




# Branches of the U.S. Government

The U.S. Constitution outlines our country's basic laws. The Constitution's writers wanted to create a strong national government. But they didn't want one person or group to have too much power. That's why they separated the government's powers into three parts, or branches. The members of these branches share power with each other.

Read the chart below to learn more about the three branches of our country's government. Then answer the questions.

<p><b>LEGISLATIVE</b>  <b>CONGRESS</b>  <b>100 Senators and 435 Representatives</b></p>  <p><b>THE U.S. CAPITOL</b></p> <p>Some duties of Congress include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● writing bills, then voting on whether or not the bills should become law</li> <li>● collecting money from taxes</li> <li>● declaring war</li> </ul>	<p><b>EXECUTIVE</b>  <b>The President, Vice President and Cabinet members</b></p>  <p><b>THE WHITE HOUSE</b></p> <p>Some duties of the President include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● signing bills into laws or vetoing, or rejecting, them</li> <li>● appointing Supreme Court justices</li> <li>● meeting with foreign leaders and negotiating treaties</li> </ul>	<p><b>JUDICIAL</b>  <b>Nine Supreme Court Justices</b></p>  <p><b>THE SUPREME COURT BUILDING</b></p> <p>Some duties of the Supreme Court Justices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● deciding if laws agree with the Constitution</li> <li>● interpreting how laws should be applied</li> </ul>
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1. Who is the head of the Executive Branch? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Which branch of government is responsible for writing bills and voting on whether or not the bills should become laws?  
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3. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the country. What is one of the duties of a Supreme Court Justice?  
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4. The President can veto, or reject, a bill. But Congress can override, or cancel, a Presidential veto. If two-thirds of all Congress members vote for the bill, it can still become a law. Why do you think the writers of the Constitution gave Congress this power?  
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**BONUS:** Why did the writers separate the government's power into three branches? What might happen if the government's power were in the hands of just one person or group?