

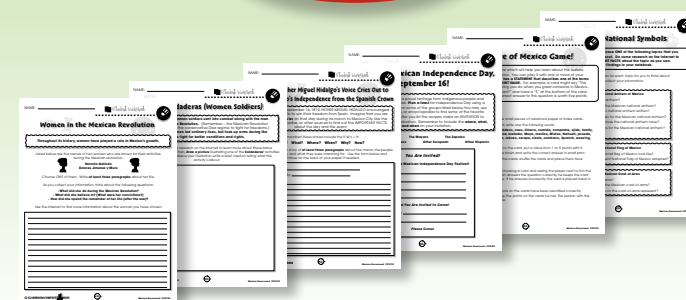
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System of Checks and Balances

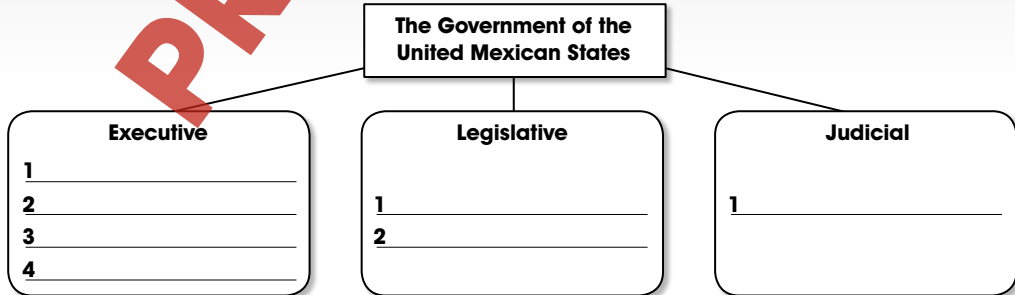
1. Write each term beside the correct meaning.

separation of powers veto constitutional executive branch
pardon legislative branch judicial branch resign

- a) To stop or end a law
- b) Agreeing with the Constitution of 1917
- c) A plan in which one branch of a government makes sure that the other branches do not have too much power
- d) The President of the Republic, Secretaries of State, the head of the federal executive legal office, and the Attorney General
- e) The Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, district courts, and magistrates
- f) The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate
- g) To quit or leave office
- h) To end or take away a court sentence

2. Fill in the blanks in the diagram below. Use the terms in the box.

Supreme Court of the Justice of the Nation Chamber of Deputies President
Secretaries of State Senate Federal Executive Legal Office Attorney General



System of Checks and Balances

Throughout its history, the citizens of Mexico have fought and died for liberty and independence. The goal of the writers of the Constitution of 1917 was to make sure that no person or branch of government had too much power. This is why they included a **system of checks and balances** in the Constitution. Each branch **checks**, or holds back, the other two. This helps to keep the balance of power even in all three branches.

The Checking Power of the Executive Branch

The president is the head of the executive branch of the government. He can **check** the power of the legislative branch by using his power of **veto** which prevents a bill from becoming a law. Every bill that is approved by the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate is sent to the president for his approval. If he chooses not to approve the law, we say that he has vetoed it.

The president can veto almost any bill sent by Congress. He cannot veto bills where members of Congress **act as a jury** or when they **certify** or **confirm the results of an election**. Having this ability gives the President strong checking power over the legislative branch.

STOP **What Do You Think?** Why do you think it is necessary for each branch of the government to have checking powers over the other two branches?

System of Checks and Balances

1. **Circle** the word True if the statement is true. **Circle** the word False if it's false. If it is false, rewrite the statement to make it correct.

- a) The president is the head of state and head of the executive branch.
True False _____
- b) "Veto" means the same as "pardon."
True False _____
- c) Each branch of the Mexican government checks the other two.
True False _____
- d) The president of Mexico cannot be impeached.
True False _____
- e) The judicial branch decides whether laws are constitutional.
True False _____
- f) The president of Mexico serves a five-year term called a "sexenio".
True False _____
- g) The Secretaries of State are members of the legislative branch of government.
True False _____

2. **Become a Research Detective!**

Use your encyclopedia or the Internet to find the answer to the following:

Has a woman ever been elected president of Mexico? If so, what is her name?

Are there any women among the secretaries of state in the executive branch? If so, who are they?

Here are six writing tasks about the government of Mexico. Be sure to think about all that you have learned about the Mexican government as you write. Write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

Task #1 Every country on earth has some kind of government even though all governments are not alike. All governments have leaders. What is the title of the person who leads the Mexican government? How is he or she selected?

Task #2 Being the leader of a large country like Mexico is a very big task for anyone. What kind of qualities do you think the leader of the Mexican government should have? What kind of qualities do you think the leader of your country should have? Compare the qualities you have given for each leader. Give good reasons for your opinion.

Task #3 Article 3 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 states, "Every individual has the right to receive education." Why do you think the writers of the Constitution thought an education was so important?

Task #4 All countries have problems which must be solved. Some of these problems are so serious that they are present in most countries (for example, homelessness). If you were president of the United Mexican States which three problems would you try to solve? What would you do to solve them?

Task #5 The Mexican president has many powers. Think about what you have learned about the Mexican government and describe three of the powers the Mexican president has. What document gives him these powers?

Task #6 The Constitution of 1917 states that slavery is forbidden in Mexico. What is slavery? What basic rights are taken away from a person who is a slave to another person or group of people?

NAME: _____

After You Read 



System of Checks and Balances

Answer each question with a complete sentence.

3. What is the reason for having a **system of checks and balances** in a government?

4. Why do you think a person would be willing to fight, and even die, for **freedom**? Do you think that freedom is very important? Why?

5. Read the presidential oath (promise) below. What are **two** things that the president is promising to do when he takes this oath?

The Mexican Presidential Oath of Office

"I solemnly promise that I will observe and enforce the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States and the laws enacted in pursuance thereof, and that I will discharge loyally and patriotically the office of President of the Republic which the people have conferred upon me, in all ways looking to the welfare and prosperity of the Union; and if I do not do so may the Nation demand it of me."

6. Describe **two** ways that the executive branch can check the legislative branch.

7. When is the only time that the president **cannot** veto a law sent to him by the legislative branch?

Answers will vary

3.

To keep any branch from having too much power

4.

Accept any reasonable answer

5.

To enforce the constitution and the laws, to look after the welfare of the country

6.

veto, pardon

7.

When Congress acts as a Jury or certifies an election

Across:

- 1. sexenio
- 3. government
- 4. rights
- 5. Titles
- 6. conflicts
- 7. branch
- 8. Hidalgo
- 10. democracy
- 11. vote
- 12. judicial
- 13. anarchy
- 15. executive

Down:

- 1. Senate
- 2. pardon
- 4. power
- 5. good
- 6. protect
- 7. federation
- 8. balances
- 9. dictator
- 10. Deputies
- 12. candidate

EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY



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