

The Separation of Powers

The Constitution limited the U.S. government by creating a **separation of powers** in which no branch can do its job alone; each depends on the other.

The **legislative branch** is made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate, which make the nation's laws.

The **executive branch** is made up of the president and the offices under his direction, which carry out the laws.

The **judicial branch** is made up of the courts, which interpret laws and decide how the laws should be applied.

POWERS

The legislative branch (Congress) can do the following:

- write bills
- hold hearings on bills before voting
- confirm (approve) people appointed to offices by the president
- remove the president or federal judges from office if they break the law
- approve Constitutional amendments before sending them to the states to ratify
- declare war and approve treaties with foreign countries

The executive branch (the president) can do the following:

- propose new laws for Congress to pass
- veto bills passed by Congress
- call Congress into session for special reasons
- appoint federal judges
- appoint people to work in departments that are part of the executive branch
- Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces
- makes treaties with foreign countries

The judicial branch (federal judges) can do the following:

- declare laws or executive branch actions unconstitutional
- conduct trials
- sentence convicted persons

NAME _____

COMPARE AND CONTRAST THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Write the role of each branch and then state if the responsibilities are the same as or different from your country.

United States of America

Your country

LEGISLATIVE

write bills
holds hearings/voting

remove president from office if
he breaks the law

declare war

EXECUTIVE

gives new laws to Congress
vetoes bills passed by Congress

appoint federal judges

makes treaties w/ foreign countries

JUDICIAL

declares some actions or
laws unconstitutional
conducts trials
sentence convicted persons