

**U.S. HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT
HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS
DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2008**

I. The Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights
The First Amendments to the United States Constitution

Amendment Number	Topic
1	Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition
2	Right to keep arms and have a state militia
3	No quartering of troops in people's homes
4	Limits search and seizure without cause
5	Rights of an accused person
6	Right to a speedy trial
7	Right to a trial by jury
8	No excessive bail, excessive fines, and no cruel or inhuman punishments
9	Other powers remain with the people
10	Other powers remain with the states

“The amendments are ‘limited to points which are important in the eyes of many and can be objectionable in those of none. The structure & stamina of [Government] are as little touched as possible.’”

Representative James Madison to Edmund Randolph, June 15, 1789

Copy and answer the following questions/prompts on a separate sheet of loose-leaf paper.

1. The Bill of Rights changed what important document?
2. Using the quote, tell what changes Madison felt were made to the government structure.
3. Why did people feel more protected by the Constitution after the Bill of Rights was ratified?



II. U.S. Constitution – Basic Principles

The Constitution of the United States includes a number of important basic principles, which are listed below.

Popular Sovereignty

The Constitution is based on the idea of popular sovereignty— that the source of all power or authority to govern is the people. This type of government is considered a democracy.

Limited Government

Governmental powers are defined by the Constitution. In this way, our government is limited by law. The Constitution places limits on state and national governments and government officials as well.

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.

Flexibility

The Constitution is a flexible document that can meet changing conditions over time.

THE ELASTIC CLAUSE Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, states that Congress can make all laws “necessary and proper” for carrying out the tasks listed in the Constitution.

THE AMENDMENT PROCESS Article V describes how the Constitution may be formally amended. Both Congress and the states must agree to such changes.

JUDICIAL INTERPRETATION The Supreme Court and lower federal courts review cases which involve possible conflicts with the Constitution and federal laws. This involves interpreting local, state, and federal laws, as well as executive actions.

Use the text above to answer the following questions on a separate sheet of loose-leaf paper.

1. How do the first two principles protect the rights of individual people?
2. In what ways is the Constitution able to change to adapt to new challenges and situations over time?

III. Separation of Powers

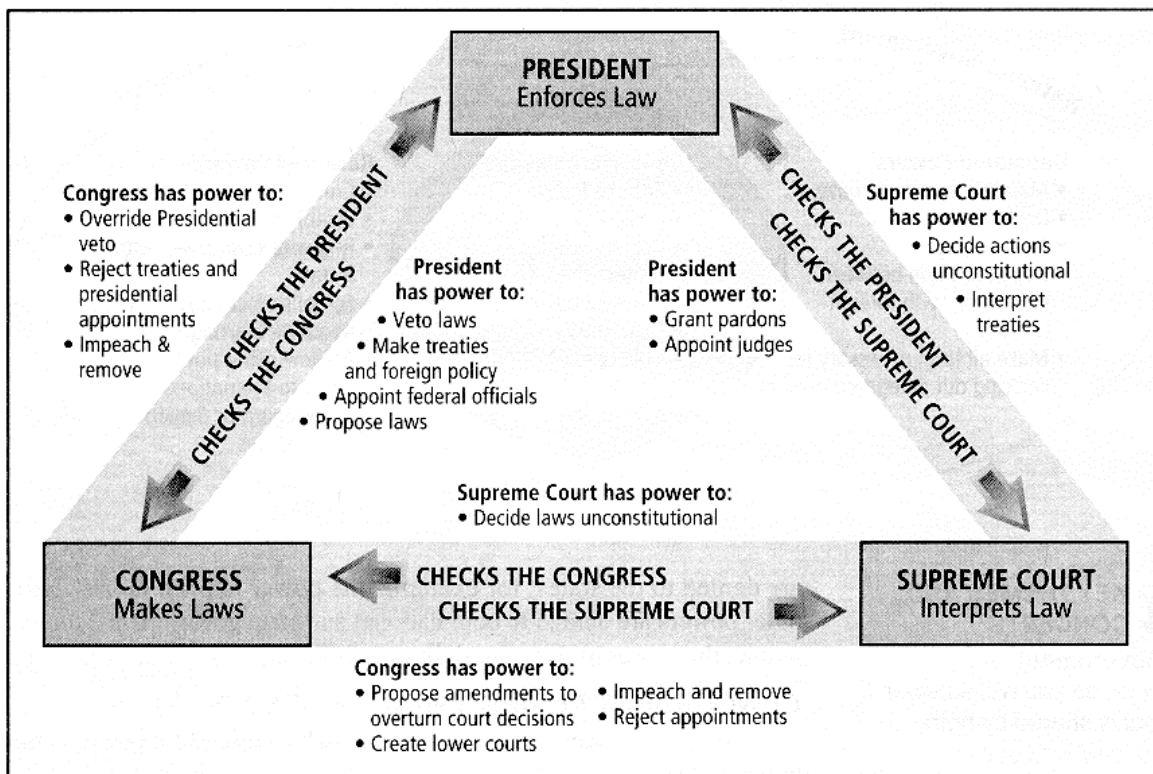
Three Branches of U.S. Government

Legislative	Executive	Judicial
Senate House of Representatives	President Vice President	Supreme Court Federal Courts
Makes laws	Enforces laws and treaties	Explains and interprets laws
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overrides presidential vetoes • Approves presidential appointments • Approves treaties • Taxes to provide services • Provides for defense, declares war • Regulates money and trade • Impeaches officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can veto laws • Appoints high officials • Conducts foreign policy • Enforces laws and treaties • Commander in chief of the military • Recommends bills to Congress • Reports the state of the Union to Congress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settles legal disputes between states • Settles State and federal disputes • Settles disputes between States and foreign countries • Hears cases with ambassadors of foreign governments • Settles disputes between individuals and Federal Government

Source: U.S. Department of Justice

IV. Checks and Balances

The Checks and Balances System



Use the charts above to answer the following questions on a separate sheet of loose-leaf paper.

1. What are the major functions of each of the branches of government?
2. Why might it be a good idea to split up power between different branches of government?
3. If the president (executive branch) was to appoint an unqualified person for the judicial branch, what could the congress (legislative branch) do about it?

V. Federalism

The Constitution divides the power to govern between the national and the state governments. Disputes between the national and state governments are settled by the courts, but the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the Constitution makes the Constitution, federal laws, and treaties superior to state laws.

DELEGATED POWERS Certain powers of the national government are spelled out in the Constitution. Most of these delegated powers are listed in Article I, Section 8. One example is the power of the national government to declare war.

IMPLIED POWERS Certain powers of the national government are not stated in writing. Their existence is implied by the Elastic Clause. One example of an implied power is the regulation of child labor; this power is implied by the delegated power to regulate interstate commerce.

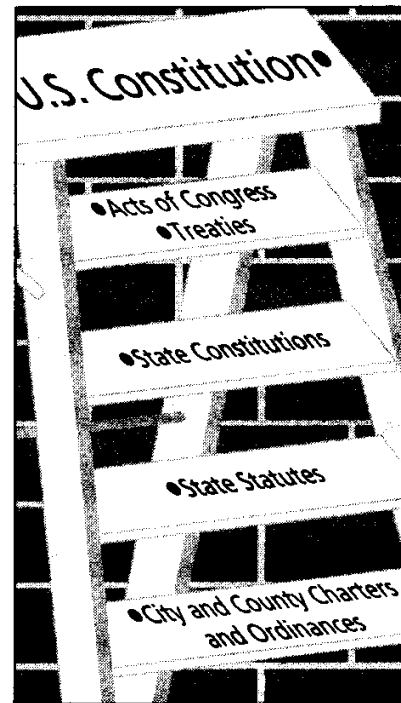
DENIED POWERS Certain powers are denied to the national government, for example, the power to pass an export tax. Other powers are denied to the states, for example, the power to print money. Still other powers are denied to both national and state governments, for example, the power to deny the right to vote because of sex or race.

CONCURRENT POWER Certain powers belong to both national and state governments. One example of such a concurrent power is the power to tax.

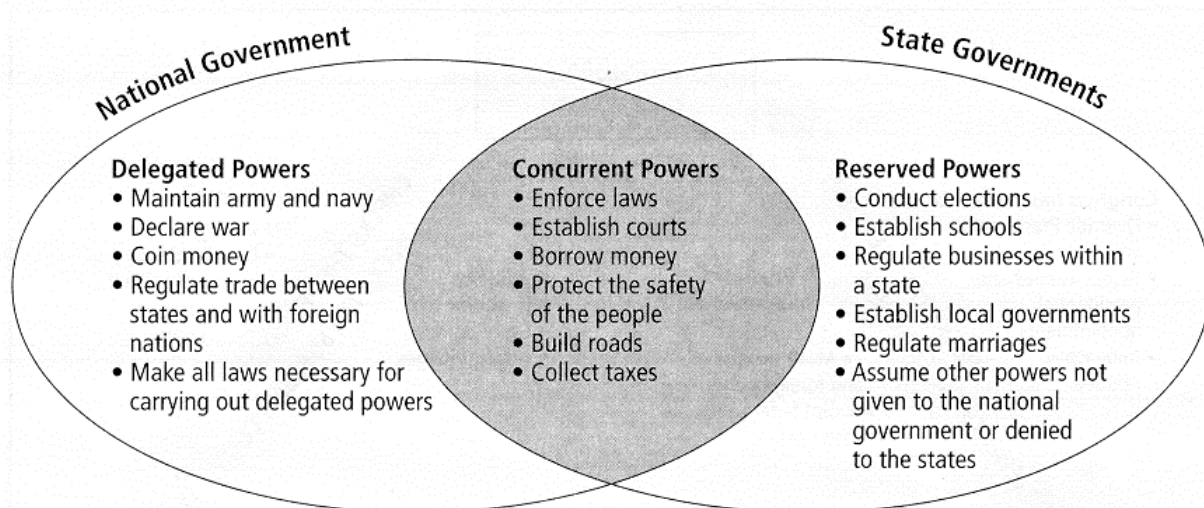
RESERVED POWERS The reserved powers are neither delegated to the national government nor denied to the states. One example is the power to make divorce laws.

Article IV of the Constitution describes relations among the states and lists guarantees that the national government makes to the states. Article VII, which describes ratification of the Constitution, serves as a reminder that the new national government had to be approved by the individual states.

The Supremacy Clause



System of Federalism



Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of loose-leaf paper.

1. What is the highest law of the land according to the U.S. Constitution?
2. If the federal government and a state government had a dispute over a law, who would win?
3. Why might it be smarter for the National Government to have the power to coin money (which means design and print or manufacture money), rather than the states?