

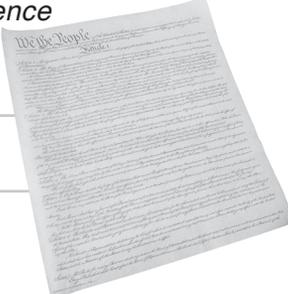
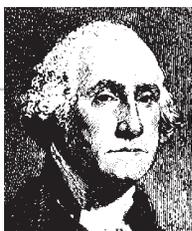
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Listed below is a sampling of the important events that led up to America's independence and the adoption of a new Constitution. You will find the year and the significant event that happened during that time.

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 <i>Sons of Liberty</i> are formed. Laws such as the <i>Quartering Act</i> , <i>Stamp Act</i> , and <i>Sugar Act</i> anger the colonists, who are forced to pay unjust taxes and provide supplies to British troops.	
1770	Colonists reduce their boycott of British goods when they withdraw all of the <i>Townshend Act</i> , except the tax on tea. <i>Boston Massacre</i> occurs when an angry crowd of citizens surround a group of soldiers causing them to open fire.	
1773	With the American colonists and merchants still angry over British tax policies, an uprising called the <i>Boston Tea Party</i> occurs.	
1774	In response to the Boston Tea Party, the Parliament passes several acts to punish Massachusetts. Twelve of the 13 colonies name delegates to a congress, The First Continental Congress. On September 5th they meet mainly to deal with Britain's actions.	
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 <i>Minutemen</i> . An unidentified shot triggers this <i>Battle at Lexington</i> . This starts the American Revolution and also leads to another famous battle, <i>Bunker Hill</i> .	
1776	On July 4th, The Second Continental Congress adopts the <i>Declaration of Independence</i> (written by Thomas Jefferson and a committee). A few days later the <i>Liberty Bell</i> is rung in Philadelphia to call the people to the first public reading of the Declaration.	
1781	The <i>Articles of Confederation</i> are adopted by the states.	
1787	On May 14th, The Constitutional Convention meets in Philadelphia and lasts until September 17th. Here the delegates reviewed and approved the Constitution.	
1788	Nine states ratify the Constitution, and it is put into effect (the remaining four states will ratify by 1790). America prepares to operate under this new document.	
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 (<i>Bill of Rights</i>) are adopted by Congress.	

QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

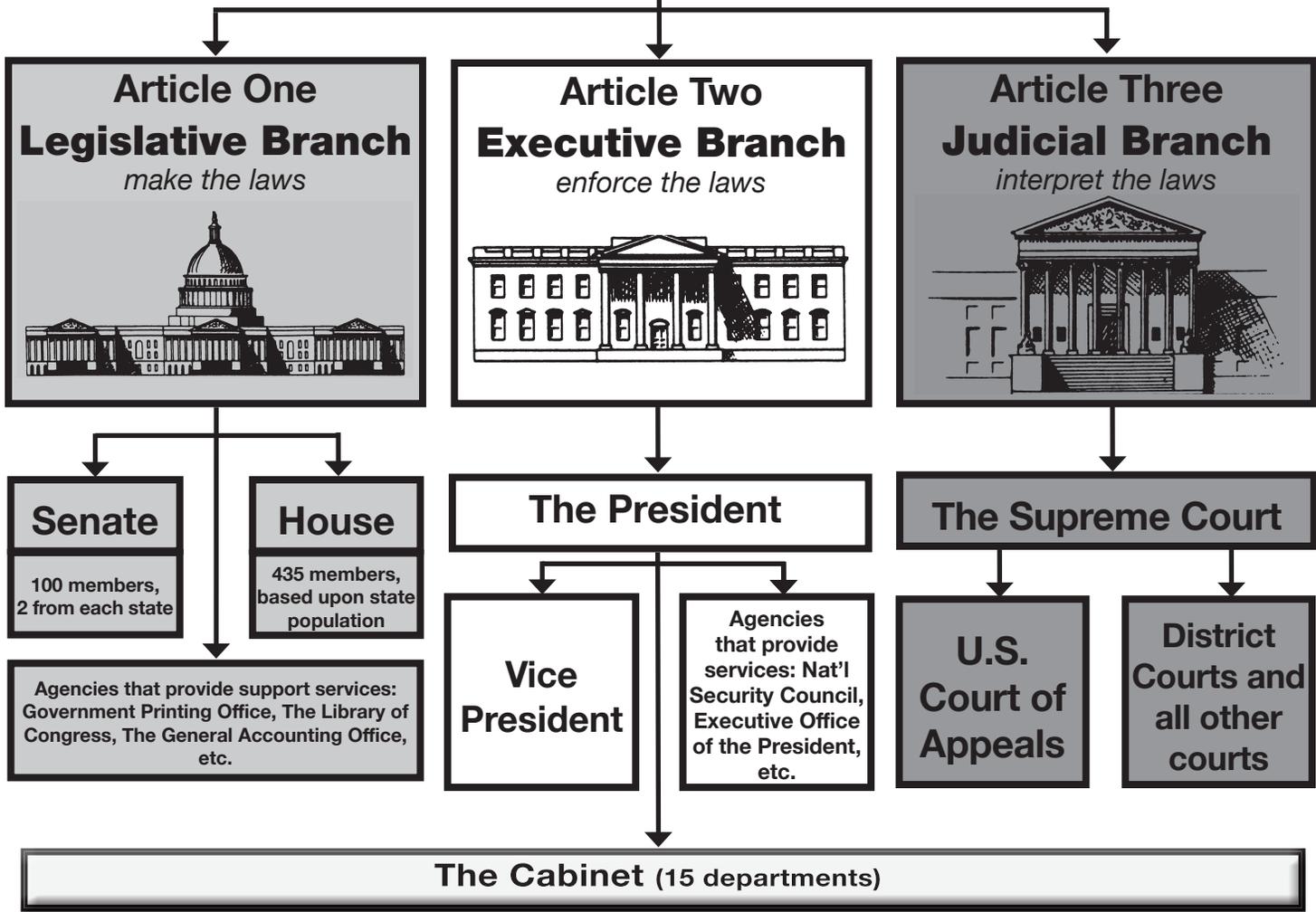
1. The Minutemen helped the British at the Battle of Lexington. _____
2. The Boston Tea Party occurred in 1773. _____
3. The colonists especially liked the British Quartering Act and the Sugar Act. _____
4. The Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Second Continental Congress. _____
5. The Bill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

PUT THE EVENTS IN ORDER. Put the events in chronological order, from most recent to the latest, by using the letter of the event.

1. **a.** Boston Massacre **b.** Declaration of Independence
c. Washington becomes president _____
2. **a.** Articles of Confederation **b.** Boston Tea Party **c.** The Constitution ratified by nine states _____
3. **a.** England decides on a program of taxation and control of the colonies **b.** Constitutional Convention **c.** Battle of Bunker Hill _____
4. **a.** Paul Revere alerts colonists **b.** Stamp Act **c.** First House of Representatives organized _____
5. **a.** Bill of Rights adopted **b.** First Continental Congress is held **c.** Liberty Bell is rung _____

Students: You are now ready to study the three branches of government as outlined below.

The Constitution SETS UP THREE BRANCHES



Department of Agriculture

Department of Commerce

Department of Defense

Department of Education

Department of Energy

Department of Homeland Security

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Department of Interior

Department of Justice

Department of Labor

Department of State

Department of Transportation

Department of Treasury

Department of Veterans Affairs

“All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.” — United States Constitution

The legislative branch of government is described in Article 1 of the Constitution. The legislative branch is the first branch mentioned in the Constitution. Its major duty is to make our country’s laws.

The Congress

The legislative branch of our federal government is called the *Congress*. It consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Every citizen is represented in Congress by two U.S. senators from their particular state, and one U.S. representative from their congressional district. That is why our form of government is referred to as a *representative government*. The citizens of our great country delegate authority to elected representatives. Although we have more direct representation by our senators and representatives, the same principle is adopted by many executive and judicial offices.

Agencies that provide support services for Congress are also considered part of the legislative branch. They include the Library of Congress, the Congressional Budget Office, the Government Printing Office, and the General Accounting Office.

The term of Congress begins on the third day of January every odd-numbered year, and lasts for two years. The Constitution says that during this two-year term “Congress shall assemble (meet) at least once in every year. . .” There is so much business before the Congress these days that the meetings or sessions last almost all year. *Special sessions* of Congress may be called by the President of the United States.

Congress meets in the *Capitol Building* in Washington, D.C. Both the Senate and the House meet there, but in different chambers. Pictures of the Capitol Building (see below) are seen often in our newspapers, magazines, and television broadcasts. This is because the work done in this building is very important to every American. The Capitol is the only place our senators and representatives meet to make our laws. Senators and representatives have offices nearby. If you visit Washington, D.C., you may attend a session of Congress.



The Capitol Building - The Meeting Place of Congress

Every day, the proceedings of the Congress are printed in *The Congressional Record*. It is a copy of all bills introduced into both houses of Congress and speeches and testimonies before Congress. Members may even have speeches never given printed in the *Record*. Almost four million copies of the *Record* are printed every year.

Role of Congress

Everyday life has been influenced by the decisions of Congress. Their role is to improve the quality of our lives and to strengthen our nation. The following are a few of the acts of Congress:

- **air safety** – created the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA), which assures commercial air safety
- **banking** – established insurance policies, which guarantee deposits made in banks
- **clean air** – passed national pollution-control laws
- **family leave** – granted unpaid leave to workers for up to 12 weeks to deal with family issues
- **labor wages** – created the concept of a federal minimum wage and votes periodic raises
- **automobile safety** – passed laws to promote auto safety by requiring car manufacturers to meet minimum safety standards
- **handicapped access** – expanded employment opportunities for the handicapped by passing laws requiring access to the workplace and public spaces

QUESTIONS

1. What is the major duty of the legislative branch? _____

2. What is the major body in the legislative branch? _____

3. What two houses make up the legislative branch? _____

4. What is representative government? _____

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

- _____ 1. The President of the United States has the power to call Congress into special session.
- _____ 2. Congress meets in many of our major cities.
- _____ 3. The Library of Congress is part of the legislative branch.
- _____ 4. Congress must meet at least twice every year.
- _____ 5. The president makes the rules for Congress.
- _____ 6. Congress meets in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.
- _____ 7. The daily record of Congress is called “The Capital Journal.”

"The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America..."

— Article 2 of the United States Constitution

The executive branch of government is discussed in Article 2 of the Constitution.

The main duty of the executive branch is to enforce or administer laws. The most important official in this branch is the president. The president and the vice president are the only national officers of the government elected by voters of the entire United States. The president is thought of as being the representative of all the people. Unlike senators and representatives, all of the people in the United States vote for the president.

A candidate for the office of president is nominated at a *party convention* the summer before the election. A party convention is a meeting of delegates and party officials for the purpose of nominating candidates and carrying out other party business.

After a candidate has been nominated for president by the party, a campaign begins. This campaign is an organized attempt to win the November election. The major candidates are those nominated by the Democratic and Republican parties. Campaigns get underway in late summer and last until the November election.

Qualifications and Salary

The president or the vice president must be a natural-born citizen, 35 years of age, and a resident of the United States for at least 14 years.

The president and vice president must always be on the same party ticket. You vote for the president and the vice president at the same time, always assuring that the president and vice president are from the same political party.

The yearly salary of the president is \$400,000 plus an expense allowance. The vice president receives a salary of \$230,700, plus an expense allowance.

Before 1999, the president's salary had not been increased for more than 20 years. As a result, the salary was very low for the leader of the most powerful country in the world. All the chief executive officers of large American corporations make more than 10 times the salary of the president. Finally, in 1999, Congress raised the president's salary from \$200,000 to \$400,000. If you adjust for inflation, the president today makes less than George Washington!

Oath of Office

The oath of office was established in the U.S. Constitution, Article 2, and is mandatory for a new or reelected president. With the words of this simple oath, the president takes the most important political position in the world:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

The entire section of the Constitution that tells about the powers of the president contains only 320 words, but the wording is designed so that the office gets a maximum of necessary powers with necessary safeguards for the people.

The oath is typically administered by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The ceremony generally takes place at the U.S. Capitol. After the oath, the president gives his or her *inaugural* speech. This tells the people the goals and direction of the nation. Over the years, this *Inauguration Day* has expanded from a simple ceremony to a day-long event, including parades, speeches, and balls.

Role of the Vice President

The president faces critical issues daily. The day is long, and the pressures are great. The vice president may be assigned duties by the president and, in recent years, presidents have given considerable authority and responsibility to their vice presidents. This is one way the president can ease the presidential burdens of the office. The vice president is also the president of the Senate and provides the president with a valuable link with Congress.

Vacancy

If the Office of the President becomes vacant, the vice president becomes president. Next in order of succession is the speaker of the House, then president pro tempore of the Senate, then members of the cabinet, starting with the secretary of state.

In 1973, the Office of the Vice President became vacant when Vice President Agnew resigned in a scandal. President Nixon made the first use of the 25th Amendment when he nominated Gerald Ford, House minority leader, as the new vice president. Congress approved the nomination. For more about the 25th Amendment, see Page 14.

Before 1974, the only way the Office of the President had become vacant was through death. However, in 1974, when President Nixon was found to be involved in the Watergate cover up, he became the first president ever to resign. Vice President Ford then became the 38th President of the United States.

"The judicial power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts..."

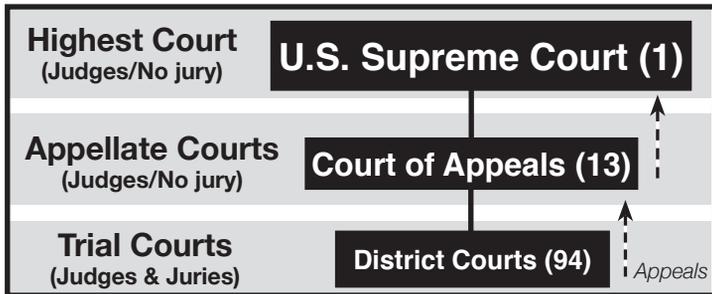
— Article 3, Section 1 of the United States Constitution

The main purpose of the judicial branch is to interpret the laws and administer justice. Many of the details of this branch may be found in Article 3 of the Constitution. The judicial branch consists of a system of federal courts.

While the executive and legislative branches are elected by the people, members of the judicial branch are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Each federal judge holds office for life and may be removed only by impeachment. There are no expressed qualifications for federal judges in the Constitution.

The power of the judicial branch through the courts is extended to all cases arising under the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the United States, and in some other special cases (see Article 3, Section 2). Every person accused of wrongdoing has the right to a fair trial before a competent judge and a jury of one's peers.

There are three major types of federal courts:



The Supreme Court

A major duty of the *justices* (judges) of the Supreme Court is to decide whether state and federal laws are constitutional, and whether actions by lower courts or other governmental agencies are constitutional. This power is not given to the Supreme Court directly by the Constitution, but precedence and tradition have given the court this power. It also hears cases of appeal from lower courts, providing a federal matter, such as copyright, kidnapping, or counterfeiting, is involved. In some special cases, it hears the matter directly.

There are nine Supreme Court justices with one justice serving as chief justice. The Constitution does not stipulate the number of Supreme Court justices; the number is set instead by Congress. Court justices receive a salary of \$213,900. The chief justice receives a salary of \$223,500. Six justices make a quorum, and a majority is necessary for a decision. The court meets in its own building in Washington, D.C. The current nine members are listed below.

Chief Justice (1): John G. Roberts Jr.		
Associate Justices (8)	Antonin Scalia	Stephen G. Breyer
	Anthony M. Kennedy	Samuel A. Alito Jr.
	Clarence Thomas	Sonia M. Sotomayor
	Ruth Bader Ginsburg	Elena Kagan

Court of Appeals

The United States has 13 courts of appeal, each with three or more judges. Their main job is to hear cases of appeal from lower courts. This court was created in 1891 to relieve the Supreme Court of the large burden of cases appealed from the district courts.

District Courts

There are about 94 district courts in the United States. Each court has one to 24 judges. The district courts are the ordinary trial courts in the federal system. Almost all cases heard in the federal system begin here. Most people would come in contact with this court if they were involved in a federal legal issue.

There are a number of other courts for special cases. Some of these are: U.S. Claims Court, U.S. Tax Court, and U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Appeals. As their names show, their duties are limited to specific areas. Also, states have court systems for state matters.

QUESTIONS

WHICH COURT? Which federal court fits the statement given? Answer *Supreme Court (SC)*, *Court of Appeals (CA)*, *District Court (DC)*, *none (N)*, or *all (A)*.

- _____ 1. This court could declare the final word on the constitutionality of a state law.
- _____ 2. This court could declare the final word on the constitutionality of a federal law.
- _____ 3. Judges are appointed.
- _____ 4. Judges serve for life.
- _____ 5. Has nine judges.
- _____ 6. Removed only by impeachment.
- _____ 7. Ordinary trial courts of the federal system.
- _____ 8. Has 13 courts.
- _____ 9. Meets in its own building in Washington, D.C.
- _____ 10. The judges must be 32 years or older.
- _____ 11. Has a chief justice as head officer.
- _____ 12. Most court cases begin here.
- _____ 13. Courts that are described in Article 3 of the Constitution.
- _____ 14. Appointment approved by the Senate.
- _____ 15. Salary of \$173,600.
- _____ 16. Elected by the people.
- _____ 17. Must be natural-born citizens.
- _____ 18. Appointed by the president.
- _____ 19. Must have law degrees.
- _____ 20. Serve without salary.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

- 1. Who appoints Supreme Court judges? _____
- 2. Who must approve Supreme Court appointments? _____
- 3. Who is the current chief justice of the Supreme Court? _____

The following test will help you prepare for your final Constitution test. It has questions similar to ones you will find on your final. It is suggested you write your answers on a piece of paper so you can take the test a number of times. You will find the correct answers at the bottom of Page 51.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Write the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

1. _____ The president may serve how many terms? A. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4
2. _____ What is NOT a rule of the flag code?
 - A. worn flags should be thrown in trash
 - B. should be in the front of a parade
 - C. nothing should be attached to the flag
 - D. exact likeness should not be used in ads
3. _____ How many amendments have been added to the Constitution? A. 10 B. 21 C. 27 D. 41
4. _____ How many years is the president's term of office? A. 2 B. 4 C. 6 D. 9
5. _____ What is the age requirement to become president? A. 18 B. 21 C. 35 D. 45
6. _____ After a bill has gone through both houses of Congress successfully, it is sent to:
 - A. the President
 - B. the States
 - C. the Speaker of the House
 - D. the Supreme Court
7. _____ Which amendment explains that the president may serve only two terms?
 - A. 17th
 - B. 19th
 - C. 22nd
 - D. 27th
8. _____ How many U.S. senators come from each state? A. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4
9. _____ Each state receives at least _____ representative(s) in the U.S. House of Representatives.
 - A. 1
 - B. 2
 - C. 3
 - D. 4
10. _____ Who may veto a bill proposed by Congress?
 - A. the President of the United States
 - B. the Secretary of State
 - C. the Vice President
 - D. all Cabinet members
11. _____ The president of the Senate is:
 - A. the President of the United States
 - B. the Speaker of the House
 - C. the Secretary of State
 - D. the Vice President
12. _____ Which of these rights is not an unalienable right from the Declaration of Independence?
 - A. liberty
 - B. education
 - C. pursuit of happiness
 - D. life
13. _____ The Declaration of Independence was written largely by:
 - A. Hamilton
 - B. Washington
 - C. Jefferson
 - D. Adams
14. _____ The national budget is presented annually to Congress by the:
 - A. the Vice President
 - B. the Governors
 - C. the Secretary of State
 - D. the President
15. _____ There are how many branches of government? A. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4
16. _____ The president takes the oath of office on:
 - A. January 4th
 - B. January 20th
 - C. November 7th
 - D. September 5th
17. _____ In our First Amendment, which is NOT a "freedom"?
 - A. freedom of the press
 - B. freedom of employment
 - C. freedom of speech
 - D. freedom of religion
18. _____ The vote of what group really decides who will be president?
 - A. Electoral College
 - B. popular vote by the people
 - C. United Nations
 - D. House of Representatives
19. _____ What is described in Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution giving Congress broad powers to write laws about new situations?
 - A. war power
 - B. insight clause
 - C. elastic clause
 - D. inventional clause
20. _____ Which body has the power to borrow money?
 - A. Congress
 - B. Supreme Court
 - C. Executive Branch
 - D. State Legislatures

Today, New York faces many challenges such as health care, pollution, terrorism, education, social services, maintaining the state’s network of highways, and updating the present prison system. New York certainly is not alone in facing these types of challenges as other levels of government and other states have many of the same concerns.

Presently, New York ranks third in population among the states. In the 1960s, California became the leading state pushing New York to second (and now Texas moved into the second slot). New York City is the largest city in the United States. Other large cities in New York include Albany, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Schenectady, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, and Yonkers. There are now over 19 million people living in the state. New York continues to play a vital role in the affairs of the United States. It is the nation’s leader in banking, communication, and finance. Industrial products from New York are distributed all over the country and the world. The state truly deserves the name “The Empire State.”

State Constitutions

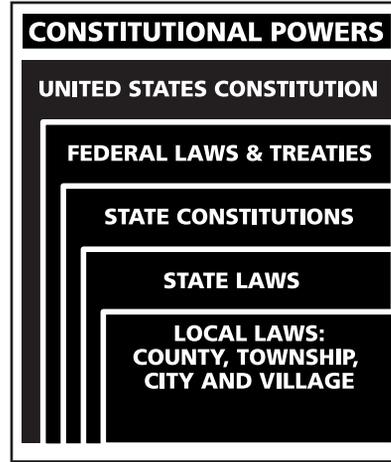
New York has changed and modified its government as its population and economy has changed. Several constitutions have governed New York and many changes were made by constitutional conventions. The present constitution of the state was adopted in 1894 although that constitution has been amended over 250 times. Most of these changes occurred at the Constitutional Convention of 1938.

Organization of State Government

From studying the U.S. Constitution, you know certain responsibilities are left to the states. To carry out these responsibilities, states have established their own constitutions. The state government, for example, is responsible for highway construction, local laws, intrastate commerce, traffic laws, education, marriage and divorce laws, voting regulations, etc.

The organization of a state government is very similar to that of the federal government. Both have three branches which have about the same type of duties and the same type of checks and balances system. Both the U.S. Constitution and the New York Constitution have a Bill of Rights. There are other similarities and differences you will notice as you read about New York’s Constitution.

Read Article 4 and Amendment 10 of the U.S. Constitution if you wish to know exactly what the federal Constitution says about the role of states. The chart above also shows where the state constitution fits in terms of authority and power.



The chart shows where the state constitution fits in terms of authority and power. While each of the 50 states has its own constitution, all provisions of state constitutions must comply with the United States Constitution. The 10th Amendment recognizes the powers of state governments.

QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a *T* or *F* in the space provided.

- ___ 1. In the early days, the Dutch controlled the area.
- ___ 2. The New York Constitution has been amended five times.
- ___ 3. The first white man to explore New York was thought to be Giovanni da Verrazano.
- ___ 4. New York became a state in 1776.
- ___ 5. New York has the highest population of any state.
- ___ 6. Both the New York Constitution and the United States Constitution have bills of rights.
- ___ 7. Both the New York government and the United States government have three branches.
- ___ 8. Foreign affairs is the duty of state government.
- ___ 9. The capital of New York is Buffalo.
- ___ 10. States may make treaties.

EVENTS IN ORDER. Write the numbers 1-4, indicating which historical event happened first, second, third, or fourth.

- _____ State adopts its current constitution
- _____ New York becomes a state
- _____ United States Constitution signed
- _____ World War II ends

New York Quick Facts	
Capital	Albany, New York
Federal Representatives	Senators – 2, Representatives – 27, Electoral Votes – 29
Statehood	July 26, 1788 (11th state)
Land Area	47,224 square miles
Population	19,570,261 (#3 of all states)
Largest Cities	New York, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers, Albany
State Nickname	Empire State
State Tree	Sugar Maple
State Flower	Rose
State Song	I Love New York
State Bird	Blue Bird

Students should not let the fact that there is a federal government, as well as a state government, confuse them. If you remember that these two bodies of government meet separate needs for our people, and that together they solve the problems of a nation (federal government) and of a local area (state government), you will see that we have a logical form of government.

The New York State Legislature dates back to 1777, 12 years before the founding of the United States. Article 3 of the state constitution set such items as the organizational structure, the number of members, qualifications for membership, and powers of the legislative branch.

The purpose of the legislative branch is to make the laws. The main body of the New York Legislative Branch is called the Legislature. It contains the Senate and the Assembly. The Legislature meets every year on the first Wednesday after the first Monday in January. Special sessions may be called by the governor, or by two-thirds of the Legislature. Neither regular nor special sessions have any time limitations.

Salary and Qualifications

Members of the Legislature are elected by the people, and may be re-elected. They receive an annual salary of \$79,500, plus \$138 per day expenses. Each senator and assembly member must be a citizen of the United States, a resident of the state of New York for five years, and live in the district he or she represents for one year. There is no minimum age requirement.

A quorum in each house is set at a majority of its members. Each house determines its own rules of proceedings. All members may be punished for contempt or disorderly behavior, but no member may be expelled except by a two-thirds vote in that house.

A *quorum* in each house is set as a majority of its members. The state constitution requires a majority of members to be present for the House and the Senate to conduct business. Each house may punish individuals for contempt or disorderly behavior, although no member may be expelled, except by a two-thirds vote.

Districts

In New York, all members of the Legislature are elected from single-member districts. A district is determined by population rather than land area. Every 10 years the federal government conducts a census to determine population changes. In New York, after these population changes are published, the districts are changed to correspond with the census results. Changing a district's shape and size is known as reapportionment.

State Senate

There are 61 Senate districts in the state of New York. The state Senate consists of one member from each district. They are elected to two-year terms at the same time the governor is elected; November of even-numbered non-presidential years. The presiding officer of the state Senate is the lieutenant governor, who may vote only to break a tie. In the lieutenant governor's absence, the majority leader or temporary president will then serve. Other officers include a Senate minority leader, selected by the members themselves.

In addition to regular lawmaking powers, the Senate has certain special duties. One of these is to serve as the jury in cases of impeachment; another is to vote on appointments made by the governor.

State Assembly

There are 150 Assembly districts in the state of New York. The state Assembly consists of one member from each district. They are elected to two-year terms in November of even-numbered years. The presiding officer of the state Assembly is known as the speaker, and is elected by the members themselves. In the speaker's absence, the speaker pro tempore presides. The Assembly members also select an Assembly majority and Assembly minority leader.

Besides its duties of lawmaking, the Assembly has the sole power to start impeachment proceedings. A majority of the members in the Assembly must vote in favor of starting proceedings against an official.

QUESTIONS

WHICH BODY OF THE LEGISLATURE? The following duties are the responsibility of the Senate or Assembly and, in some cases, may be the responsibility of both or neither. Answer **Senate**, **Assembly**, **neither**, or **both**.

1. Elected by the people. _____
2. Have 150 members. _____
3. Have 61 members. _____
4. Are parts of the Legislature. _____
5. Receive salary of \$79,500. _____
6. Have speaker as chief officer. _____
7. Have governor as chief officer. _____
8. Term is two years. _____
9. Term is four years. _____
10. Start impeachment proceedings. _____
11. Must be at least 35 years old. _____
12. Must live in district at least one year. _____
13. Approves appointments of the governor. _____
14. Tries impeachment cases. _____
15. Meets in Albany. _____
16. Makes laws for every state. _____

The Governor

The executive branch of New York enforces and administers the laws. The governor is assisted by the lieutenant governor, who becomes governor if the governor cannot continue to serve. The governor is the most important officer in the executive branch.

The New York Constitution states the governor must be a citizen of the United States, be a qualified voter of the state, have lived in New York for at least five years prior to the election, and be at least 30 years of age. The governor serves a term of four years and can serve an unlimited number of terms. This position receives an annual salary of \$179,000. In the event that the governor cannot complete a term, the lieutenant governor becomes governor. If the lieutenant governor is unable to serve, the Senate majority leader takes responsibility. The next in line to assume the office is the speaker of the assembly.

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

The governor of the State of New York 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.
2. With the approval of the Legislature, the governor may reorganize any executive agencies in the state that are responsible to the governor.
3. The governor may grant pardons, commutations, and reprieves as he or she thinks proper.
4. The governor, at the beginning of each session and at the close of the governor's term of office, shall report to the Legislature on the condition of the state.
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. The governor may call special sessions of the Legislature.
7. Each year the governor must submit a state budget to the Legislature for its consideration.



Democrat Andrew Cuomo won his 2nd term in the November 2014 General Election defeating Republican challenger Rob Astorino.

Veto

There are two ways a governor may veto a bill.

1. Rejecting the entire bill, in much the same way the president may veto a bill.
2. Using the item veto. This applies to appropriation or money bills, and means that the governor may approve only some parts of a bill while rejecting others.

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. We might also assume that the governor has a somewhat less demanding job.

New York has had many famous and talented governors and public officials. The lives of these people make an interesting and worthwhile study. Your local or school library contains interesting material on the lives of New York's chief executives and officials.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the qualifications for governor? _____

2. What is the order of succession to the office of governor? _____

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

- ___ 1. The Legislature cannot be called into special session.
- ___ 2. The governor may remove any officer he has appointed.
- ___ 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's salary is \$179,000.
- ___ 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 a bill.
- ___ 10. The governor must be 40 years old or older.

DEFINE

1. reprieves _____
2. commutations _____
3. agency _____
4. pardons _____
5. militia _____
6. succession _____

In a democracy, a citizen has the responsibility for the government under which he or she lives. By voting and staying informed on the issues he or she takes part in the business of government. With every freedom we enjoy, there are also corresponding duties. We must perform these duties, such as voting, if we expect to enjoy our freedom.

Voting is a constitutional right. Early in American history, only white men over the age of 21 could vote. Then it took two constitutional amendments — one in 1870 and the other in 1920 — to give black people and women, respectively, the right to vote. Then, when Americans 18 and older were in the military fighting in wars, people began to think that if young people were old enough to die for their country, they were surely old enough to vote. So in 1971, the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave 18-year-olds the right to vote, and so did the State of New York.

Primary Elections

Primaries are elections held before the general election in which party members select the candidates of their party, mainly the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. The winners of these primaries then face each other in the upcoming general election. Primaries are held in February before the fall general elections.

Voting at Age 17?

Should New York join 12 other states that allow 17-year-olds to vote in primaries if they'll be 18 by the November election? Advocates say the change allows youth to develop voting habits early, a key to ensuring they turn into lifelong voters. Critics have questioned whether teens are engaged enough to cast meaningful votes. What do you think?

General Elections

The most publicized elections in New York are the *general elections*. They are *biennial* elections. That is, they are held every two years in even numbered years. New York residents also vote for the President of the United States in every other general election. The next presidential election will be 2016. President Obama will not be eligible to run, as he will have served the maximum number of terms for a president (two).

Other Types of Elections

There are three basic types of elections in New York. The first type is the election of representatives to operate the government. These legislative, executive, and judicial representatives have been discussed in past sections of this book. The second type of election is voting on constitutional amendments. Such elections take place when the citizens desire to change the Constitution and call for a constitutional convention. And the third type is the election in which the people are asked to vote on a public issue

(referendum). One example of a referendum is the local school district requesting a tax increase to fund a new school.

Absentee Ballots & Early Voting

When voters are going to be absent from the voting area on Election Day, they may apply for an *absentee ballot*. Voters who are sick, or meet certain other requirements, may also request an absentee ballot. Your local election officials can provide details on absentee ballots.

Early voting is gaining popularity across the country, allowing a citizen to vote in a designated polling place preceding an election without having to supply an excuse or reason. Today, New Yorkers are not allowed to vote early and must supply an excuse for an absentee ballot.

Voting Requirements

In New York, like any state, a citizen must obey the election laws. They also must meet the requirements that have been set up by those laws. New York requirements include:

- **Age:** Must be 18 years old by or on election day.
- **Residency:** Voters must live in your county or in the City of New York at least 30 days before an election.
- **Registration:** Voters must register, or sign up, to vote in their election district at least 25 days before the election. You may register at many state and local offices, including the departments of labor, social services, motor vehicle, and the state and city universities.

Voter Disqualification

A person convicted of treason or a felony and serving a jail sentence loses the right to vote. This right is restored after the sentence is served. The New York Constitution also states the persons deemed incompetent or mentally ill may be restricted from voting. In order to register in your county, you must not claim the right to vote elsewhere.

QUESTIONS

SHORT ANSWER

1. When is the next general election? _____
2. How often is a general election held? _____
3. On what day are general elections held? _____

4. What are some other kinds of elections? _____

5. If you are going to be absent on Election Day, how can you still vote? _____

6. What are the requirements for voters? _____

7. What is the purpose of a primary election? _____
