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The authors of the Constitution could not have imagined that, in 200 years, people would be exploring outer space or going from coast to coast in a few hours. Nor could they have imagined all the changes in daily living that would occur. Today, we claim the protection of the Constitution, written when there were only a few million people in the United States. The Constitution now protects more than 320 million Americans. Almost everything about the United States has changed, except the Constitution. It is truly an outstanding document that has withstood the test of time.

Yet, the Constitution changes in some very important ways. In upcoming units, you will see how the Constitution is officially amended. Officials, who operate the government under the rules of the Constitution, constantly interpret its meaning. The Constitution allows a great deal of freedom to do this (and is referred to as a *living document*). It's a basic guide for government and safeguards our freedom. It's flexible and brief enough to allow for adjustments. For example, the Constitution sets up strict rules for making laws to ensure they are just and democratic. But, the Constitution also gives Congress the power to make laws. This provides our Congress with the ability to make laws in areas that did not even exist when the Constitution was written. Space exploration and the internet are two examples. Can you think of others?

### Quotes on the Constitution

Two centuries of growth and unrivaled prosperity have proven the foresight of the 55 men who worked through the summer of 1787 to lay the foundation of American government. In the words of Archibald Cox, former solicitor general of the United States, "The original Constitution still serves us well despite the tremendous changes in every aspect of American life because the framers had the genius to say enough but not too much.... As the plan outlined in the Constitutional Convention succeeded, as the country grew and prospered both materially and in the realization of its ideals, the Constitution gained majesty and authority far greater than that of any individual or body of men."

Quotes from the Founding Father's give insight into the attitude and mindset of the time:

*"Let our government be like that of the solar system. Let the general government be like the sun and the states the planets, repelled yet attracted, and the whole moving regularly and harmoniously in several orbits."* — John Dickinson

*"The happy Union of these States is a wonder; their Constitution a miracle; their example of Liberty throughout the world."*

— James Madison

*"Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."* — Ben Franklin

*"The Constitution is the guide which I will never abandon."*

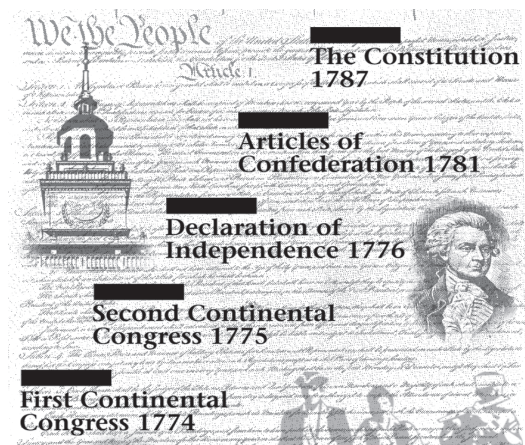
— George Washington

Within the framework of the Constitution, as interpreted by the courts, we are governed by laws, treaties, and customs. Later, you will study judicial review and the amending process, helping you better understand how the Constitution is changed.

### The Constitution has lasted because it:

- provides for a government by the people;
- provides for a government that can act when in danger;
- provides for a federal union where people retain certain rights and powers in their states;
- guarantees individual rights even when the individual's views are unpopular or in the minority;
- has preserved the Union;
- provides the leaders of our government an opportunity to interpret the Constitution and apply it to changing times;
- has provisions for orderly changes.

### STAIRWAY TO THE CONSTITUTION



The chart above shows the documents and events leading up to the signing of the Constitution in 1787.

### QUESTIONS

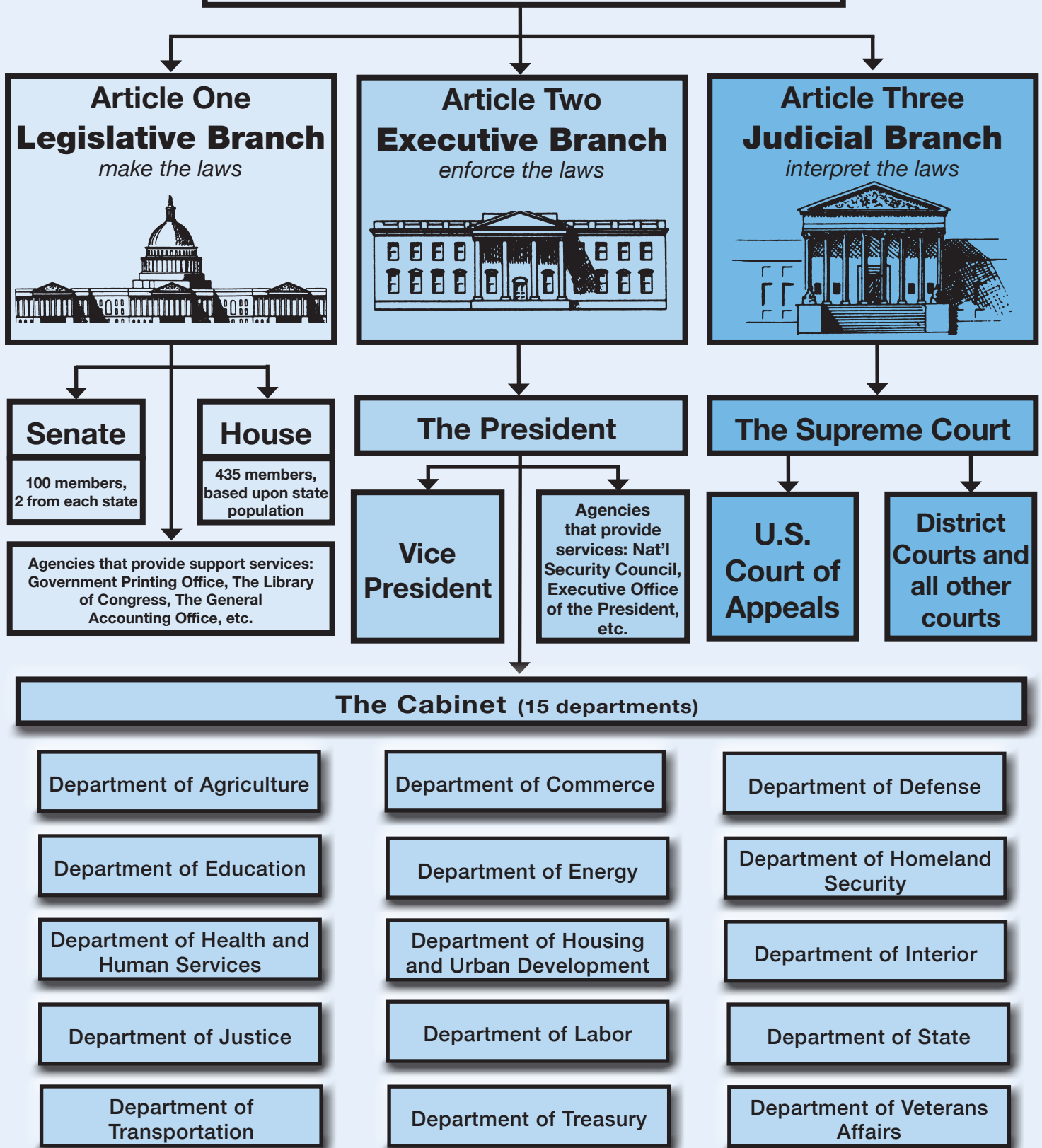
**TRUE OR FALSE?** Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

1. Changing the interpretation of the Constitution is what makes our Constitution weak.
2. The Constitution allows laws to be made for subjects that did not exist in 1787.
3. The Constitution can be changed only through rebellion and revolution.
4. Over 500 delegates attended the Constitutional Convention and signed the Constitution.

**EVENTS IN ORDER.** Write the numbers **1-4**, indicating which historical event happened **first (1)**, **second (2)**, **third (3)**, or **fourth (4)**.

- \_\_\_\_\_ The ratification of the Articles of Confederation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The adoption of the United States Constitution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The beginning of the American Revolution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The signing of the Declaration of Independence.

# The Constitution SETS UP THREE BRANCHES



*“Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it becomes law, be presented to the President of the United States....” — United States Constitution, Article 1*

Powers to make laws are given to Congress, consisting of the Senate and House of Representatives. A description of these powers can be found in Article 1 of the Constitution.

In both houses of Congress, no business may be transacted without a *quorum*. A quorum in each house is a majority of its members. A majority is one-half plus one.

### How a Bill Becomes Law in Congress

*Bills*, a term for proposed laws, may start in either house of Congress (Please refer to more of the lawmaking process on Pages 21, 22 and 24). However, bills for revenue must begin in the House of Representatives (see Article 1, Section 7). After a bill is introduced, it is given a number and usually referred to a *special committee*. There are 16 Senate committees and 24 House committees, plus four special or select Senate committees.

In a committee, detailed studies are made of the bill, and hearings may be held. A committee may amend, rewrite, recommend passage, or ignore a bill. It is possible to pass some bills without committee approval, but this seldom happens. Some people feel these committees are too powerful and may keep members of Congress from considering certain laws. Committees are necessary, however, and rules controlling their behavior and power are determined by Congress.

Thousands of bills are introduced during a session of Congress. Four out of five of these bills have little

or no chance of being passed into law. Bills that seem unimportant to the committees are ignored. The bills that are taken seriously may have public hearings. After the committee finishes with a bill, it is reported to the Senate or House favorably or unfavorably. The entire Senate or House then votes on the bill.

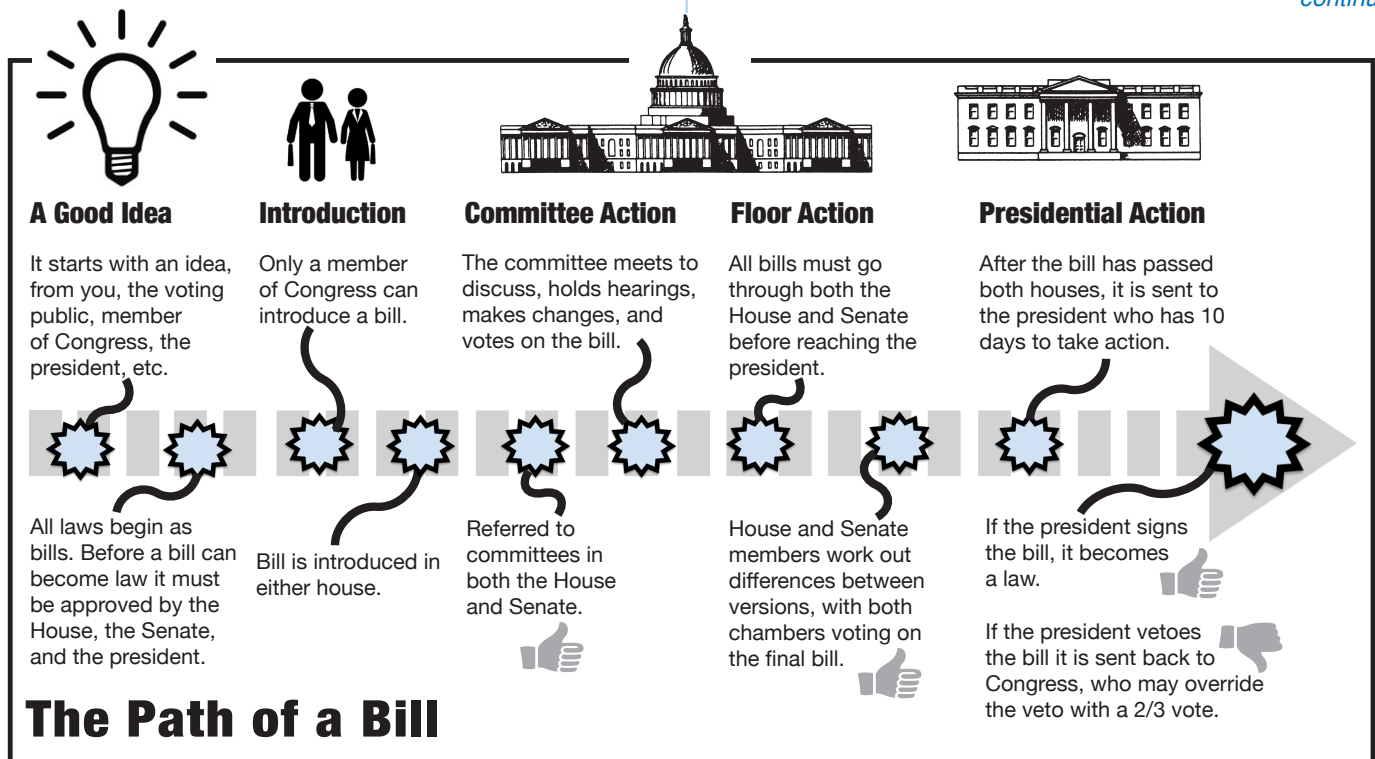
The bills that come from committees are put on a calendar and voted on according to a schedule. Changes to the bill may be made, and then the final vote is taken. The bill is sent to the other house of Congress if the vote is favorable.

In the other house of Congress, the same type of procedure is followed. If the other house passes the bill, but with changes, a joint committee from both houses is set up to work out a *compromise bill*.

After the bill has passed both houses, it is sent to the president, who may either sign or veto it. This particular duty is found in Article 1, Section 7, of the Constitution. If the president signs the bill, it becomes another law of our land. If the president does not sign the bill, but vetoes it, the two houses of Congress may try to override the president's veto by a two-thirds vote in each house. Very few bills are passed this way.

If the president does not act at all, the bill becomes a law automatically in 10 days, providing Congress is still in session. If Congress adjourns before the 10-day period is up and the president has not acted on the bill, it is automatically vetoed. This is called a *pocket veto*.

*continued*





# How the Federal Government and States Divide Powers

## The Constitution Says...



### Certain Powers Belong to the Federal Government:

- ★ Regulate Interstate Commerce
- ★ Conduct Foreign Affairs
- ★ Coin and Issue Money
- ★ Establish Post Offices
- ★ Make War and Peace
- ★ Maintain Armed Forces
- ★ Admit New States and Govern Territories
- ★ Punish Crimes Against the U.S.
- ★ Grant Patents and Copyrights
- ★ Make Uniform Laws on Naturalization and Bankruptcy

*(Also considered expressed powers.)*



### Certain Powers Belong to State Governments:

(Mainly comes from an interpretation of the reserved powers.)

- ★ Authorize Establishment of Local Governments
- ★ Establish and Supervise Schools
- ★ Provide for State Militia
- ★ Regulate Commerce Within the State
- ★ Charter Corporations
- ★ Regulate Labor, Industry, and Business Within the State
- ★ All Other Powers Not Delegated to the United States Government or Specifically Prohibited to the States

### Certain Powers Are Shared by Both Governments

Tax...Establish Courts...Promote Agriculture and Industry...Borrow Money...  
Charter Banks...Protect the Public Health...Provide For Public Welfare



### Certain Powers Are Prohibited to Both Governments

The personal rights of citizens of the United States, as listed in the Bill Of Rights (first 10 amendments to the Constitution) and in state constitutions, cannot be reduced or destroyed by the federal or the state governments. Also, certain specific prohibitions in the Constitution itself, such as no title of nobility, no ex post facto laws, no duty on exports, no bill of attainder, etc.

Perhaps the longest debate at the Constitutional Convention concerned the method of selecting the president. An early suggestion was to give this power to Congress. But that would have destroyed the idea of the separation of powers. How could we have three branches of government, each checking the other if the legislative branch (the Congress) picked the head of the executive branch (the president)?

The writers of the Constitution also weren't ready to give the selection of the president to the people or the "common man." So they wrote a compromise into Article 2 of the Constitution. The compromise set up a system of electors to select the president. These electors came to be known as the *Electoral College*, but the Constitution itself does not mention the term "Electoral College."

Each state would get as many "electors" as there were senators and representatives from that state. And, in the 23rd Amendment to the Constitution in 1961, three additional electoral votes were added for the voters of Washington, D.C. That made a total of 538 electors (electoral votes for each state equals the number of representatives plus two for the senators), and a vote of 270 or more would be necessary to select the president. The map below shows the distribution of electoral votes based on the 2010 reapportionment.

Before 1961, the voters in Washington, D.C., didn't get to vote for the president at all. This was not considered fair in the capital of our country.

To summarize, if a candidate gets the most popular

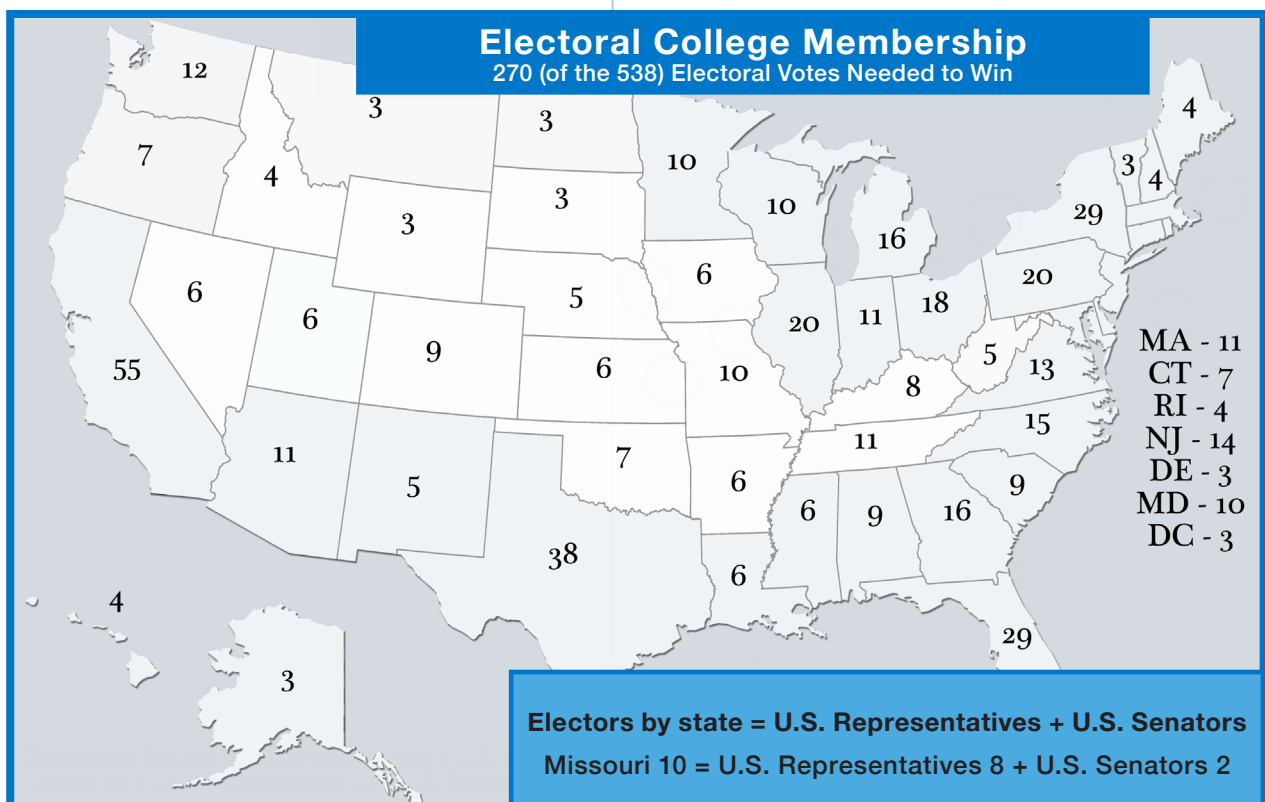
(people) votes in the state, the "electors" will then cast their votes the same way. Thus all the electoral votes for the state will (except for Maine and Nebraska) go to the winner of the state.

The writers of the Constitution also thought that the Electoral College gave states with a small population more equal weight in the presidential election.

One of the problems political scientists see in the Electoral College is that it allows a person to be selected president who has not won the popular vote in the country. In our growing beliefs in the power and rights of democracy in our nation, that could be a problem. Because all the electoral votes of a state go to the candidate who wins the vote in that state, whether the candidate wins by a single vote or a million votes, it is possible to be elected president without having the most votes.

That has not happened very often, but it did occur in 2000 when George W. Bush became president and again recently in the 2016 election. President Trump became president even though Hillary Clinton won a majority of the popular votes. And, because this has happened so recently, Americans are debating the pros and cons of the Electoral College. Since a change in the electoral vote would require a constitutional amendment, change will not come easily. Supporters of the current system say that it has served the nation well and forces candidates to gain broad geographic support rather than concentrating only on large metropolitan areas.

*continued*



*"The judicial power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts..."*  
 — United States Constitution, Article 3, Section 1

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 people elect the executive and legislative branches, 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.

### Power of the Judicial Branch

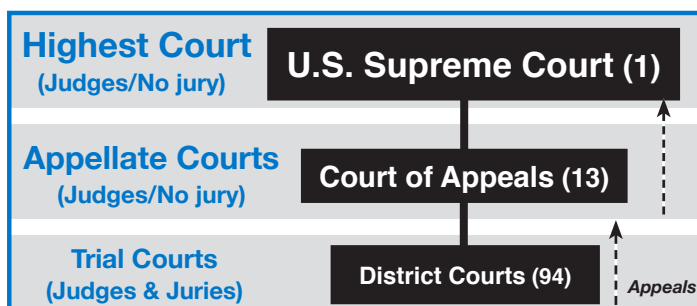
The power of the judicial branch through the courts is extended to all cases arising under the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the United States, and in some other special cases (see Article 3, Section 2). Every person accused of wrongdoing has the right to a fair trial before a competent judge and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

Under the Constitution, the courts protect the rights of all citizens and guarantees justice based on law. The philosophy of our law (often referred to as jurisprudence) relies heavily on past precedent. Courts will review cases that were previously decided when analyzing a new case brought to the courts. The decision of similar cases will mostly be the same as courts utilize this past precedent.

Most court cases fall into two categories, *criminal* or *civil* cases. Most crimes are a violation of state law, not federal law, and thus would be prosecuted in the state court system. Only crimes that break a law of the U.S. government will be prosecuted in the federal courts.

In criminal cases, the court decides if an accused person is guilty or innocent of a crime. Examples of federal crimes include bank robbery, counterfeiting, kidnapping, and financial fraud. In civil cases, the court settles disputes between two parties. Civil cases that may be heard in federal court include questions over federal law, suing for civil rights and first amendment violations, and resolving disputes (over \$75,000) between parties from different states.

There are three major types of federal courts:



### The Supreme Court

*"Equal Justice Under Law"* - These words, written above the main entrance to the Supreme Court Building, express the ultimate responsibility of the Supreme Court of the United States. The unique position of the Supreme Court is the result of the strong commitment of the American people to the *Rule of Law* and constitutional government. The Supreme Court ensures democracy and the importance of the oldest written Constitution still in force.

A primary 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, the court 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 the U.S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C. Typically the court conducts its annual term from the first Monday of October until late June the following year.

The current nine members are listed below.

|    | Supreme Court Justice | Type of Justice   | President Who Nominated |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | John Roberts, Jr.     | Chief Justice     | G.W. Bush (R)           |
| 2. | Clarence Thomas       | Associate Justice | G.H. Bush (R)           |
| 3. | Ruth Bader Ginsburg   | Associate Justice | Clinton (D)             |
| 4. | Stephen G. Breyer     | Associate Justice | Clinton (D)             |
| 5. | Samuel A. Alito Jr.   | Associate Justice | G.W. Bush (R)           |
| 6. | Sonia M. Sotomayor    | Associate Justice | Obama (D)               |
| 7. | Elena Kagan           | Associate Justice | Obama (D)               |
| 8. | Neil Gorsuch          | Associate Justice | Trump (R)               |
| 9. | Brett M. Kavanaugh    | Associate Justice | Trump (R)               |

The most recent appointments to the Supreme Court include Neil Gorsuch in April of 2017 along and Brett M. Kavanaugh in October of 2018. Both were nominated by President Trump.

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 a 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 and may grant pardons or reprieves for those convicted in court.

**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 and 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.

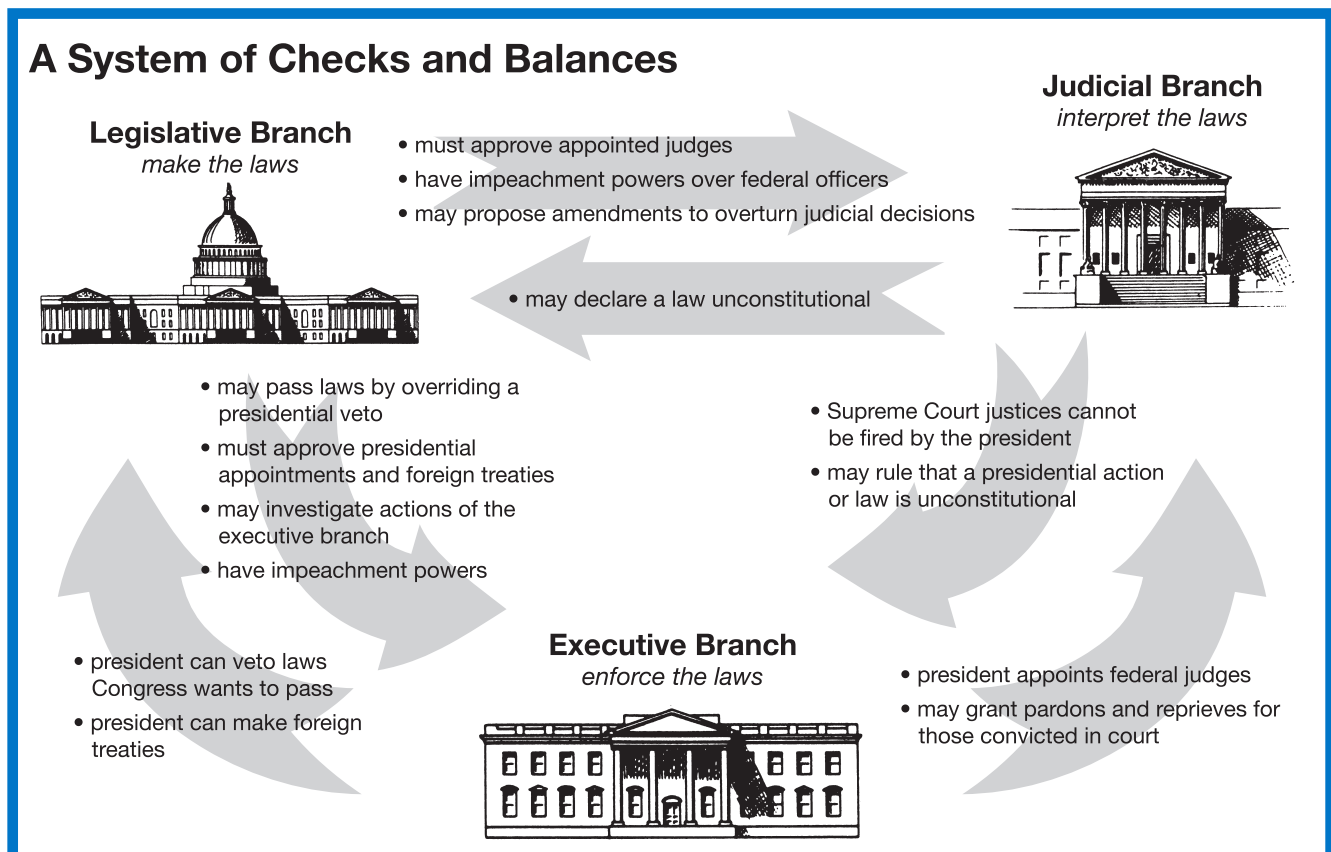
**Judicial over the executive branch:** Supreme Court justices cannot be fired by the president.

There are other checks and balances in the American government besides those between branches of government. They include:

### Checks in Congress

The Senate and House can check each other by rejecting bills passed by the other. The House has the added check of sole power to start revenue bills.

*continued*





The history of the state of Missouri is rich and distinguished. The state has played a vital role in the development of the United States.

Indians, known as the *mound builders*, inhabited the region of Missouri long before the coming of the white man. Many different tribes, including the Missouri, Osage, Fox, and Sauk, lived and hunted in the area.

The French were probably the first whites to explore the area. Names such as Father Jacques Marquette, Louis Joliet, and Sieur de LaSalle were important in the early exploration of the territory they claimed for the French government. French missionaries and trappers continued to explore and settle the area. Although the French gave up claim to the territory to the Spanish, Napoleon Bonaparte reclaimed the area for France. Because of France's involvement in a series of expensive wars, Napoleon decided to sell the entire Louisiana Territory, which included Missouri, to the United States. This 1803 land sale doubled the size of the United States.

In 1812, the United States Congress organized the Missouri Territory. There were more than 20,000 people living in the territory at the time. The territory, because of its fine land, attracted many settlers. Like other areas of the country, increased numbers of settlers led to trouble with the Indians, who saw their traditional hunting grounds being taken away. For several years, the Indians made bloody attacks on frontier settlements.

In 1818, Missouri applied for admission to the United States. This application for admission started a controversy leading to the *Missouri Compromise of 1820*. Because many of the settlers in the territory had brought slaves with them, anti-slavery forces felt that the slave-holding states would gain more power in Congress if Missouri were added as another slave state. The issue was finally

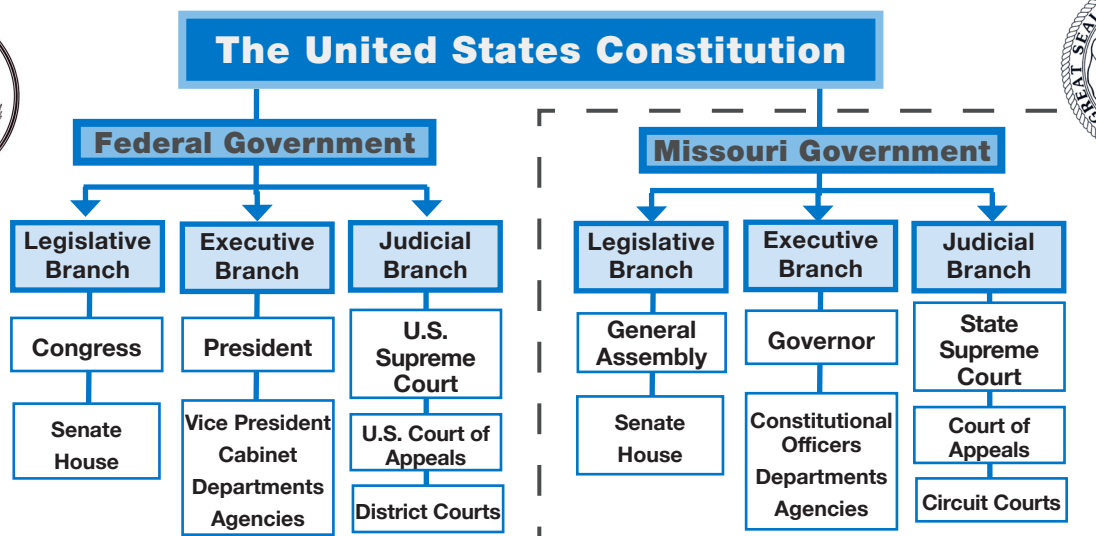
settled with the Compromise, when Missouri was admitted as a slave state and Maine was admitted as a free state, thus keeping the balance of power in Congress equal. Missouri was admitted to the Union on August 10, 1821, as the 24th state.

When the Missouri Territory was organized in 1812, St. Louis was the capital. In 1821, it was moved to St. Charles, and finally, in 1826, to Jefferson City.

Missouri played a key role in settling the West. Independence, Missouri, was the beginning of both the Santa Fe Trail to the Southwest and the Oregon Trail to the Northwest. Wealth poured into Missouri from the Southwest and thousands of settlers began moving west from Independence.

Prior to the Civil War, the people of Missouri were divided over the slavery issue, and scattered fighting broke out among Missourians. In 1861, a convention was called to determine whether the people of Missouri desired to secede (withdraw) from the Union and join the Confederacy. Although the people voted to remain in the Union, when the Civil War started that same year, many Missourians sided with the Confederacy. Many battles were fought in the state throughout the Civil War with bands of both Union and Confederate guerrillas terrorizing the Missouri countryside.

During this same period, the state became an important transportation center. Fur trading subsided, and tenant farmers replaced slaves as field workers. The early 1900s brought political, social, and industrial reforms to Missouri. Working conditions improved and laws were established regulating child labor. The state grew steadily over the years in population, agricultural production, and industrial production. Because of its rich soil, favorable climate, and abundant resources, many saw the state as a land of opportunity.



*The U.S. Constitution splits governing powers between the federal government and the states. This unit will cover the state government portion of the chart above. It will also include the study of local government bodies.*

## Our 200th Birthday

The citizens of Missouri are ready to recognize and celebrate an important milestone in state history. August 10, 2021, will mark the 200th anniversary (or *bicentennial*) of Missouri's entry as the 24th state of the United States.



You will become familiar with the above logo as we head into the many state-sponsored activities and celebrations. This vital work began more than five years ago when the 97th Missouri General Assembly issued House Concurrent Resolution 7 (HCR7) tasking State Historical Society of Missouri (SHSMO) to develop “plans, ideas, and proposals to commemorate and celebrate” the Missouri Bicentennial, and to provide “guidance and direction to a statewide effort to promote and celebrate the State of Missouri’s rich and complex history.”

This led to the House Concurrent Resolution No. 105 from the 99th General Assembly. Below are excerpts from the resolution:

### House Concurrent Resolution No. 105 99TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**WHEREAS**, the land that would become the state of Missouri was included in the Louisiana Purchase, in which the United States acquired 828,000 square miles of the Louisiana Territory from France for \$15 million dollars in 1803; and

**WHEREAS**, the Louisiana Territory, including the future Missouri, was explored by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark at the direction of President Thomas Jefferson from 1803 to 1806; and

**WHEREAS**, William Clark was appointed governor of the Missouri Territory in 1813; Missouri attained statehood in 1821; and

**WHEREAS**, Missouri’s statehood occurred at a pivotal time in United States history; and Missouri’s admission to the Union was in doubt due to concerns in Congress about maintaining the balance of slave states and free states; and

**WHEREAS**, the Missouri Compromise, one of the great pre-Civil War compromises in American history, allowed the admission of Missouri as a slave state and the simultaneous admission of Maine as a free state; and

**WHEREAS**, Missouri’s history, beginning even before its statehood, is rich in colorful characters, adventure, bravery, and the embodiment of the American dream; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ninety-seventh General Assembly, First Regular Session, directed the State Historical Society of Missouri to develop plans, ideas, and proposals to commemorate and HCR 105 to celebrate the Missouri bicentennial and ready itself to provide guidance and direction to a statewide effort to promote and celebrate the State of Missouri’s rich and complex history.

The logo’s three stars represent the past, present, and future of the Show-Me State. “The new logo focuses on the bicentennial as an important moment in Missouri’s history,” stated Christian George, an SHSMO associate. “Our story is one that is still being written. We all have a say in what it will mean to be a Missourian in the future.”

You will also see the bicentennial honored with license plates, which went into circulation in October of 2018. Most Missouri



registration holders will be required to purchase the new bicentennial license. The license plate’s color palette honors the Missouri state flag with the use of red, white, and blue. Waves in the bands of color represent a river. Rivers are an important symbol for Missouri, as waterways figured prominently in the state’s historic role as a gateway for American exploration and transportation.

## Bicentennial Celebration Details

You may find many details of the celebration activities at [www.missouri2021.org](http://www.missouri2021.org). The mission is to promote a better understanding of Missouri and its regions, communities, and people, both past and present. The Missouri Bicentennial provides opportunities for citizens to celebrate, explore, and share perspectives on the state’s rich history and culture.

This once-in-a-lifetime event will offer many opportunities to celebrate. A successful commemoration of Missouri’s 200th year will engage all 114 counties and the city of St. Louis in a meaningful look at the Show-Me State’s past, present, and future. Missourians will reflect on the events that have shaped their communities, counties, regions, and the entire state while starting a new chapter in its unique history.

The goal is to inspire Missourians to be proud of their great state. There will be several forums, including social media, photo contest, and quilt design, to share your love of Missouri and the land where we live. A statewide campaign will celebrate its influence on the world through music, sports, agriculture, literature, commerce, history, technology, innovation, transportation, art, and architecture.

## Celebrate Our Great History!

This celebration is a good time to remember from where we came. This should make all citizens proud and inspire them to become reacquainted with our distinguished state. We have mentioned several of these historical moments in earlier sections of this book. A sampling of other historical highpoints are listed on the next page.

*continued*

### Population and Government

As you have learned from the federal section, each state gets at least one representative and exactly two senators. Because of its population, Missouri receives eight representatives in the United States House of Representatives in Washington, DC. The state is divided into eight districts, each with one representative (called *congressional districts*). The two U.S. senators serve the state *at large*, meaning they serve the entire state without having their own district.



\*There are  
114 counties  
in Missouri.



### Missouri Geography and Map Exercise

1. On the map, identify the states that border Missouri.
2. On the map, identify and show the locations of Kansas City, St. Louis, and Springfield.
3. On the map, identify and show the location of your hometown.
4. On the map, identify the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.
5. Shade your county lightly and identify the county seat.
6. On the map, identify the general location of the state capital and identify the city.
7. Identify the directions: North (N), South (S), East (E), and West (W) on the map.

### State Seal Exercise

Above is a reproduction of the official *Great Seal of Missouri*. The Great Seal was designed by Judge Robert William Wells and adopted by the Missouri General Assembly on January 11, 1822. **Research the Great Seal and answer the following questions:**

1. What do the two grizzlies on the seal represent? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What do the Roman numerals signify? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How many stars atop the helmet? \_\_\_\_\_  
What does this represent? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*The judicial power of the state shall be vested in a supreme court, a court of appeals consisting of districts as prescribed by law, and circuit courts. — Missouri Constitution Article V*

The judicial branch of government in Missouri administers justice and interprets the laws. It is composed of a system of courts. The Missouri Constitution defines the responsibilities of the courts, the qualifications of judges, and the duties of the three-level court system. The *three-level court system* involves the (1) circuit courts, (2) court of appeals, and (3) the Supreme Court.

### Circuit Courts

Missouri *circuit courts* are courts of original civil and criminal jurisdiction, which means all trials in Missouri begin at the circuit level. Circuit courts serve as the main focus of the state's judicial system. Presently there is a circuit court in each of the 45 judicial circuits. Divisions of circuit courts include the *probate courts* (deal with wills and estates), *juvenile courts*, *municipal courts* (cases involving misdemeanor or civil matters), and *associate courts*.

Circuit court judges and associate circuit court judges are elected or selected under the nonpartisan selection plan. Circuit court judges serve terms of six years and associate circuit court judges serve terms of four years. Presently, there are 133 circuit judges and 175 associate circuit judges in the state.

### Court of Appeals

Criminal convictions, handed down by the circuit courts, may be appealed to the *court of appeals*. There is no testimony given in this court. Cases are reviewed by written transcript and oral arguments by attorneys. The court of appeals is divided into

three districts. The Eastern District in St. Louis has 14 judges, the Western District in Kansas City has 11 judges, and the Southern District in Springfield has seven judges. The governor appoints all appeals court judges to 12-year terms and their appointments must be approved by the voters in the next general election.

### Missouri Supreme Court

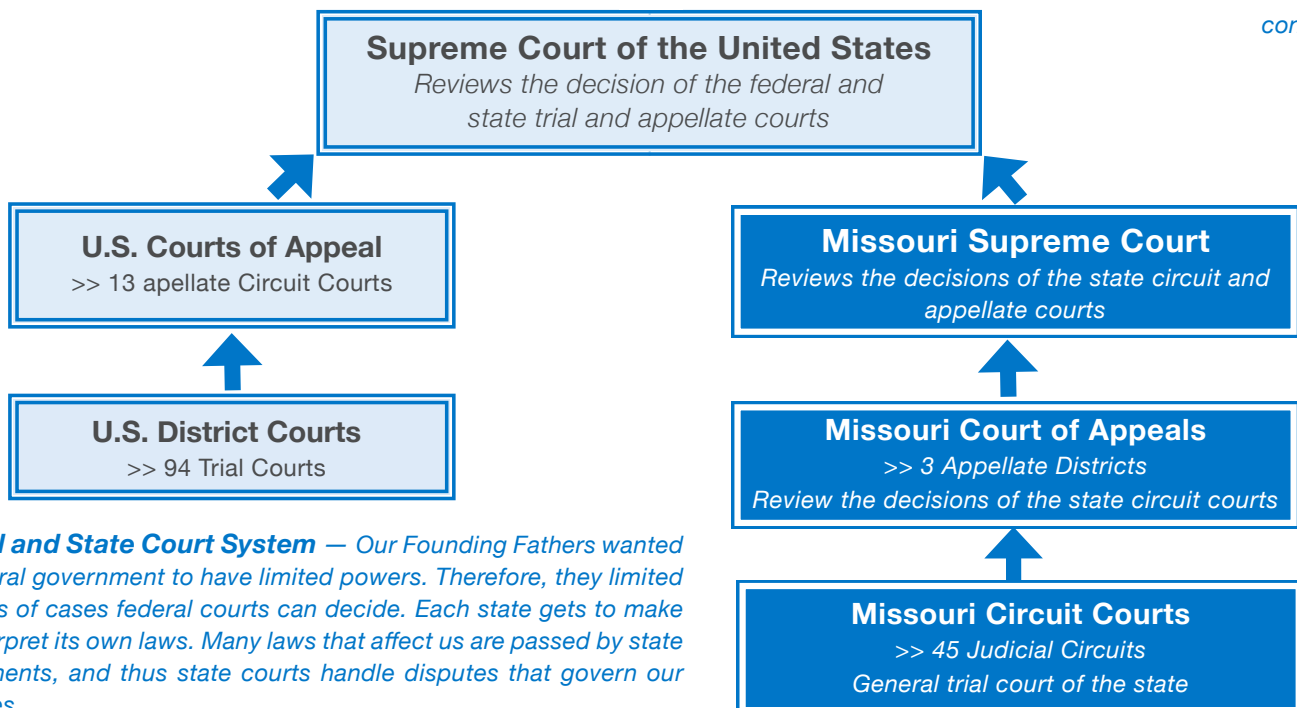
The highest court in the state is the Missouri Supreme Court. It has the highest authority on the interpretation of state and local laws. Also, it has the power to declare laws from Missouri General Assembly unconstitutional. The Missouri Supreme Court oversees the entire state court system, monitoring court workload, seeking improvements to the court system, and establishing an administrative office to watch over these lower courts.

The Missouri Supreme Court is required to hear cases from the lower courts that involve constitutional issues or cases of extreme importance. Also, it has *exclusive jurisdiction* (the sole power to hear) in the following appeal cases:

- the validity of a United States statute or treaty;
- the validity of a Missouri statute or constitutional provision;
- the state's revenue laws;
- challenges to a statewide elected official's right to hold office;
- imposition of the death penalty.

Unless their case involves one of those five issues, people who want a trial court's decision reviewed must appeal to the Missouri court of appeals.

*continued*



**Federal and State Court System** — Our Founding Fathers wanted the federal government to have limited powers. Therefore, they limited the kinds of cases federal courts can decide. Each state gets to make and interpret its own laws. Many laws that affect us are passed by state governments, and thus state courts handle disputes that govern our daily lives.



The following test will help you prepare for your final Missouri 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 80.

Hard work on this page will assure you of a better grade on your final exam. Be sure to look up any answers you don't understand or see your teacher for an explanation.

**MATCHING.** Match the person or body in **Column A** with the correct branch of state government in **Column B**. Put the letter of the correct answer in the space provided.

**Column A**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The Missouri Governor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Missouri House of Representatives
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Missouri Supreme Court
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Missouri Circuit Courts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Lieutenant Governor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Missouri State Senate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Attorney General

**Column B**

- a. The Legislative Branch
- b. The Judicial Branch
- c. The Executive Branch

**FILL IN THE BLANKS.** Write the correct answer in the space provided.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Who can veto a bill passed by the General Assembly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. If the governor dies, who becomes governor?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The river that makes up the easterly border of Missouri.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. The highest court in Missouri.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Voters not only vote for state officials, they sometimes vote on public issues or questions. What are those types of elections called?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. The governor of Missouri.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. The next presidential election will be in what year?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. How many days does the governor have to consider a bill when the General Assembly is in session?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. How many constitutions has Missouri had?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Who may call special sessions of the General Assembly?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. The executive branch officer that keeps the "Great Seal" and maintains the official records of the state.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Who is the chief legal officer of the state of Missouri?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. The Missouri Constitution guarantees the right of trial by \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Name the election used to select candidates for the general election.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. The capital of Missouri.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. How many branches of government in Missouri?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. If the General Assembly wishes to pass a bill over a veto, what fractional vote is necessary?

*continued*