Three Branches at Work

Read how Indiana's state government makes, carries out, and applies laws.

4.C.3 "Identify and explain the major responsibilities of the legislative (Article 4), executive (Article 5), and judicial branches (Article 7) of state government as written in the Indiana Constitution."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the name of each branch. Underline one sentence in each paragraph that tells what that branch does, so you can compare their jobs.

A Rule for the Road

1. Imagine that drivers speed past a busy school crossing. Some families ask for a rule that would apply across Indiana. Article 4 of the Indiana Constitution gives lawmaking power to the General Assembly, the state's legislative branch. Its two parts are the House of Representatives and the Senate. Members can write, discuss, and vote on a bill about road safety. If the bill becomes law, it sets a rule for people to follow.

2. A new law does not carry itself out. Article 5 of Indiana's Constitution gives executive power to the governor. The governor leads the executive branch and must see that state laws are faithfully carried out. State agencies can help put a road safety law into action. Before a bill becomes law, the governor may sign it or veto it. A veto sends the bill back to the General Assembly.

3. What if two people disagree about what a road safety law means? Article 7 of Indiana's Constitution gives power to the judicial branch, which includes the Indiana Supreme Court and circuit courts. Courts hear cases and explain what laws mean when deciding them. A judge may decide whether someone broke a law in a case. Courts do not write bills or lead state agencies. Their job is to decide cases by applying the law.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Some families want a statewide rule about bike helmets. Which branch could work on a bill for this rule, and what would its members do?

2. A new state law requires playground safety checks. Which branch must see that the law is carried out, and who leads it?

3. Two people disagree about what a state law on fences means. Which branch could settle their disagreement in a case, and how?

4. A bill about road safety passes the General Assembly. Which branch voted on it, and what can the governor do next?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a new state issue not mentioned in the passage or questions. Write three sentences, one for each branch, naming the branch and explaining how it could help with your issue.

ANSWER KEY

Three Branches at Work

GRADE 4 · 4.C.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the name of each branch. Underline one sentence in each paragraph that tells what that branch does, so you can compare their jobs. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Some families want a statewide rule about bike helmets. Which branch could work on a bill for this rule, and what would its members do?	**The legislative branch could work on it. Members of the General Assembly could write, discuss, and vote on a bill.**
2	A new state law requires playground safety checks. Which branch must see that the law is carried out, and who leads it?	**The executive branch must see that the law is carried out. The governor leads it.**
3	Two people disagree about what a state law on fences means. Which branch could settle their disagreement in a case, and how?	**The judicial branch could hear the case, explain what the law means, and apply it.**
4	A bill about road safety passes the General Assembly. Which branch voted on it, and what can the governor do next?	**The legislative branch voted on the bill. The governor can sign or veto it.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

For a new state rule about life jackets on boats, the legislative branch could write and vote on a bill. The executive branch could see that the new law is carried out. If people disagree about what the law means, the judicial branch could decide a case by applying it.

Accept any new state issue if the response accurately explains a distinct responsibility for each branch. Students may name the General Assembly, governor, or courts instead of the branch names if each role is clear.