

## WHO'S GOT THE POWER?

Learning Objectives: The students will

1. Identify and explain the basic functions of the three branches of government.
2. Identify examples of the system of checks and balances outlined in the U.S. Constitution.
3. Enhance their critical thinking skills by analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information.

TEKS: SS 5.17A,B 5.25B, 5.26C

Materials Needed: Computer, LCD projector, Who's Got the Power (Game) PowerPoint Presentation that accompanies this lesson, sets of the "Checks and Balances Signs" attachment, cut into separate signs, prizes (optional)

Vocabulary: Amendment, branch of government, checks and balances, discretionary, executive, impeach, judicial, legislative, override, Supreme Court, unconstitutional, veto

Teaching Strategy:

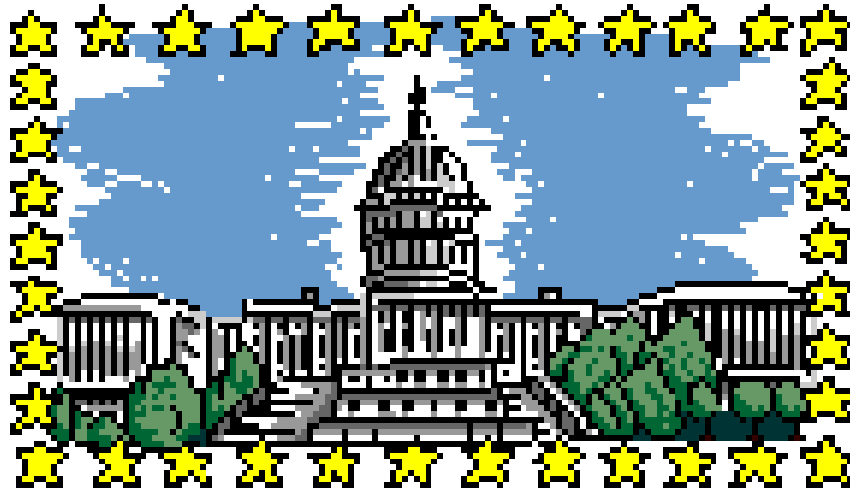
1. Note: Students should have been introduced to information on checks and balances preceding this activity.
2. Divide the class into teams of 3 or 4 students. Appoint one of the students on the team to be the score keeper and give each group a set of "Checks and Balances" signs.
3. Tell students that they are going to play a game about checks and balances called "Who's Got the Power?" They will be given a situation and must decide which branch of government is responsible for the stated action. Teams will indicate their answer by holding up the correct sign, when asked by the teacher, and their team will earn 10 points for giving the correct response.
4. Teams who give the correct answer will be able to gain an extra 20 bonus points if they can name the branch of government that can check that power.

5. The game will consist of 12 regular questions and 12 bonus questions. At the end of the game every team will have a chance to earn 50 points by answering the “Final Check” bonus question correctly.
6. The team with the most points at the end of the game is the winner. The teacher may award prizes to the winning team, if desired.

Extension for Gifted and Talented: Students will complete the following analogy: The system of Checks and Balances is like \_\_\_\_\_ because\_\_\_\_\_.

# CHECKS AND BALANCES SIGNS

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Legislative Branch



Executive Branch



# Judicial Branch

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