why are representative voting records open to the public?

STUDENT HANDOUT: STATE DEMOGRAPHICS								
	State #1	State #2	State #3	State #4	State #5	State #6	State #7	State #8
Population	3,500,000	4,200,300	6,320,030	6,900,300	8,300,201	10,300,020	11,202,033	13,600,500
Unemploy- ment rate	2%	1.5%	0.4%	4.5%	.34%	3.8%	8.3%	5.1%
% on Social Security	9%	5%	6%	10%	4%	4%	3%	9%
Number of parks in 5 mi. radius	3	7	9	11	10	2	2	3
Average property tax	\$1,030	\$2,040	\$2,145	\$5,300	\$4,565	\$6,200	\$3,202	\$2,687
% practicing a religion	93%	78%	85%	98%	96%	92%	68%	81%
# violent crime/ 100,000	700	200	670	4,600	400	589	9,898	706

Name: _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: REPRESENTATIVE VOTE SHEET

Directions: You are to discuss your state data within your group and determine how your constituents would want you to vote on these issues. If you write on your sheet, use pencil, because you may be changing your vote later on.

ISSUE #1: Increasing benefits for seniors.

This may please seniors, but it also means taking money away from other programs such as homeless day shelters, work training programs, early childhood education and day care.

☐

YES

☐

NO

ISSUE #2: Raising minimum wage.

This may force some businesses to close or layoff workers if they cannot afford paying higher salaries. However, this would please the average worker and possibly pump more money into the economy as people would have more to spend.

☐

YES

☐

NO

ISSUE #3: Prohibit the death penalty in all states.

Constituents have widely differing opinions on this topic. Young, old, crime victims, non-crime victims, religious, non-religious, poor and wealthy all feel strongly about this life or death issue.

☐

YES

☐

NO

ISSUE #4: Raising property tax to fund social service programs.

Social service programs include youth recreation programs, child welfare services, homeless and food pantry aid.

☐

YES

☐

NO

ISSUE #5: Insecticide spraying at local parks.

Many communities have complained about the insect problem making some parks not useable. There are environmental concerns about the health impact of these sprays, especially for the elderly, young children, and pregnant women.

☐

YES

☐

NO

LESSON 3: CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

PURPOSE:

- Stimulate interest in the government through direct interaction with state representatives
- Allow students an opportunity to directly participate in government
- Reinforce the importance of high-quality writing skills

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Student Handout: Webbing the Issue,” page 11
- Copies of “Student Handout: Representative Letter,” page 12

PROCEDURE:

- Discuss the representative’s role of advocating for their constituents.
- List and briefly discuss issues that are important to your students.
- Have students choose an issue they wish to write to their representative about.
- Distribute the student handout, “Webbing the Issue,” (p. 11) and have students complete the handout on their own.



HINT: Demonstrate how to complete the “Webbing the Issue” handout by completing one on an overhead. Pretend you are going to write a letter to the principal of the school and use a school issue for the example rather than a broader issue the class generated for possible representative letters.

- Distribute and explain the student handout, “Representative Letter” (p. 12). This can be either a guide for the structure of the letter and/or an evaluation form for the letter.
- Allow students appropriate time to complete a rough draft of their letter.
- Collect rough drafts from students and review for major errors or do a peer edit.
- Have students research who their representatives are and at what address the letters should be sent to.
- Have students make any necessary revisions to their letters.
- Sign, seal, and mail the letters.
- Discuss responses from representatives as they come in over the following weeks.

Name: _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: WEBBING THE ISSUE

Introductory information about yourself

Concerns about this topic

LETTER TOPIC:

Support for your opinion

Specific information for each supporting argument

Name : _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: REPRESENTATIVE LETTER

Directions: You are to write a letter to your state representative regarding an issue you completed an information “web” on. Your letter should follow the format below and may be graded based on the following point system.

GENERAL APPEARANCE:

Typed/written in blue or black ink

2

Not typed, written in colored ink or pencil

0

Correct margins and spacing

2

Incorrect margins and/or spacing

0

BODY PARAGRAPHS:**Body Paragraph One:**

Introduces self clearly

2

Introduces self somewhat

1

Missing info. about self

0

Clearly states topic/issue

2

Vaguely states issue

1

Does not state issue

0

Body Paragraph Two

Clearly lists support for issue

2

Vaguely lists support for issue

1

Weak support for issue

0

Specific reasoning explained

2

Some reasoning explained

1

Weak explanations given

0

Body Paragraph Three

Clearly summarizes intent

2

Vague summary of intent

1

Weak/no summary of intent

0

Polite/appropriate conclusion

2

Somewhat appropriate conclusion

1

Weak conclusion

0

WRITING MECHANICS

No spelling errors

2

1-2 spelling errors

1

3+ spelling errors

0

No grammar errors

2

1-2 grammar errors

1

3+ spelling errors

0

ASSESSMENT SCORE: /20

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

LESSON 4: ROLES OF THE PRESIDENT

PURPOSE:

- Actively involve students through skits
- Develop presentation and focused writing skills

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Student Handout: Presidential Role Skits Starters,” page 14
- Markers and poster board

PROCEDURE:

- Randomly divide students into 7 groups.
- Assign each group one of the following seven roles: Chief Executive, Commander in Chief, Chief Agenda Setter, Representative of Nation, Chief of State, Foreign Policy Leader, Party Leader.
- Distribute the student handout, “Presidential Role Skit Starters,” (p. 14) and review each group’s role.
- Instruct students to create a skit of the President acting in the role they were assigned. Explain expectations for the skit. For example, does everyone need a speaking role? Does there need to be an introduction and a conclusion? Is there a required length? Does a script need to be turned in?
- Allow appropriate time for skit presentation.
- Inform students that to check for understanding, after the skits have been performed, each group will be making a poster explaining all of the president’s roles.
- Have students present their skits.
- Distribute markers and poster board to each group and explain the criteria for the posters. Criteria will vary depending on the ability level and expectations for your students.



HINT: Criteria for the posters may include: a brief description of each role in students’ own words, a specific example of each role (perhaps from the skits), neatly presented and organized.

STUDENT HANDOUT: PRESIDENTIAL ROLE SKIT STARTERS

ROLE #1: Chief Executive

The President is responsible for executing the nation's laws (seeing that they are carried out). Article II, Section I of the Constitution is where this role comes from.

.....

ROLE #2: Commander in Chief

The President is the commander of all military officers, whether or not we are at war. The President has the final say in all wartime decisions. Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution is where this role comes from.

.....

ROLE #3: Chief Agenda Setter

The President is responsible for guiding Congress in issues that are important to the American people. This is done through the State of the Union Address in which the President highlights programs and legislation he/she would like to see addressed.

.....

ROLE #4: Representative of Nation

The President represents all people of the United States as he/she is nationally elected. He may travel to disaster areas, attend funerals of diplomats, and respond to any crisis as he/she speaks for the United States.

.....

ROLE #5: Chief of State

The President represents the United States when meeting with foreign leaders. Besides negotiating with foreign countries, the President also has to perform ceremonial duties with the United States to fulfill this role.

.....

ROLE #6: Foreign Policy Leader

The President is responsible for establishing foreign policy – the goals of the United States regarding foreign trade, friendship, and treaties. At the same time, the President must maintain a high level of national security, which is impacted by relationships with foreign countries.

.....

ROLE #7: Party Leader

The President is the leader of the political party he/she represents. The President helps to raise money, encourage party participation, lobby for party issues, and help the campaigns of other politicians in the same party.

LESSON 5: PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

PURPOSE:

- Develop persuasive speaking skills
- Demonstrate the presidential role of persuasive public speaking

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Student Handout: Debate Issues and Format,” page 16
- Copies of Debate: Teacher Evaluation Sheet, page 17
- Copies of Debate: Student Evaluation Sheet, page 18

PROCEDURE:

- Randomly pair students as competing candidates.



HINT: Depending on class size and ability level of students, teams of two may work together as one candidate.



HINT: Students may be paired based on competing political views (pair a democrat with a republican) to ensure differing opinions on issues.

- Distribute the student handout, “Debate Issues and Format,” (p.16) and review the instructions and format of the debate.
- Distribute the Debate Evaluation (p. 17) and discuss how students will be evaluated on this activity.
- Allow appropriate time for students to prepare for the debate. Research time will be needed to find supporting facts for student’s opinions.
- Select the first candidates to debate.
- Distribute the student handout, “Student Evaluation Sheet,” (p.18). Read through the directions with the class and clarify their role in determining the winner of the debate.
- Proceed with the debate format explained on the student handout, page 16.
- At the conclusion of the debate, tally the class votes to determine the winner and note those points on the teacher evaluation sheet.
- Continue with the remaining candidates.



HINT: To randomly select topics for candidates to discuss, place all issues in a box and pull two out per debate. Do not put the two pulled out back in until all other topics have been discussed by candidates. Using this method will ensure the discussion of all possible issues for the class.

STUDENT HANDOUT: DEBATE ISSUES AND FORMAT

For your debate, you should prepare an opinion on the following issues:

- gun control
- the drinking age
- prayer in school
- abortion
- military spending
- minimum wage
- _____
- _____
- _____

The following is the format for the debate:

- Opening comments from candidate A (one minute or less)
- ◆ Opening comments from candidate B (one minute or less)

✍ First issue picked by moderator

- Response to first issue by candidate A (two minutes or less)
- ◆ Response to first issue by candidate B (two minutes or less)
- Second response by candidate A (one minute or less)

✍ Second issue picked by moderator

- ◆ Response to second issue by candidate B (two minutes or less)
- Response to second issue by candidate A (two minutes or less)
- ◆ Second response by candidate B (one minute or less)
- Closing comments from candidate A (one minute or less)
- ◆ Closing comments from candidate B (one minute or less)

TEACHER EVALUATION SHEET

Each item will be given a score from 0-3.

- 0 = Item not done
- 1 = Item poorly/briefly done
- 2 = Item well done
- 3 = Item exceptionally done

	CANDIDATE A	CANDIDATE B
OPENING COMMENTS		
Clear and well thought out/organized	_____	_____
FIRST ISSUE		
Response was clear, intelligent and concise	_____	_____
Response had specific facts to support position	_____	_____
SECOND ISSUE		
Response was clear, intelligent and concise	_____	_____
Response had specific facts to support position	_____	_____
REBUTTAL RESPONSE		
Response directly addressed points made by other candidate	_____	_____
Response was clear, intelligent and concise	_____	_____
CLOSING COMMENTS		
Clear and well thought out/organized	_____	_____
WINNER (Determined by class) +2 points	_____	_____
TOTAL POINTS:	_____	_____

Name : _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET

Your vote for who won the debate will impact the candidates' scores, therefore, this form needs to be used to determine the winner of each debate. Complete the form as soon as the candidates have given their response.

For each item, give the candidate a score of 1, 2, or 3.

1 = Candidate did *not* do this

2 = Candidate *kind of* did this

3 = Candidate *definitely* did this

	CANDIDATE A	CANDIDATE B
OPENING COMMENTS:		

Were clear and well thought out/organized	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

FOR THE FIRST ISSUE:

Response was clear, intelligent and concise	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

Response had specific facts to support position	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

FOR THE SECOND ISSUE

Response was clear, intelligent and concise	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

Response had specific facts to support position	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

FOR THE REBUTTAL RESPONSE

Response directly addressed points made by other candidate	_____	_____
--	-------	-------

Response was clear, intelligent and concise	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

CLOSING COMMENTS

Were clear and well thought out/organized	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

Who do you agree with more? (Add 1 point)	_____	_____
---	-------	-------

ADD UP POINTS TO DETERMINE YOUR WINNER: (Candidate with the most points wins)	_____	_____
--	-------	-------

LESSON 6: PRESIDENTIAL JOB PIE

PURPOSE:

- Develop group skills such as collaboration, decision making, and compromise
- Illustrate some presidential jobs

MATERIALS:

- Copies of Job Pie Pieces, cut apart and mixed up, page 20
- Copies of “Student Handout: The Job Pie,” page 21
- Crayons, butcher paper or poster board

PROCEDURE:

- Break students into groups of 3-5.
- Briefly discuss each of the jobs listed on the Job Pie Pieces Sheet.
- Instruct groups to break the jobs into these categories: Executive Powers, Diplomatic Powers, Military Powers, Judicial Powers, and Legislative Powers. If they correctly complete this, the pie pieces should make a complete circle.
- Help groups complete this first task and discuss why the jobs fall under these headings.
- Distribute the student handout, “The Job Pie,” (p. 21) and read through the directions.
- Allow appropriate time for completion of the job pie.
- When groups are complete, have a representative from each group read their synopsis of their job pie.
- Encourage other students to ask questions and challenge the decisions of other groups. Groups should be able to defend their decisions.



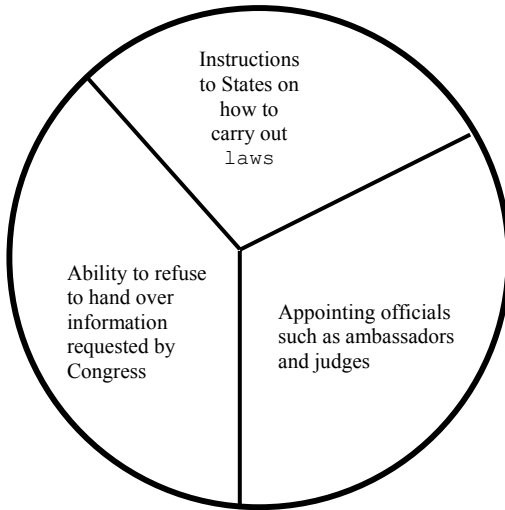
HINT: Offering “extra credit” or making participation a part of evaluation may help students question and challenge other groups.

DISCUSSION:

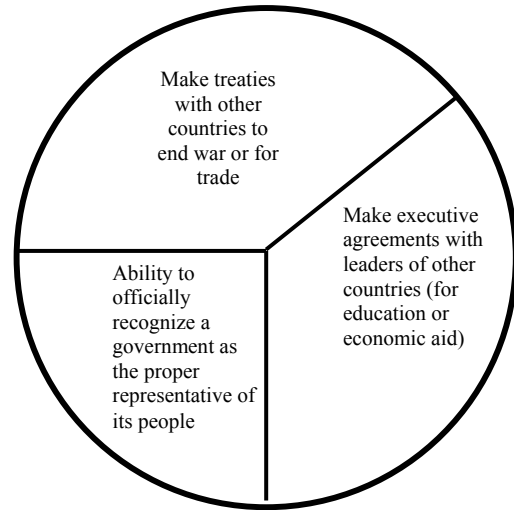
- Discuss the different levels of importance of presidential jobs.
- Discuss the different people and groups that influence presidential decision making for the different jobs.
- Discuss how people view the importance of these jobs differently depending on their needs.

JOB PIE PIECES

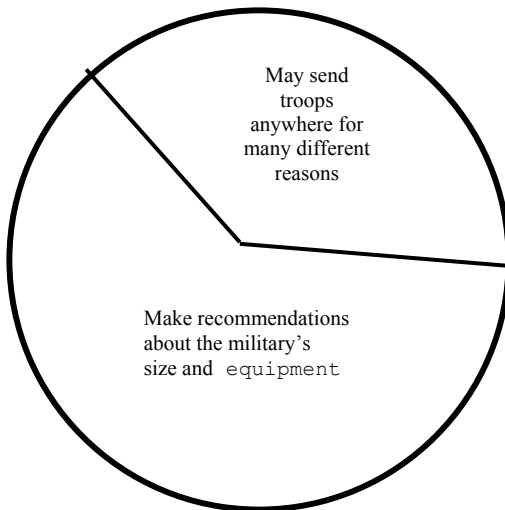
EXECUTIVE POWERS



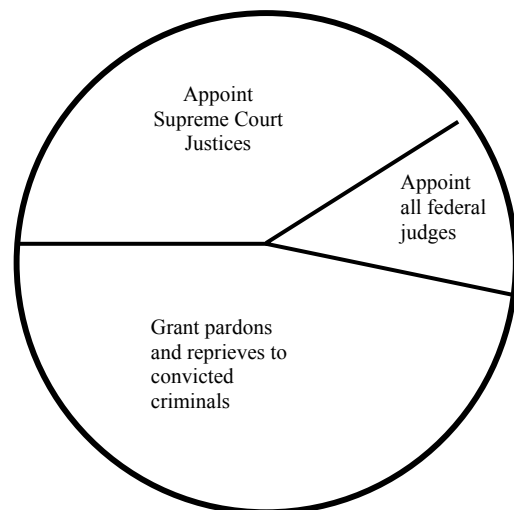
DIPLOMATIC POWERS



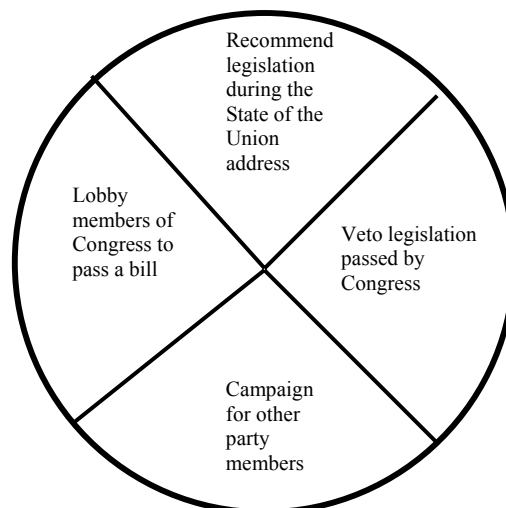
MILITARY POWERS



JUDICIAL POWERS



LEGISLATIVE POWERS



STUDENT HANDOUT: THE JOB PIE

Directions: The five different job pies you have created need to be combined into one large job pie. You will create this job pie on a large sheet of poster board or butcher paper. Follow the steps below to complete your “Presidential Job Pie.”

**Check when
Complete**



- 1) Put the title “Presidential Job Pie” on your paper and draw the circle for the pie. Also draw a small box in a corner for your key. Remember to put your names on the paper as well.



- 2) Your job pie should reflect how you, personally, think the President should divide his time for all of his jobs. Determine how much of the pie should be spent on each job. Divide your pie into fifteen sections according to your break down.



- 3) Assign a color to each category of jobs and, in the appropriate pie section, write the job in that color. Make a key to explain the color coding on your paper.



- 4) Add a check the pie sections where Congress has some role in the President’s job. For example, Congress may have to approve or be able to limit the President’s decision. (Put the check outside the pie piece if there isn’t enough room in the pie.) Add this symbol to your key.



- 5) Put a star next to the five most important Presidential jobs. Add this symbol to your key.



- 6) Put a “□” in, or next to, the jobs you feel the American people should have more of a say in. Add this symbol to your key.



- 7) On a separate sheet of paper, write a one paragraph synopsis or summary of your Presidential Job Pie.

JUDICIAL BRANCH

LESSON 7: CLASS JUDGE

PURPOSE:

- Allow students to experience the difficulty of structuring a government process
- Develop the skills of compromising and working with others

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Student Handout: Issue Organization,” page 23
- Overhead of “Class Judge Tally Time,” page 24

PROCEDURE:

- Explain to the class that they are going to set up a judicial system for your classroom. There are three aspects of the system that need to be decided upon. (Show overhead of “Class Judge Tally Time,” p.24)
 - ✎ How many judges will there be at any given time (1 or 3)?
 - ✎ How will the judge(s) be appointed (by the teacher with student approval or by the students alone)?
 - ✎ How long should a judge serve (part of a term or the whole term)?
- Break students into 6 groups and assign each group a position to prepare for.
- Distribute the student handout, “Issue Organization,” (p. 23)
- Groups should be given adequate time to brainstorm support for their position. Explain that the class will be voting on these issues based on the information that the groups provide. Assist groups as necessary. Example supporting statements are below.



HINT: Depending on the ability level of students, you may require each group to prepare a script for their issue presentation. At a minimum, the Issue Organization handout should be checked before allowing a group to present.

- Have students present their ideas to the class.
- After both sides of each issue present, take a hand count of where the class stands on the issue and write the tally on the overhead.



EXAMPLES OF SUPPORT:

- One judge should mean consistency throughout the term.
- Three judges will allow for differing options to be discussed.
- Teacher and student approval may give more students a chance to be judge.
- Student selection alone would represent the majority of students.
- A judge serving a whole term would ensure consistency.
- A judge serving part of a term would give others a chance to be judge and, therefore, bring new perspectives.

Name : _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: ISSUE ORGANIZATION

Directions: Complete the diagram below in preparation for your presentation.TITLE: _____
(Your assigned position on an issue)

Support for your position: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		How/why the class would benefit: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Reasons against your position: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		Counter statements for these reasons: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Complete the following statements that have been started for you to use in your argument presentation:

- We MUST _____
- The results would be HORRIBLE if we don't _____

- The thought of _____ , is UNBELIEVABLE because _____

CLASS JUDGE TALLY TIME

A) How many judges will there be at any given time?

Options

One

Three

Student vote tally

B) How will the judge(s) be appointed?

Options

Teacher & Students

Students alone

Student vote tally

C) How long should a judge serve?

Options

Part of a term

The entire term

Student vote tally

LESSON 8: COURT ROLE PLAY

PURPOSE:

- Allow students to act out a court session
- Develop communication skills
- Allow students to use court terms through active learning

MATERIALS:

- Copies of “Student Handout: Case Explanation,” page 26
- Copies of “Student Handout: Student Brief,” page 27
- Copies of “Student Handout: Majority Opinion,” page 28
- Copies of “Student Handout: Dissenting Opinion,” page 29

PROCEDURE:

- Explain to the class that they are going to role play a court session.
- Divide the class into five groups: the Supreme Court, Pro-Capital Punishment, Con-Capital Punishment, Pro-Affirmative Action and Con-Affirmative Action.



HINT: If these topics will not interest and motivate your students, choose alternate topics and create your own “Case Explanation” sheet.

- Explain the following procedure for this activity:
 - Those who are going to testify before the Supreme Court need to complete a “brief.”
 - While the briefs are being prepared, the Supreme Court members should meet and discuss why these issues were chosen for the Court to hear. They should list the reasons why these are such hot topics for the country. They should also develop a list of possible questions for both sides of each issue.
 - Once the briefs are complete, one person from each issue group will act as an attorney and have 5 minutes to present their argument to the court.
 - The justices can stop the arguments and interrupt to ask questions.
 - After the oral arguments, the groups should turn their briefs into the judges and the judges should discuss each case in front of the class.
 - Justices should be selected to write brief majority and dissenting opinions for the cases and those should be read to the class.
- Distribute the student handouts (pp. 26-29) to the appropriate groups and allow adequate work time.
- Arrange the classroom to resemble a courtroom and follow the procedure described above.

STUDENT HANDOUT: CASE EXPLANATION

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Capital punishment has been a hotly debated issue for many years. Currently there is a group seeking to ban capital punishment in all U.S. states. This group claims that innocent people have been put to death and innocent people are currently on death row. They feel that a life sentence is a severe enough punishment for any crime and it allows the convicted person to continue fighting for their innocence. An innocent person may not get back years of their life spent wrongfully imprisoned, but they surely cannot get back their life once put to death. Finally, this group wants to eliminate the huge expense of keeping people on death row as the courts face one appeal after another. On the other hand, some people feel the death penalty is a strong deterrent to crime. Some crimes are so horrific that spending a decent life in prison does not seem like justice. Death is the only option. It costs a lot of money to keep people in prison for life and if the appeal process were limited, it wouldn't cost so much to execute people.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Affirmative action was started to make things more fair for groups who had been at a disadvantage for a variety of reasons. Over time, however, questions about the impact of affirmative action have risen. In general, schools and companies were encouraged to enroll and hire more diverse populations (increase ethnic minorities and women). One group feels that this practice should be continued as it has given opportunities to people who have long faced discrimination and oppression. Biased behavior and racism still exist in this world, and without affirmative action policies, unfair practices would continue. On the other hand, a different group charges that affirmative action has resulted in reverse discrimination as qualified white males are being turned down for positions simply because they are white males and a minority person is needed. This group calls for the end of affirmative action hiring practices so that hiring can be based on ability and qualifications. People should only be denied a position because they don't qualify for it.

❑ Con-Affirmative Action

STUDENT HANDOUT: MAJORITY OPINION

We, the majority of the Supreme Court Justices, rule in favor of _____

The rationale behind our decision is as follows: _____

Our decision comes after great deliberation. We were most swayed by _____

Although the other side did make a good point by saying _____

we still had to vote against them.

(Justices' signatures)

STUDENT HANDOUT: DISSENTING OPINION

We, the minority of the Supreme Court Justices, disagree with the majority opinion. We instead rule in favor of _____

The rationale behind our decision is as follows: _____

Our decision comes after great deliberation. We were most swayed by _____

Although the other side did make a good point by saying _____

we still had to vote against them.

(Justices' signatures)

REVIEW

LESSON 9: REVIEW BINGO

PURPOSE:

- Review important terms and concepts relating to the branches of government
- Provide a fun and engaging closure activity

MATERIALS:

- Transparency of “BINGO! Terms,” page 31



HINT: All of the terms listed on this sheet may not apply to your class. Cross out the terms your students are not responsible for and add missing terms on the lines provided.

- Copies of “Student Handout BINGO!” page 32
- Copy of “Teacher Term Definitions,” page 33
- Markers for the BINGO! cards (pieces of paper, coins, paper clips, etc.)

PROCEDURE:

- Show the transparency “BINGO! Terms,” (p. 31), and explain to students that they are responsible for understanding the terms and concepts being shown. In order to review their meanings, the class is going to play BINGO!
- Distribute the student handout “BINGO!” (p. 32), and instruct students to fill in each box on their Bingo card with a term from the transparency. Not all of the terms will fit so they should pick some they know and some they need to learn.
- To play BINGO!:
 - Randomly select a term and read only its definition (do not say the term).
 - Students with the selected term mark it off on their sheet.
 - When a student has marked off a complete column or row they say “BINGO!” The teacher should have them read off their terms to make sure the terms match the definitions that were read.
 - If there is a correct BINGO!, students clear their cards and play again. If the student who had BINGO! made an error, the game continues.



HINT: Students can switch cards when playing multiple games so students are not always looking at the same terms.




HINT: Teachers have to keep track of the definitions they are read off so BINGO! can be accurately checked.

BINGO! TERMS

Bill	Impeach
Brief	Incumbent
Cabinet	Jurisdiction
Censure	Loose constructionist
Concurring opinion	Majority opinion
Congress	Markup
Conference committee	National Convention
Constituents	Pardon
Court of Appeals	Pocket veto
Diplomacy	Precedent
Diplomatic recognition	Presidential term
Dissenting opinion	Presidential qualifications
Executive order	Senate qualifications
Executive privilege	Senate size
Floor consideration	Senate term
Gerrymandering	Speaker
Hearings	Strict constructionist
House qualifications	Supreme Court
House size	Vice President
House term	

REVIEW BINGO!

TEACHER TERM DEFINITIONS

Bill: proposal for a law
Brief: written argument given to the Supreme Court
Cabinet: presidential advisory board whose members are executive department heads
Censure: formal reprimand of a member of the legislature
Concurring opinion: written Supreme Court decision that supports the majority opinion
Congress: made up of the House and the Senate
Conference committee: House and Senate representatives who agree on wording of a bill
Constituents: people who elected representatives and expect to have their opinions heard
Court of Appeals: a court established to hear the appeals from other court decisions
Diplomacy: formal relations and communications nations maintain with one another
Diplomatic recognition: officially recognizing the appropriate government of a country
Dissenting opinion: written Supreme Court decision that disagrees with the majority
Executive order: order given to the States by the President
Executive privilege: President's ability to keep things from Congress
Floor consideration: the entire House or Senate voting on a bill
Gerrymandering: dividing voting areas so that one political group will be favored
Hearings: when people testify to the House or Senate regarding a proposed bill
House size: 435 members
House term: 2 years
House qualifications: 25 years old, U.S. citizen for 7 years, legal resident of state
Impeach: formal charges brought by the legislature against a public official
Incumbent: person who previously held office
Jurisdiction: the power of the court to interpret and administer the law
Loose constructionist: constitutional interpretation should change with the times
Majority opinion: written Supreme Court opinion that represents the majority
Markup: process of altering the wording of a bill
National Convention: meeting of political party representative to elect a candidate
Pardon: the official release of a person convicted of a crime
Pocket veto: President's ability to prevent a bill from becoming a law without giving reason
Precedent: court ruling that serves as a model for future cases
Presidential term: 4 years
Presidential qualifications: US born citizen, 35 years old
Senate size: 100 members
Senate term: 6 years
Senate qualifications: 30 years old, 9 years as a U.S. citizen, legal resident of state
Speaker: Leader of the House of Representatives
Strict constructionist: Rigid interpretation of the constitution based on what is written
Supreme Court: Group of justices who interpret the law
Vice President: Head of the Senate and next in line to become President

LESSON 10: REVIEW JEOPARDY

PURPOSE:

- Review important terms and concepts relating to the branches of government
- Provide a fun and engaging closure activity

MATERIALS:

- Transparency of “Government Branches Jeopardy,” pages 35 & 36
- Copies of “Student Handout Government Branches Jeopardy,” page 38 & 39
- Copy of “Teacher Jeopardy Answers,” pages 39 & 40

PROCEDURE:

- Review Jeopardy can be played with students in teams competing against one another or individually.
- If playing in teams, divide students into desired number of teams and have them sit together.
- Distribute the student handouts, “Government Branches Jeopardy,” (pp. 38 & 39). Instruct students, whether playing in teams or not, to write the “answers” (questions) on the blank sheets. If they copy the “questions” (answers) after the game, they will have a study sheet.
- Cover the transparencies with small post-it notes so the answers can’t be seen.
- If playing in teams, have one person select the category and amount, show the answer, and have competing students raise their hand or ring a bell to answer. The team to answer correctly first wins the point value. If playing individually, call on students to select the category and amount, show the answer, and have all students write down the answer. If the student who selected the answer gets it correct, he/she gets double points, everyone else gets the regular points.



HINT: A modified version would be to have students sitting in rows. Call on students to select the category and amount. That student should answer the question out loud and if correct, everyone in that row gets the points.

- Add up group points or individual points at the end to determine the winner.



HINT: Daily doubles and a “final jeopardy” can be added to make the game more like the tv show.

- Allow students to copy the “answers” onto their sheets or give them copies of the transparency so that they can have a complete study sheet.

GOVERNMENT BRANCHES JEOPARDY

Level	#'s	Qualifications	Duties A	Duties B
100	4 years	No age requirement	Approve Presidential Appointments	Delivers State of the Union Address
200	Lifetime appointment	No professional requirement	Veto laws	Determines constitutionality of laws
300	2 years	25 years old 7 year US citizen Legal resident of state they're running in	Can pardon criminals	Can send troops to foreign countries
400	6 years	30 years old 9 year US citizen Legal resident of state they're running in	Interprets the law	Passes laws
500	50	35 years old Natural born US citizen	Takes over if President can not complete the term	Ratifies treaties
600	435	No specific state residency required	Develops a plan for dealing with foreign countries	Resolves disputes between parties

GOVERNMENT BRANCHES JEOPARDY

Level	Bill to law terms	General terms	Presidential terms	Judicial terms
100	Proposal for a law	Person who previously held office	Presidential advisory board who head executive departments	Written supreme court opinion that represents the majority
200	When people testify to the House or Senate regarding a proposed bill	Formal charges brought by the legislature against a public official	The official release of a person convicted of a crime	Written Supreme court decision that disagrees with the majority
300	President's ability to prevent a bill from becoming a law without giving reason	Document that defines many of the duties of the three branches	Order given to the States by the President	A court established to hear the appeals from other court decisions
400	House and Senate representatives who agree on wording of a bill	Dividing voting areas so that one political group will be favored	Head of the Senate and next in line to become President	Belief that constitutional interpretation should change with the times
500	Process of altering the wording of a bill	People who elected representatives expecting to have their opinions heard	President's ability to keep things from Congress	Court ruling that serves as a model for future cases
600	The entire House or Senate voting on a bill	Formal relations & communications nations maintain with one another	Presidents annual message to Congress - proposing programs	Rigid interpretation of the constitution based on what is written

Name : _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: GOVERNMENT BRANCHES JEOPARDY

Directions: Write your *questions* to the answers in the space below. Use pencil in case your answers are incorrect and you need to change them later.

Level	#'s	Qualifications	Duties A	Duties B
100				
200				
300				
400				
500				
600				

Name : _____

STUDENT HANDOUT: GOVERNMENT BRANCHES JEOPARDY

Directions: Write your *questions* to the answers in the space below. Use pencil in case your answers are incorrect and you need to change them later.

Level	Bill to law terms	General terms	Presidential terms	Judicial terms
100				
200				
300				
400				
500				
600				

TEACHER JEOPARDY ANSWERS

Answers are in the lower half of each box. All answers should be given in the form of a question.

Level	#'s	Qualifications	Duties A	Duties B
100	4 years	No age requirement	Approve Presidential Appointments	Delivers State of the Union Address
	President's term	Qualifications for a justice	Duty of the Congress	Duty of the President
200	Lifetime appointment	No professional requirement	Veto laws	Determines constitutionality of laws
	Justice term	Qualification for a justice	Duty of the President	Duty of the Supreme Court
300	2 years	25 years old 7 year US citizen Legal resident of state	Can pardon criminals	Can send troops to foreign countries
	House Rep. term	Qualification for House member	Duty of the President	Duty of the President
400	6 years	30 years old 9 year US citizen Legal resident of state	Interprets the law	Passes laws
	Senate term	Qualification for Senate member	Duty of the Supreme Court	Duty of Congress
500	50	35 years old Natural born US citizen	Takes over if President can not complete the term	Ratifies treaties
	# of seats in the Senate	Qualifications for the President	Duty of the Vice President	Duty of Congress
600	435	No specific state residency required	Develops a plan for dealing with foreign countries	Resolves disputes between parties
	# of seats in the House of Rep.	True for President and Justices	Duty of the President	Duty of the Supreme Court

TEACHER JEOPARDY ANSWERS

Answers are in the lower half of each box. All answers should be given in the form of a question.

Level	Bill to law terms	General terms	Presidential terms	Judicial terms
100	Proposal for a law	Person who previously held office	Presidential advisory board who head executive departments	Written supreme court opinion that represents the majority
	A bill	Incumbant	Cabinet	Majority opinion
200	When people testify to the House or Senate regarding a proposed bill	Formal charges brought by the legislature against a public official	The official release of a person convicted of a crime	Written Supreme court decision that disagrees with the majority
	Hearings	Impeach	Pardon	Dissenting opinion
300	President's ability to prevent a bill from becoming a law without giving reason	Document that defines many of the duties of the three branches	Order given to the States by the President	A court established to hear the appeals from other court decisions
	Pocket-veto	Constitution	Executive Order	Precedent
400	House and Senate representatives who agree on wording of a bill	Dividing voting areas so that one political group will be favored	Head of the Senate and next in line to become President	Belief that constitutional interpretation should change with the times
	Conference committee	Gerrymandering	Vice-President	Strict Constructionist
500	Process of altering the wording of a bill	People who elected representatives expecting to have their opinions heard	President's ability to keep things from Congress	Court ruling that serves as a model for future cases
	Markup	Constituent	Executive Privilege	Loose Constructionist
600	The entire House or Senate voting on a bill	Formal relations & communications nations maintain with one another	Presidents annual message to Congress - proposing programs	Rigid interpretation of the constitution based on what is written
	Floor consideration	Diplomacy	State of the Union Address	Court of Appeals

GLOSSARY

Glossary

Bill:

Proposal for a law.

Brief:

Written argument given to the Supreme Court.

Cabinet:

Presidential advisory board. Members head executive departments in the government.

Censure:

The formal reprimand of a member of the legislature. The most severe penalty for a legislator.

Concurring opinion:

Written Supreme Court decision that supports the majority opinion, but may have different reasons.

Congress:

Consists of two chambers: the House and the Senate. It is the Legislature, or law making body of the government.

Conference committee:

In the process of a bill becoming a law, House and Senate representatives meet to agree on the wording of a bill if it passed in different forms in the two chambers.

Constituents:

People who elected representatives and expect to have their opinions heard in the government.

Court of Appeals:

A court established to hear the appeals from other court decisions.

Diplomacy:

Formal relations and communications nations maintain with one another.

Diplomatic recognition:

Officially recognizing the appropriate government of a country.

Dissenting opinion:

Written Supreme Court decision that disagrees with the majority opinion of the Justices.

Executive order:

Order given to the States by the President.

Executive privilege:

President's ability to keep things from Congress.

Floor consideration:

In the process of a bill becoming a law, when the entire House or Senate votes on a bill.

Hearings:

When people testify to the House or Senate regarding a proposed bill.

House of Representatives:

One of the chambers of Congress. Members are elected by the people every 2 years. There are 435 seats in the House. The number of seats granted to each state is determined by the state's population.

Impeach:

Formal charges brought by the legislature against a public official.

Incumbent:

Person who previously held office.

Loose Constructionist:

Person who feels that Constitutional interpretation should change with the times and be flexible.

Majority opinion:

Written Supreme Court opinion that represents the majority of the justices' opinions.

Markup:

In the process of a bill becoming a law, the wording of a bill may be altered at this stage.

National Convention:

Meeting of political party representatives to elect a candidate.

Pocket veto:

President's ability to prevent a bill from becoming a law without giving reason.

Senate:

One chamber of Congress with 100 members, 2 elected from each state every 6 years. One third of the Senate is elected at one time to prevent complete turnover.

Strict Constructionist

Person who feels that the constitution should be rigidly interpreted. What was written is what is intended.

Supreme Court:

Groups of justices, appointed by the President and approved by Congress, who interpret the law and determine if actions are constitutional.

Veto:

A Presidential power preventing a bill from becoming a law.

Vice President:

Head of the Senate and next in line to become President. Has many duties and aids the President throughout the term.

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Grade(s) of students in class: _____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Booklet(s) supplemented my textbook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Lessons were easy to follow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Student handouts were clear and useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Students enjoyed the activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Format was teacher-friendly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Product satisfied my needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Suggested topics for future *Government Activities* volumes or booklets in other curricular areas: _____

Comments: _____

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