

Lesson 3

# The Federal Government



In this lesson,  
you will work  
with words  
about the U.S.  
federal government.  
Read this  
description of the  
three branches of  
government.

In the U.S., the **federal** government is divided into three **branches**. The branches are interrelated. They **balance** each other.

One branch of the government is the legislative branch. The legislative branch is also called Congress. Each state sends elected officials to Washington, D.C. The officials **serve** in Congress. Congress is divided into two houses. Senators serve in the Senate. Representatives serve in the House of Representatives. Senators serve for six years, and representatives serve for two years. Both types of legislators can be re-elected. Senators and representatives often serve many **terms**. The legislative branch **proposes** and votes on new laws.

Another branch of the government is the executive branch. The executive branch **enforces** the laws. The president is the head of the executive branch. The president has the power to **veto** some decisions made by the legislative branch. The country **elects** a president every four years. A president can be re-elected one time.

The third branch of government is the judicial branch, or the courts. The highest court is the Supreme Court. There are nine judges on the Supreme Court. They are called justices. Supreme Court justices are **appointed** by the president. They are also **approved** by Congress. They serve for life—until they decide to retire or until they die. The justices explain and interpret the meaning of laws for the people.

The U.S. Constitution **created** the three branches of government. The people who wrote the Constitution wanted the branches to balance each other. The legislative branch proposes and votes on laws. The executive branch can veto those laws and send them back to the legislative branch. And the judicial branch can explain laws and decide whether those laws agree with the ideas in the Constitution.

**Exercise 1**

## Definitions

Write each word next to its definition.

appoint  
approve  
balance

branch  
create  
elect

enforce  
federal  
propose

serve  
term  
veto

1. to spend a period of time doing a job, usually in the government
2. to select someone by voting
3. to make people obey a law or rule
4. having to do with a central government of a country that contains more than one state
5. to formally suggest a plan
6. to officially refuse to allow something to happen, especially after another group has agreed
7. to officially accept a proposal
8. a part or division of government or another organization
9. to designate or choose someone to do a job or duty
10. a period of time that a person does a government job
11. to make equal so that one part is not more important or more powerful than another
12. to make something that did not exist before

### Exercise 2

## Abbreviations

Match each abbreviation with the word that it represents.

Many job titles and other words associated with the government are abbreviated. When you read an abbreviation, you say the whole word. For example, when you read **Sen.**, before a person's name, you say **Senator**.

- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| _____ 1. Gov.  | a. Vice President |
| _____ 2. Del.  | b. Senator        |
| _____ 3. D     | c. Governor       |
| _____ 4. Rep.  | d. Democrat       |
| _____ 5. dept. | e. government     |
| _____ 6. govt. | f. department     |
| _____ 7. Sen.  | g. Republican     |
| _____ 8. R     | h. Delegate       |
| _____ 9. VP    | i. Representative |

### Exercise 3: Word Builder

## Prefix

Choose a word from the box, add *inter-* to it, and write it on the line.

The prefix *inter-* can mean *between or among two or more things or people*.

<b>city</b>	<b>continental</b>	<b>national</b>	<b>related</b>
<b>connected</b>	<b>dependent</b>	<b>office</b>	<b>state</b>

1. The three branches are connected in many ways, so we say they are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. That \_\_\_\_\_ company does business in several countries.
3. The bus that goes from Chicago to New York is an \_\_\_\_\_ bus.
4. The trade between Europe and South America is \_\_\_\_\_ trade.
5. The three branches are related to each other, so we say they are \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Some plants and animals depend on each other, so we say they are \_\_\_\_\_.
7. A road that goes between states is called an \_\_\_\_\_ highway.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ mail goes between two or more offices in one organization.

#### Exercise 4: Word Builder

## Suffix

Study each rule. Then fill in the adverb form of the adjective in parentheses.

The suffix **-ly** changes an adjective into an adverb. An adverb tells how an action is done.

**Rule 1: If an adjective ends in **-al**, add **-ly**. This results in a double **l**.**

**Example:** **national + ly = nationally**

1. (federal) Some judges are appointed \_\_\_\_\_.
2. (national) The president is elected \_\_\_\_\_.
3. (local) Many decisions are made \_\_\_\_\_.
4. (personal) The president doesn't enforce laws \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rule 2: If an adjective ends in **-le**, drop the **-e** and add **-ly**.**

**Example:** **responsible + ly = responsibly**

5. (possible) The president may \_\_\_\_\_ veto the proposal.
6. (remarkable) \_\_\_\_\_, the unpopular senator was re-elected.
7. (responsible) Judges must act \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rule 3: If an adjective ends in a consonant and **-y**, change the **-y** to **-i** before adding **-ly**.**

**Example:** **easy + ly = easily**

8. (happy) The official \_\_\_\_\_ accepted the appointment.
9. (easy) The president was re-elected \_\_\_\_\_.
10. (busy) The senators are \_\_\_\_\_ working on new laws.

**Rule 4: If an adjective ends in **-ic**, add **-ally**.**

**Example:** **historic + ly = historically**

11. (patriotic) He speaks \_\_\_\_\_ about his country.
12. (logic) The justices work \_\_\_\_\_ through the problem.
13. (realistic) Can a justice \_\_\_\_\_ serve his or her whole life?
14. (historic) \_\_\_\_\_, all justices were men. Recently, however, some women have become justices.

### Exercise 5

## Synonyms

Look at each underlined word. Choose a word from the box with a similar meaning and write it on the line.

agency  
appointed

justice  
national

recommendation  
reject

1. The Bureau of ATF is the \_\_\_\_\_ that regulates alcohol, tobacco, and firearms.
2. The last president \_\_\_\_\_ two justices, and the current one selected two also.
3. Congress will discuss the president's \_\_\_\_\_ after the formal nomination is presented.
4. He was a judge in a lower court, and then he became a \_\_\_\_\_ on the Supreme Court.
5. The president vetoed the proposal and promised to \_\_\_\_\_ the next one as well.
6. Many agencies of the federal government are located in the \_\_\_\_\_ capital region around Washington, D.C.

### Exercise 6

## Collocations

In each of the following, circle the word that best completes the sentence.

*Hold and take are general verbs that are used in many collocations.*

1. The committee is (holding/taking) a meeting today.
2. New laws often (hold/take) effect on January 1.
3. The new president (holds/takes) office on January 20.
4. He hopes to be elected, but no one knows what the future (holds/takes).
5. That country will (hold/take) elections next year.
6. The candidate (held/took) credit for a lot of the improvements.

Exercise 7

## Confusing Words

In each of the following, write *capital* or *capitol* on the line.

**Capital** and **capitol** are both used to talk about the government, but they have different meanings. A **capital** is a city where the government of a state or country is located. A **capitol** is the building where the people who make the laws meet.

1. He took an elevator to his office on the fourth floor of the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Is Chicago the \_\_\_\_\_ of Illinois?
3. When we drove through the city at night, we noticed that there were some lights on in the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. If you live in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the U.S., you might see the president.
5. The representative parks in a garage near the \_\_\_\_\_ and walks up to his office.
6. Often the \_\_\_\_\_ of a state is not the largest city in that state.
7. We took a bus tour of the \_\_\_\_\_. We drove past all of the important buildings.

In each of the following, write *principle(s)* or *principal(s)* on the line.

**Principle** and **principal** sound the same but have different meanings and can be different parts of speech. **Principle** is a noun that means a *basic idea or belief*. **Principal** can be an adjective that means *main* or *most important*. It can also be a noun that means *the person in charge of a school*.

8. The teacher talked to the \_\_\_\_\_ about the student.
9. The \_\_\_\_\_ job of the legislative branch is to make laws.
10. The Constitution outlines the basic \_\_\_\_\_ that guide the government.
11. Income taxes are the country's \_\_\_\_\_ source of income.
12. I don't understand the general \_\_\_\_\_ on which the idea is based.

### Exercise 8

## Context Clues

Copy the two words or phrases with opposite meanings in each of the following.

When you guess from context, you can often find a word with an opposite meaning in the same sentence to help you. Look for words like *different*, *but*, or *while* to show that a sentence contains words with opposite meanings.

1. Senators are elected, while judges are appointed.

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2. Two proposals were rejected, but one was accepted.

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3. Working for local government is different from working for the federal government.

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4. Some people think businesses are too regulated, but others think businesses are free to do what they want.

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5. The president fired one advisor, but the other one resigned.

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6. Some committee meetings are boring, but others are interesting.

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7. The president agrees with some ideas, but is opposed to others.

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8. He was pleased with the process, but disappointed in the outcome.

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9. During the crisis, the president was calm while his advisors seemed troubled.

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10. One candidate seems to be aware of the problems, while his opponent seems to be ignorant of the issues.

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### Exercise 9

## Parts of Speech

Identify the underlined words. Write *V* on the line if the word is a verb, and write *Adj.* if it is an adjective.

Many common vocabulary words that end in -ed can work either as verbs or as adjectives. Look for a verb after a subject and before an object. Look for an adjective before a noun.

1. The last president appointed several judges.
2. The president is an elected official.
3. Supreme Court justice is an appointed position.
4. That agency regulated banking during the 1930s.
5. The committee proposed several laws.
6. A bill is a proposed law.
7. The president nominated several officials.
8. The class elected a representative for the student council.
9. Interstate shipping is a regulated industry.
10. The president vetoed that proposal.

### Exercise 10

## Dictionary

Identify the part of speech of each underlined word. Write *N*, *V*, or *Adj.* on the line.

Then look up the word in your dictionary. Choose and write the best definition.

1. My neighbor was just elected to the county board of supervisors.

definition: \_\_\_\_\_

2. The secretary of state is a member of the president's cabinet.

definition: \_\_\_\_\_

3. The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech.

definition: \_\_\_\_\_

4. A naturalized citizen cannot be elected president.

definition: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which government agency does he work for?

definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Review 1

# Crossword Puzzle

Fill in the puzzle with words from the box.

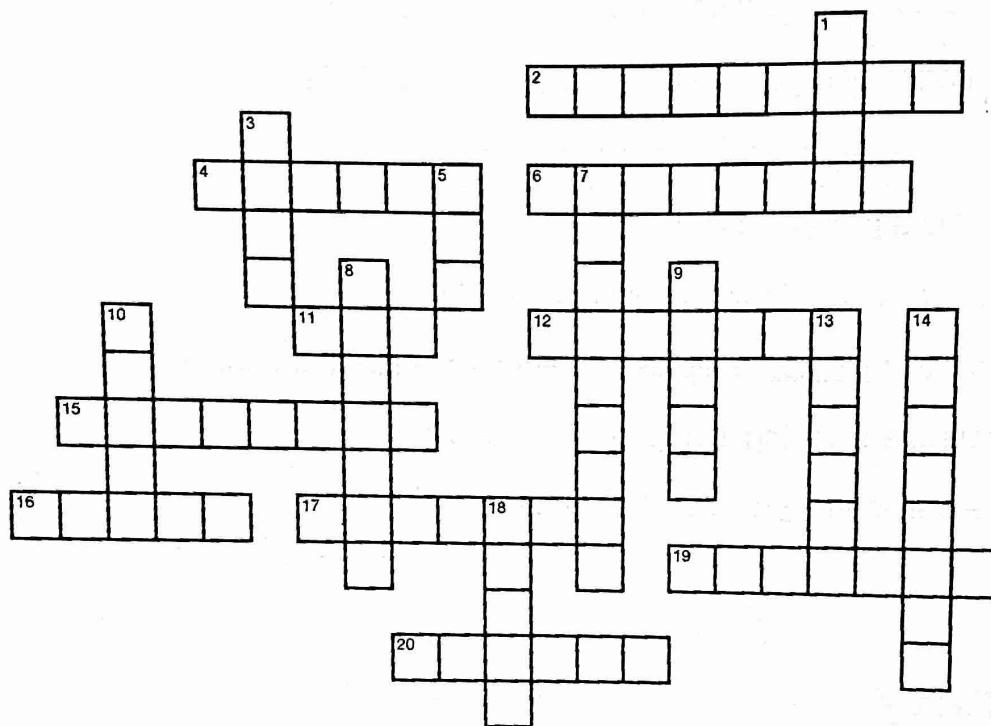
agency  
appoints  
balances  
branches

capitol  
effect  
elect  
elections

enforce  
federal  
govt.  
holds

justice  
principle  
Rep.  
Sen.

serve  
takes  
term  
vetoes



## ACROSS

2. This country holds \_\_\_\_\_ every November.
4. If the president rejects it, he \_\_\_\_\_ it.
6. The president \_\_\_\_\_ his advisors.
11. The abbreviation for Representative is \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The executive branch must \_\_\_\_\_ the laws.
15. There are three \_\_\_\_\_ of government.
16. We \_\_\_\_\_ the president every four years.
17. The senators work in the \_\_\_\_\_ building.
19. A Supreme Court judge is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
20. A government office is often called an \_\_\_\_\_.

## DOWN

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the abbreviation for government.
3. A senator serves a \_\_\_\_\_ of six years.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is the abbreviation for Senator.
7. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a belief on which a system is based.
8. The \_\_\_\_\_ government is in Washington, D.C.
9. No one knows what the future \_\_\_\_\_.
10. A president can only \_\_\_\_\_ two terms.
13. New laws often take \_\_\_\_\_ on January 1.
14. Each branch of the government \_\_\_\_\_ another.
18. The new president \_\_\_\_\_ office in January.

**Review 2**

## Vocabulary in Context

Choose a word from the box and write it on the line.

appointed  
approve

elected  
justices

nomination  
selects

Supreme Court \_\_\_\_\_ aren't \_\_\_\_\_; they are \_\_\_\_\_  
1 2  
by the president. First, the president \_\_\_\_\_ a judge to  
3 4  
become a justice. Then Congress must \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_.  
5 6  
After that, the judge becomes a Supreme Court justice.

effect

elections

office

officials

In the U.S., \_\_\_\_\_ are held every November. Sometimes people vote on new  
7  
laws. The laws generally take \_\_\_\_\_ the year after the election. In most  
8  
elections, government \_\_\_\_\_ are chosen. They generally take  
9  
in January of the following year.  
10

Intercity

interstate

interconnected

international

travel became easier in the 1950s when the federal government  
11  
created the \_\_\_\_\_ highway system. Now all of the cities in the country are  
12  
by a big network of highways. Some of those highways are even  
13  
, since they lead to either Canada or Mexico.  
14