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Listed below are a sampling of the important events that led up to America's independence and the adoption of a new Constitution. You will find the year and the significant event that happened during that time.

1789	On March 4th, the new federal government is inaugurated in New York. In April, the first House of Representatives is organized. George Washington is elected the first President on April 6th. He is inaugurated on April 30th. On September 25th, the first 10 amendments (Bill of Rights) are adopted by Congress.	
1788	Eleven states ratify the Constitution and it is put into effect. America prepares to operate under this new document.	
1787	On May 14th, The Constitutional Convention meets in Philadelphia, it lasts until September 17th. Here the delegates reviewed and approved the Constitution.	
1781	The Articles of Confederation are adopted by the states.	
1776	On July 4th, The Second Continental Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence (written by Thomas Jefferson and a committee). A few days later the Liberty Bell is rung in Philadelphia to call the people to the first public reading of the Declaration.	
1775	When the Americans learn the British plan to seize their guns and ammunition, Paul Revere is sent to alert the countryside and gather the Minute Men. An unidentified shot triggers this Battle at Lexington. This starts the American Revolution and also leads to another famous battle, Bunker Hill.	
1774	In response to the Boston Tea Party, the Parliament passes several acts to punish Massachusetts. The colonies name delegates to a congress, The First Continental Congress. On September 5th, 12 of the 13 colonies send a total of 56 delegates to meet in Philadelphia, mainly to deal with Britain's actions.	
1773	With the American colonists and merchants still angry over British tax policies, an uprising called the Boston Tea Party occurs.	
1770	Colonists reduce their boycott of British goods when they withdraw all of the Townshend Act, except the tax on tea. Boston Massacre occurs when an angry crowd of citizens surround a group of soldiers causing them to open fire.	
1763-1765	England decides on a program of taxation and control of the colonies. The American colonists begin organized protests against British rule. Patriotic groups such as the Sons of Liberty are formed. Laws such as the Quartering Act, Stamp Act, and Sugar Act anger the colonists, who are forced to pay unjust taxes and provide supplies to British troops.	

**Questions**

**TRUE OR FALSE?**

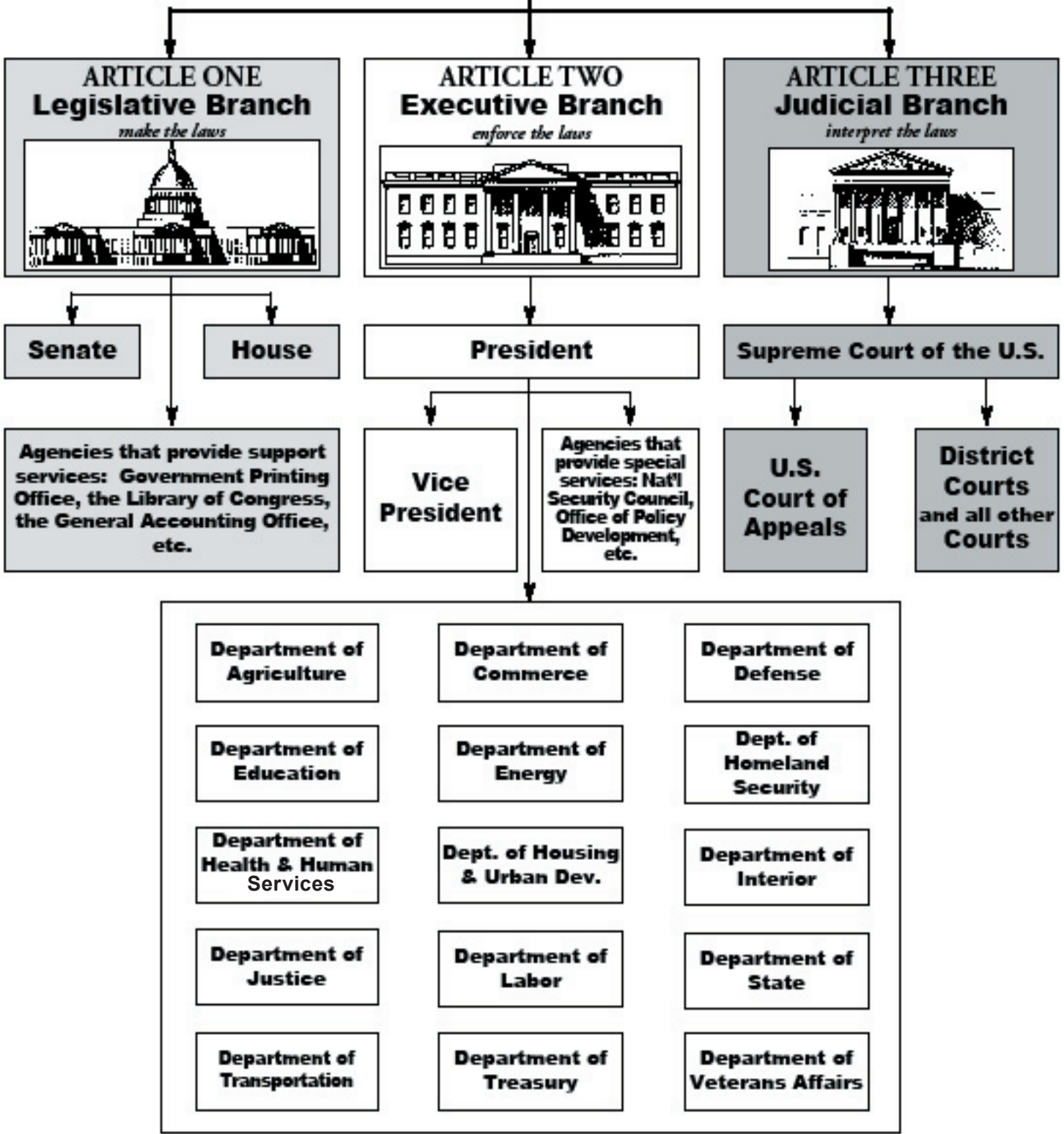
- 1. The Minute Men helped the British at the Battle of Lexington?
- 2. The Boston Tea Party occurred in 1773?
- 3. The colonists especially liked the British Quartering Act and the Sugar Act?
- 4. The Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Second Continental Congress?
- 5. The Bill of Rights was adopted by the Congress in 1789?

**PUT THE 3 EVENTS IN EACH OF THE 4 QUESTIONS BELOW IN CORRECT CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER FROM FIRST TO LAST.**

- 1. Boston Massacre, Declaration of Independence, Washington becomes president. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Articles of Confederation, Boston Tea Party, The Constitution ratified by 11 states. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. England decides on a program of taxation and control of the colonies, Constitutional Convention, Battle of Bunker Hill. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Paul Revere alerts colonists, Stamp Act, First House of Representatives organized. \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENTS: NOW YOU WILL BEGIN A STUDY OF THE 3 BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT AS OUTLINED BELOW. LOOK IT OVER CAREFULLY.**

**THE CONSTITUTION  
SETS UP THREE BRANCHES**



**AFTER YOU REVIEW THIS CHART, BEGIN YOUR STUDY OF THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT ON PAGE 16.**

The authors of the Constitution wanted to be sure that no person or group would seize power and control the American government. To insure that this would not happen, our United States government, under the Constitution, was divided into three parts: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. Each of these three branches has a check on the powers of the others. These checks provide a system of balance in our government, and that is why we call the system *checks and balances*.

You may also hear this system referred to as a *separation of powers*. Although not directly mentioned in the Constitution, the first three articles mark the responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. It gives some power to each branch of government instead of giving all the power to one branch.

These are the most important checks and balances:

1. Executive branch has the power to check the legislative branch by vetoing laws that Congress wants to pass
2. Legislative branch may check the executive branch by passing laws over the veto by two-thirds vote in each house.

3. Judicial branch may check both the legislative and executive by declaring laws unconstitutional.

Obviously, this is not the whole system, but it is the main idea. Other checks and balances include:

**Executive over the judicial branch.** The president appoints all federal judges.

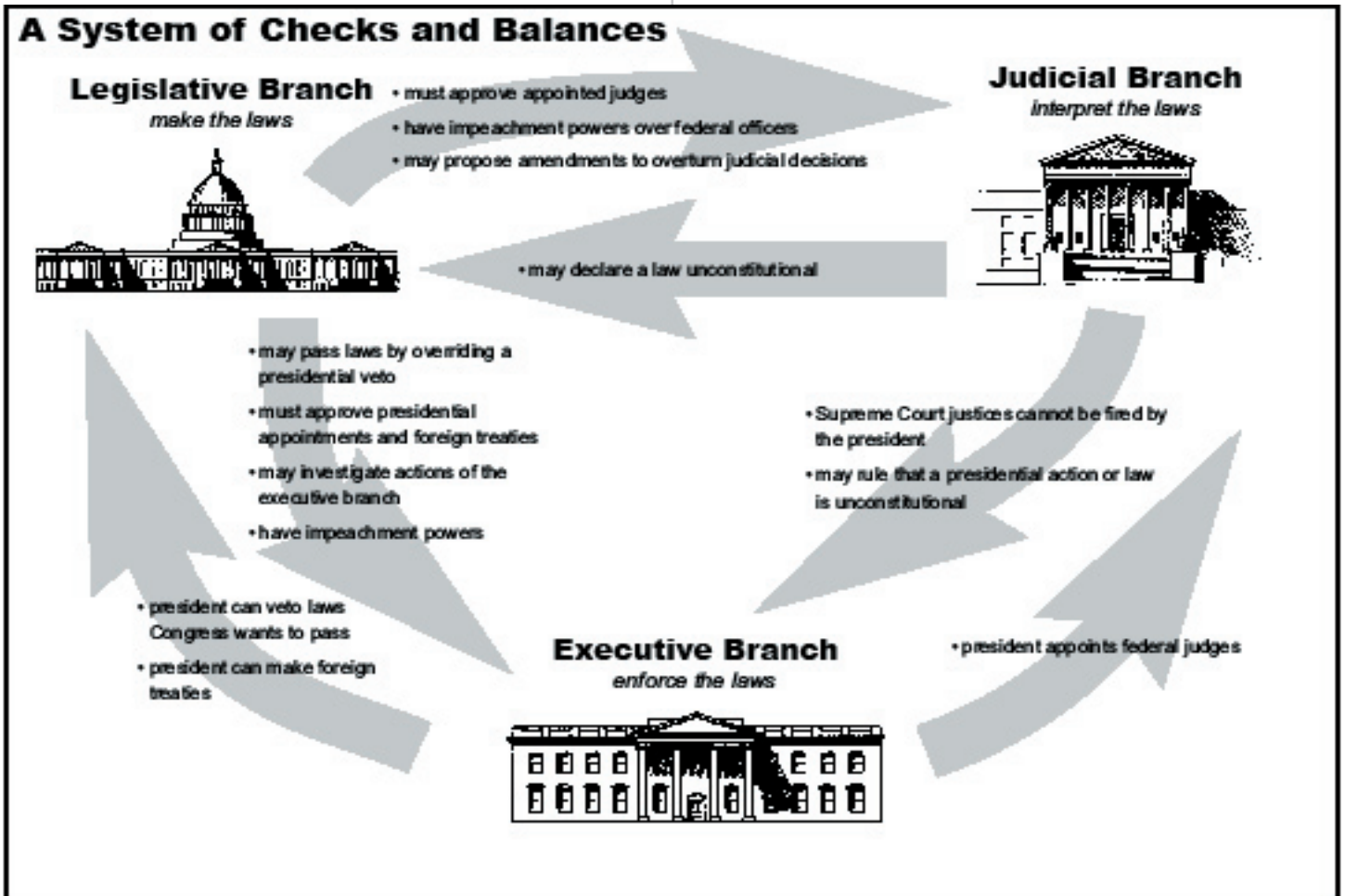
**Legislative over the executive branch.** The legislative branch must approve appointments that the president makes; the Senate must approve treaties that the president makes; and the legislative branch may investigate the executive branch.

**Legislative over the judicial branch.** The legislative branch must approve the president's choice of judges to the judicial branch; may propose constitutional amendments to overturn judicial decisions.

**Legislative over the executive and judicial branch.** The legislative branch has impeachment powers over all federal officers.

**Judicial over the executive branch.** Supreme Court justices cannot be fired by the president.

continued



**BRANCH MATCHING**

Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank at the left.

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| _____ 22. Has two houses                     | A. Executive Branch   |
| _____ 23. Is the court system of our country | B. Legislative Branch |
| _____ 24. Makes the laws                     | C. Judicial Branch    |
| _____ 25. Enforces the laws                  |                       |

**SENATE HOUSE MATCHING**

Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank at the left.

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| _____ 26. Has a 6 year term                           | A. Senate                          |
| _____ 27 Meet in the Capitol Building                 | B. House of Representatives        |
| _____ 28. Elected every two years                     | C. Both the Senate and House       |
| _____ 29. Has the Vice President as presiding officer | D. Neither the Senate or the House |
| _____ 30. Has 435 members                             |                                    |
| _____ 31. Approves or rejects treaties                |                                    |
| _____ 32. Passes bills they hope will become laws     |                                    |
| _____ 33. Has 100 members                             |                                    |

**CABINET RESPONSIBILITIES**

Write the correct letter in the space to the left of the number

- |                                   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| _____ 34. Chief legal officer     | A. Secretary of State                 |
| _____ 35. Manages Social Security | B. Secretary of Defense               |
| _____ 36. Carries out a war plan  | C. Secretary of Human Services        |
| _____ 37. Settling a strike       | D. The Attorney General               |
| _____ 38. Foreign affairs         | E. The Secretary of Labor             |
| _____ 39. Secret Service          | F. The Secretary of Homeland Security |

**TRUE OR FALSE?**

Write a T or F in the space at the left of the question.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. The federal government can admit new states and federal territories.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. A quorum in the House of Representatives is a majority of its members plus one.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. Senators are elected by the vote of all the people in their state.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. Congress gets a new number each time a President is elected.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. One-third of the Senate is elected every two years.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. The largest U.S. state is Texas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. The Constitution allows for laws to be made on subjects that did not even exist in 1787.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. The original 13 colonies included Ohio..
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. There are three methods of proposing new amendments to the Constitution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. The latest election for President was held in 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. Patrick Henry said, "Give me liberty or give me death."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. Our Constitutional Convention was held in Philadelphia in 1776.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. Ben Franklin was President of the Constitutional Convention in 1787.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. The Building in which the Constitutional Convention met is now called Independence Hall.

**The Governor**

The executive branch of New Jersey enforces and administers the laws. The governor is the most important officer here, and the only elected officer in the executive branch.

The New Jersey Constitution states that the governor must be a citizen of the United States for at least 20 years, a qualified voter of the state, have lived in New Jersey for at least seven years prior to the election, and must be at least 30 years of age. The governor serves a four year term but may serve no more than two successive terms. However, after one term out of office, may once again run for election. In the event that the governor cannot complete a term, the President of the Senate temporarily fills the position (next in line would be the Speaker of the Assembly.) This succession was most recently administered in 2004 when Governor Jim McGreevey resigned and President of the Senate Richard Codey temporarily filled this position.

The governor, besides enforcing and administering the law, also has the important duty of vetoing or approving bills passed by the Legislature.

The official residence of the governor is a mansion called *Drumthwacket*, located in Princeton. Here the governor may hold meetings, conduct ceremonies, and other official business.

The governor of the State of New Jersey has many other important duties. Among these are:

1. The governor appoints many members of the state government. Many of these appointments require the approval of the state Senate. The governor may also remove any of these officials he or she feels are incompetent. The governor of New Jersey has more power to appoint state officials than any of the other 49 state governors.
2. With the approval of the Legislature the governor may reorganize any executive agencies in the state which are responsible to the governor.
3. The governor may grant pardons, commutations, and reprieves as he or she thinks proper.
4. The governor must approve the spending of all federal aid grants, state purchases of land, and construction of highways and airports.
5. The governor is commander-in-chief of the state militia, except in cases of national emergency when they are called into federal service. (They are then under the control of the President of the United States.)
6. In addition to having the power to veto legislation, the Legislature.
7. The governor may call special sessions of the Legislature.

**Veto**

The governor may take action on bills by:

1. The regular veto in which the whole bill is rejected, much like the veto of the President.
2. A conditional veto, returning it to the Legislature for changes.
3. The item or reduction veto. This is for appropriation or money bills and means that the governor may approve only some parts of a bill while rejecting others.

The governor may also exercise a so-called “pocket veto” by failing to sign a bill passed in the last 10 days of a two-year legislative session.

The Governor’s Office is similar in some ways to the office of the President of the United States. However, there are some differences. Some of the most important differences are the lack of foreign affairs and national defense in the responsibilities of the governor.

New Jersey has had many famous and talented governors and public officials. Woodrow Wilson is just one example. The lives of these people make an interesting and worthwhile study.

**Questions**

1. What are the qualifications for governor? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the order of succession to the office of governor? \_\_\_\_\_

**TRUE OR FALSE?**

- \_\_\_ 1. The Legislature cannot be called into special session.
- \_\_\_ 2. The governor may remove an appointed official.
- \_\_\_ 3. The governor has the job of enforcing the law.
- \_\_\_ 4. The governor is the commander-in-chief of the state militia.
- \_\_\_ 5. The governor may only serve two successive terms.
- \_\_\_ 6. The governor is in charge of foreign affairs.
- \_\_\_ 7. The governor cannot grant pardons.
- \_\_\_ 8. The governor’s term of office is four years.
- \_\_\_ 9. The governor may veto only a part of a bill and approve the rest.
- \_\_\_ 10. The governor must be 35 years old or older.

**DEFINE**

1. Agency \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pardons \_\_\_\_\_