

Power and Rights

Read how branches share power and how the Bill of Rights protects people.

SS4CG3 "Describe the structure of government and the Bill of Rights."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the words that tell what each branch does, and circle the freedoms or protections named in the Bill of Rights section to show how power and rights are protected.

Three Branches, Protected Rights

- ① At a town meeting, Maya learns that the United States government has three branches. The legislative branch, Congress, writes and passes laws. The executive branch, led by the president, carries out laws. The judicial branch includes courts. Judges decide whether laws follow the Constitution. This division of jobs keeps one branch from holding all government power.
- ② The branches can limit one another through checks and balances. For example, the president may veto a bill passed by Congress. Congress can vote to override a veto. Courts can decide that a law does not follow the Constitution. These limits help protect people from unfair use of power and require branches to work together.
- ③ The first ten amendments to the Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. They list important freedoms and protections. For example, the First Amendment protects freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly, and petition. Other amendments protect the right to a fair trial and guard people from unreasonable searches. Rights have limits because people must use their freedoms without harming others or breaking laws.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What are the three branches of the United States government, and what main job does each branch have?

2 After the president vetoes a bill, what can Congress do?

3 How can courts check a law passed by the government?

4 What are the first ten amendments called? Name two freedoms or protections listed in the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write four sentences about a proposed law that could affect a right. Explain what Congress does, what the president or courts could do, and which Bill of Rights freedom or protection is involved.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the words that tell what each branch does, and circle the freedoms or protections named in the Bill of Rights section to show how power and rights are protected. 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 United States government, and what main job does each branch have?	Legislative, or Congress, writes and passes laws. Executive, led by the president, carries out laws. Judicial, or the courts, decides whether laws follow the Constitution.
2	After the president vetoes a bill, what can Congress do?	Congress can vote to override the veto.
3	How can courts check a law passed by the government?	Courts can decide that a law does not follow the Constitution.
4	What are the first ten amendments called? Name two freedoms or protections listed in the passage.	They are called the Bill of Rights. Answers may include freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly, petition, a fair trial, or protection from unreasonable searches.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Congress considers a law that would let officers search homes without a good reason. The legislative branch would write and pass the law. The judicial branch could decide whether the law follows the Constitution. This law could affect protection from unreasonable searches.

Accept branch roles and rights stated accurately in the passage. For Your Turn, accept varied realistic laws if the student correctly explains a branch action and connects the situation to a Bill of Rights freedom or protection.