

Civics & Government: Separation of Powers & Checks and Balances



Use the matching sheet ID when checking answers.

Part A: Constitutional Analysis. Examine how the three branches of American government interact and balance authority.

1. If the President vetoes a bill passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate, what constitutional check can Congress exercise to enact the bill into federal law anyway?

Answer: A. Congress can override the presidential veto with a two-thirds supermajority vote in both chambers.

Article I, Section 7 of the U.S. Constitution provides that Congress may override an executive veto if two-thirds of both the House and Senate vote in favor.

2. Under the landmark Supreme Court decision in Marbury v. Madison (1803), what essential check does the Judicial Branch possess over both Congress and the President?

Answer: A. The power to declare legislative acts or executive orders unconstitutional (Judicial Review)

Judicial Review empowers the federal judiciary to review legislative laws and executive actions and strike them down if they violate the U.S. Constitution.

3. When the President nominates a candidate to serve as a federal judge or Cabinet secretary, which constitutional body must provide 'Advice and Consent' by voting to confirm the appointment?

Answer: B. The United States Senate

Article II, Section 2 vests the Senate with the exclusive power to confirm presidential nominations for federal judges, ambassadors, and high-ranking executive officials.

Part B: Checks and Balances System Matrix. Identify which branch exercises each constitutional check.

Sort these items: Can impeach and remove federal judges and executive officials from office; Can veto acts of Congress and negotiate foreign treaties; Can declare laws passed by Congress unconstitutional via judicial review; Controls federal taxation, budget appropriations, and confirms judicial appointments; Appoints federal judges and grants executive pardons for federal offenses; Holds lifetime tenure during good behavior, insulating decisions from political pressure

Legislative Checks	Executive Checks	Judicial Checks
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