

Possible Answers for Branches of Government Poster Project

For each poster, look for statements that are identical or similar to those below. Advise the students to read the fact sheets on the other two branches as they may contain additional information (e.g. the judicial branch spells out Congress' role in establishing federal courts).

Encourage students to include as much content as possible in their posters.

Legislative Branch:

- Initiate revenue bills
- Establish annual budget
- Levee taxes/tariffs
- Authorize borrowing/spending (including mandating how monies are spent)
- Impeach federal officials, including Supreme Court justices
- Approve presidential appointments
- Ratify treaties
- Declare war
- Write and pass laws
- Change existing laws
- Establishes district courts (which try federal cases)
- Establishes federal courts of appeal
- Determine number of federal courts
- Override presidential vetoes
- Can compel testimony in investigations
- Conducts oversight of executive branch through hearings
- Maintains Government Accountability Office (GAO)

Executive Branch:

- Executes laws
- Either signs or vetoes laws passed by Congress
- Acts as the head of the military, is the Commander in Chief
- Appoint federal officials
- Negotiates treaties
- Issues executive orders (governing executive officials)
- Grants pardons or clemency to those accused of federal crimes (excluding impeachment cases)
- Gives the State of the Union Address each year

The additional handout on the Executive Offices is informative, but students should avoid using the offices themselves as responsibilities or roles of the executive office and focus primarily on the tasks of the president. These offices are subcategories to the federal commissions.

Judicial Branch:

- Federal courts interpret the laws
- Federal courts determine a law's constitutionality
- SCOTUS is the highest court in the land (decisions cannot be appealed elsewhere)
- SCOTUS settles cases between states
- SCOTUS hears appeals from federal courts and state supreme courts
- Appellate courts review district court cases
- District courts try federal cases
- Lower courts hear criminal and civil cases
- Courts can compel testimony with a subpoena

Remind students that the judicial branch is more than just the Supreme Court. It also includes district and appellate courts.