

You Be the Congress!

As a member of the Congress, or the legislative branch, you have the power to:

- Introduce new laws;
- Override a presidential veto;
- Coin money;
- Borrow money on behalf of the United States;
- Appropriate money to the executive branch (the president);
- Declare war; and
- Impeach or remove the president.

You can check the powers of the president by:

- Overriding a presidential veto on a bill;
- Impeaching or removing the president; and
- Approving presidential appointments to the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, and federal agencies (like the F.B.I.).

You can check the powers of the Supreme Court by:

- Confirming judiciary appointments to the Court;
- Impeaching or removing justices; and
- Proposing new amendments to the Constitution.

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Directions for Part One: Read the role-playing scenario below and familiarize yourself with your branch of government's goal. Then, brainstorm a list of actions/steps that your branch has the power to take in order to accomplish your goal. An example is provided for you.

Scenario/Goal:

After much prolonged debate, you and some of your fellow members of the Congress have decided that seatbelts should be removed from all cars because they tend to wrinkle your new suits and don't really protect you all that much anyway. You begin brainstorming actions you can take to accomplish this goal within a year's time.

Actions to Accomplish Your Goal:

- *You introduce a bill that bans seatbelts from all cars sold in the United States after 2011.*
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Directions for Part Two: Think about the goals that the other two branches of government have presented to you. Given the ways in which you can check their powers, brainstorm a list of actions/steps you would take to check each branch's power and make it difficult for each branch to accomplish its goal.

Actions to Check the President's Goal:

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Actions to Check the Supreme Court's Goal:

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