Power Without a Crown

Compare Hamilton's executive with the modern presidency

USG.C.4.2.B "Compare the original intent of the Chief Executive's roles as described by Hamilton in Federalist Paper No.69 to the modern presidency."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a presidential power Hamilton described in each paragraph, then circle a related modern practice. Number each matched pair to track what has changed.

The President Hamilton Defended

1. In 1788, Alexander Hamilton wrote Federalist No. 69 to answer a fear: Would the proposed president act like a king? Hamilton said the president would command the armed forces, but Congress would have the power to declare war. A British monarch, by contrast, could declare war. Today, presidents direct a much larger military and have sent forces into conflicts without a formal declaration of war. Congress still controls military funding and can set legal limits on deployments.

2. Hamilton also described a president who could make treaties only with the approval of two-thirds of senators present. A monarch could make treaties without that vote. Today's presidents still need Senate approval for treaties, but they also make executive agreements with other countries that do not require a treaty vote. These agreements can address trade, security, or cooperation, although they cannot override federal law. Modern diplomacy thus gives presidents another route for dealing with foreign governments.

3. For domestic government, Hamilton described a president who would enforce laws and nominate major officers, with Senate consent required for appointments. The president could not write laws alone. Modern presidents oversee many more federal agencies and use executive orders to direct how those agencies carry out existing law. Such orders can have wide effects, but courts can block orders that violate the Constitution or statutes. Across these roles, presidential action has grown in reach, while checks by Congress and the courts remain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the president's military role today differ from the role Hamilton described? What check remains?

2. Compare Hamilton's treaty rule with one way modern presidents reach agreements abroad.

3. How has the president's role in carrying out laws changed since Hamilton's account? What limits executive orders?

4. Across these roles, what pattern do you see in presidential power and its checks? Use one detail from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a foreign navy threatens U.S. ships. In four sentences, advise the president by comparing Hamilton's description with modern practice in military command and diplomacy, and identify one check that still applies.

ANSWER KEY

Power Without a Crown

HIGH SCHOOL · USG.C.4.2.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a presidential power Hamilton described in each paragraph, then circle a related modern practice. Number each matched pair to track what has changed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does the president's military role today differ from the role Hamilton described? What check remains?	**Presidents now direct a much larger military and have sent forces into conflicts without a formal war declaration. Congress still controls funding and can set limits on deployments.**
2	Compare Hamilton's treaty rule with one way modern presidents reach agreements abroad.	**Hamilton described treaties requiring approval from two-thirds of senators present. Modern presidents still need that approval for treaties but can also make executive agreements without a treaty vote.**
3	How has the president's role in carrying out laws changed since Hamilton's account? What limits executive orders?	**Modern presidents oversee many more agencies and direct their work through executive orders. Courts can block orders that violate the Constitution or statutes.**
4	Across these roles, what pattern do you see in presidential power and its checks? Use one detail from the passage.	**Presidential action has grown in reach, but checks remain. For example, presidents can make executive agreements, while treaties still require Senate approval.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Hamilton described a commander who could direct forces but could not declare war, a power reserved for Congress. Today, the president could direct the much larger military to protect U.S. ships without a formal war declaration. Hamilton's treaties required approval from two-thirds of senators present, but the president could seek an executive agreement on safety at sea instead. Congress could still limit a deployment through laws and funding.

Accept other accurate comparisons grounded in the passage. An executive agreement is not a treaty and cannot override federal law.