

Power Has Limits

How Georgia's branches share power and limit one another

SS8CG1.b "Explain separation of powers and checks and balances among Georgia's three branches of government."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the three sentences that name a branch and state its main job. Circle the three check sentences that begin "For example," "This override," and "This judicial review," then write E, L, or J beside each circle for the branch using the check.

Three Branches, Shared Limits

- ① Georgia's government divides power among three branches so that no one group controls every decision. This separation of powers gives the General Assembly, the legislative branch, the job of making laws. The governor leads the executive branch and carries out state laws. Georgia's courts make up the judicial branch, which decides cases by applying the law and the Georgia Constitution. Each branch has a different main responsibility. Together, their decisions affect people across Georgia in daily life and help protect individual rights.
- ② Checks and balances are the powers branches use to limit one another. For example, the governor may veto, or reject, a bill passed by the General Assembly. That veto checks the legislative branch. The General Assembly can check the governor in return. If the House and Senate each approve a bill again by a two-thirds vote of their elected members, the bill can become law despite the veto. This override keeps the governor from having the final word on every bill. It requires broad agreement in both chambers.
- ③ The judicial branch also checks laws. When a court decides a case, it may determine that a state law conflicts with the Georgia Constitution. A court can then rule that law unconstitutional and refuse to enforce it in that case. This judicial review checks the legislative branch because lawmakers cannot make a law that overrides the Constitution. Checks and balances do not erase separation of powers. Instead, each branch keeps its own main job while having limited ways to prevent another branch from using power without limits.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How does separation of powers divide work between the General Assembly and the governor?

2 What check can the governor use on a bill passed by the General Assembly?

3 How can the General Assembly check the governor after a veto?

4 How does judicial review check the legislative branch?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Invent a Georgia bill. In four sentences, explain what the General Assembly does, what the governor does, how the legislature can respond, and what a court could do if the law conflicts with the Georgia Constitution.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the three sentences that name a branch and state its main job. Circle the three check sentences that begin “For example,” “This override,” and “This judicial review,” then write E, L, or J beside each circle for the branch using the check. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does separation of powers divide work between the General Assembly and the governor?	The General Assembly makes laws, while the governor leads the executive branch and carries out state laws.
2	What check can the governor use on a bill passed by the General Assembly?	The governor can veto, or reject, the bill.
3	How can the General Assembly check the governor after a veto?	The House and Senate can each approve the bill again by a two-thirds vote of their elected members. The bill can then become law despite the veto.
4	How does judicial review check the legislative branch?	A court may find that a state law conflicts with the Georgia Constitution, rule it unconstitutional, and refuse to enforce it in that case.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The General Assembly passes a bill requiring public high schools to begin at 6:00 a.m. The governor vetoes the bill. The House and Senate each vote again by two-thirds of their elected members, so the bill becomes law. In a case challenging the law, a court finds that it conflicts with the Georgia Constitution and rules it unconstitutional.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the branches’ roles and checks. For the open response, accept any realistic invented bill that correctly shows the legislative role, a veto, a two-thirds override by both chambers, and possible judicial review.