

Constitution Power Plan

Read how constitutions organize and limit government.

SS.3.CG.3.1 "Explain how the U.S. and Florida Constitutions establish the structure, function, powers, and limits of government."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline words that tell what a branch can do, circle words that show a limit, and number the three U.S. branches 1, 2, and 3.

Two Plans for Government

- ① The U.S. Constitution is the nation's plan for government. It creates three branches. Congress, the legislative branch, makes federal laws. The President leads the executive branch and carries out federal laws. Federal courts, including the Supreme Court, make up the judicial branch. Courts explain laws and decide whether laws follow the Constitution. Dividing these jobs gives each branch a different function.
- ② The Constitution also gives each branch powers and limits. Congress can pass a bill, but the President can veto it. Congress may override a veto with enough votes. The President nominates judges, but the Senate must approve them. Courts can decide that a law does not follow the Constitution. These checks and balances help keep one branch from having too much power.
- ③ Florida has its own Constitution for state government. It also sets up legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Florida's Legislature makes state laws, the Governor carries out state laws, and state courts decide cases under state law. The Florida Constitution can give the state government powers, but Florida laws cannot go against the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Constitution is the highest law of the land.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are the three branches of the U.S. government? Tell one job of each branch.

2 How does Senate approval limit the President's power to nominate judges?

3 How is Florida's state government structured like the U.S. government?

4 What does the passage say about a Florida law and the U.S. Constitution?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Make up one school-related Florida state law. Write exactly three sentences that tell which branch would make the law, who would carry it out, and how courts and the U.S. Constitution can limit it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline words that tell what a branch can do, circle words that show a limit, and number the three U.S. branches 1, 2, and 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are the three branches of the U.S. government? Tell one job of each branch.	Legislative: Congress makes federal laws. Executive: the President carries out federal laws. Judicial: federal courts explain laws and decide whether laws follow the Constitution.
2	How does Senate approval limit the President's power to nominate judges?	The President cannot choose judges alone because the Senate must approve them.
3	How is Florida's state government structured like the U.S. government?	Both have legislative, executive, and judicial branches.
4	What does the passage say about a Florida law and the U.S. Constitution?	A Florida law cannot go against the U.S. Constitution because it is the highest law of the land.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Florida Legislature could make a state law that requires public schools to hold a fire drill each month. The Governor would carry out the law. A state court could decide whether the law follows the Florida Constitution, and the law could not go against the U.S. Constitution.

Accept equivalent descriptions of each branch's job and of checks and balances. For the open response, accept a sensible state-law idea that correctly names the Legislature, Governor, courts, and a constitutional limit.