You Be The President!

As president, or the head of the executive branch, you have the power to:

* Propose laws to the Congress (the legislative branch);
* Sign bills into law;
* Veto bills from becoming laws;
* Negotiate treaties with foreign countries;
* Make executive appointments (to the Cabinet; to the Supreme Court; to federal agencies like the F.B.I.; etc.); and
* Grant pardons to federal offenders.

## You can check the powers of the Congress by:

* Proposing new legislation; and
* Vetoing bills from becoming laws.

## You can check the powers of the Supreme Court by:

* Appointing judges who share your political viewpoints; and
* Enforcing the Court’s decisions.



# 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 a spontaneous trip to your favourite restaurant, McDonald’s, you decide that, maybe, just maybe, the secret to world peace can be found in a Big Mac, French fries, and a vanilla milkshake. With a burst of energy, you sprint back to the White House and head straight for the Oval Office. Inside, you begin brainstorming a series of actions you can take to make McDonald’s a more prominent part of your presidency.

**Actions to Accomplish Your Goal:**

* You propose a law to the Congress requiring every school to replace the Pledge of Allegiance with the “Big Mac Song” ("Two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions on a sesame seed bun.")

# 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 Congress’ Goal:**

**Actions to Check the Supreme Court’s Goal:**

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.



# 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 2020.

# 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:**

**Actions to Check the Supreme Court’s Goal:**

You Be The Supreme Court!

## As a member of the Supreme Court, or the highest court in the judicial branch, you have the power to:

* Declare laws unconstitutional; and
* Interpret/Make meaning of laws.

## You can check the powers of the president by:

* Declaring executive acts unconstitutional.

## You can check the powers of the Congress by:

* Declaring laws unconstitutional.



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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:

You and your fellow Supreme Court justices have decided that you are sick and tired of the ways in which the president and members of the Congress abuse their authority. From now on, you have decided, if either the president or members of the Congress take actions that are not specifically permitted by the Constitution, you will declare the actions unconstitutional. For example: The president and any congressperson can mail business-related correspondence for free, a privilege called “franking.” You believe it is time to stamp out this abuse of authority and force them to adhere to the principles of the Constitution.

**Actions to Accomplish Your Goal:**

* You rule in favor of Cliff Clavin in Clavin v. United States (2018), a case in which a disgruntled postal worker sues the U.S. government for theft of stamps.

# 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:**

**Actions to Check the Congress’ Goal:**