



The Mini Page

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Founded by Betty Debnam

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Next Week: Summer safety



Mini Fact:
Our government works well if the powers are balanced and checked.

The word "check" has many meanings. One of them is to **limit**, or **stop**.

The term "checks and balances" refers to the limits put on each branch of government so that one branch cannot overpower another branch.

The writers of the Constitution "checked" the powers they gave each branch of government. The writers wanted the government's power to be "balanced," or evenly shared, among the three branches.

They thought checks and balances would make government safe and secure. They did not want one branch to threaten our freedom.

Passing laws

For instance, the **Congress** approves a bill, but it can't become a law unless the president signs it.



The president can **veto**, or prevent, a law if he or she doesn't want it to pass. But Congress can **override** the veto by a two-thirds vote of both the Senate and the House.

The Supreme Court might declare a law unconstitutional, even after it has passed.



Voting power

The writers of the Constitution also checked the power of government by setting elections.

Members of Congress and the president are elected for limited terms. If the voters want a change, they can go to the polls and vote officials out of office.



Article II

Article II of the Constitution is about the executive branch (the president). It has four sections.

Section 1

The executive power shall be vested in a president.

- elected for a term of four years.
- there should also be a vice president chosen for the same term.

The section explains how the president and vice president will be elected. (This changed in 1804 with the 12th Amendment.)

- The president will:
- be a natural-born citizen.
 - be at least 35 years old.
 - have lived in the United States for 14 years. If the president dies, the vice president is the **successor**, or replacement.



President Trump meets with troops stationed in England in 2019.

White House photo by Donald C. Griesbach

Section 2

Roles and responsibilities of the president include:

- commander in chief.
- has the power to grant pardons.
- with the advice and consent of Congress, makes treaties, nominates Supreme Court justices and others.

Section 3

The president will:

- give Congress information on the state of the Union.
- execute, or carry out, all laws.
- commission officers.

Section 4

The president, vice president and all civil officers of the United States can be **impeached and convicted** (removed from office) for treason, bribery and other crimes.

In 2005, Betty Debnam, creator of The Mini Page, worked closely with the National Archives in Washington, D.C., to create a nine-part series of issues about our U.S. Constitution. This is the fifth issue in the series, which will continue once a month until Election Day 2020.

Resources

On the Web:

- archives.gov/founding-docs

At the library:

- "What Does the President Do?" by Amanda Miller



Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of the president are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

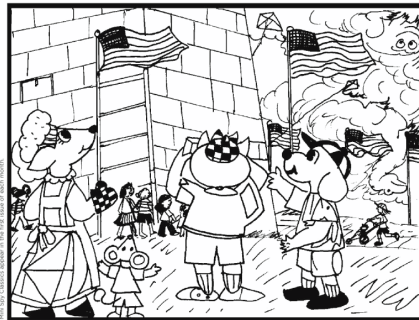
ARTICLE, BALANCE, BRANCH, CHECK, CITIZEN, COMMANDER, CONSTITUTION, EXECUTIVE, FOUR, LIMIT, OVERRIDE, PRESIDENT, SECTION, SUCCESSOR, TERM, VETO, VICE, VOTING.

C B E L C I T R A A R M C R X
H S U C C E S S O R V M R E T
E V I T U C E X E G N I T O V
C H D M I C E D I R R E V O
K C L C O N S T I T U T I O N
H N I T T S E C T I O N V G X
F A M R E D N A M M O C I J F
Q R I U Y R N E Z I T I C A O
I B T C A P B A L A N C E D U
T N E D I S E R P O T E V C R



Mini Spy Classics

Mini Spy and her friends are visiting the Washington Monument. See if you can find the hidden pictures. Then color the picture.



- frog
- fish
- word MINI
- teapot
- sailboat
- letter H
- muffin
- mushroom
- dragon
- ladder
- letter E
- marshmallow
- letter O

Mini Jokes

- Pauly:** What do you call President Washington's false teeth?
Penny: Presidentures!



Eco Note

Researchers say whales may be benefiting from a quieter Earth, thanks to the reduction in worldwide human activities during the coronavirus pandemic. Underwater noise at frequencies known to affect marine mammals has gone down since January. This is mainly because of declines in ocean shipping. Whales are known to change their calling behavior and suffer chronic stress when exposed to ship noise, and scientists want to know how they are now responding to the diminished din.

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For later:

Look in your newspaper for items about the president exercising his duties.

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