

# Almost Painless Guide to the Legislative Branch, The

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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1. The co-equal branches of government provided in the checks and balances are the \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Check only one answer)

- House and Senate
- federal, state, and local
- laws, amendments, and articles
- executive, judicial, and legislative

2. The ultimate authorities in our government are \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Check only one answer)

- all the leaders
- we the people
- most of the judges
- many of the governors

3. For the process of impeachment, the House can initiate action against the President with two-thirds majority vote, while the Senate can remove the President from office with a two-thirds majority vote.  
(Check only one answer)

- true
- false

4. As established in Article 1 of the Constitution, Congress consists of which two houses?  
(Check only one answer)

- the Pentagon and the military
- the White House and the Capitol
- the Supreme Court and the lower courts
- the Senate and the House of Representatives

5. A president's veto of congressional legislation can be overridden in each house by a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Check only one answer)

- simple majority
- 50% vote
- two-thirds vote
- three-quarters vote

Another term for a legislative body that has two houses is \_\_\_\_\_.

(Check only one answer)

- federalism
- bicameral
- bilegislature
- capitalism

7. Which of the following is NOT true of the Senate?

(Check only one answer)

- It has 100 members.
- The term for a senator is four years.
- A senator must be a resident of the state that he or she represents.
- A senator must be a citizen of the United States for at least nine years.

8. The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is \_\_\_\_\_.

(Check only one answer)

- the president
- the vice president
- the majority whip
- the Speaker of the House

9. Which of the following is NOT true of the House of Representatives?

(Check only one answer)

- It has 435 members.
- A term for a representative is two years.
- Each state gets the same number of seats in the House.
- A representative must be a resident of the state and district he or she represents.

10. The members of Congress do which of the following?

(Check only one answer)

- make laws
- serve on committees
- represent their constituents
- all of the above

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VIDEO QUIZ

1. Most of the work that is done by the legislative branch is done in committees.  
A. True      B. False
2. The Senate has more committees than the House of Representatives.  
A. True      B. False
3. The New Jersey Plan required that each state receive the same number of seats in the federal legislature.  
A. True      B. False
4. An amendment is a law which changes the Constitution.  
A. True      B. False
5. The legislative branch is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives.  
A. True      B. False
6. Another terms for a legislative body that has two houses is  
A. federalism.                      B. bicameral.  
C. bilegislatve.                      D. capitalism.
7. Which of the following is not true of the Senate?  
A. It has 100 members.  
B. The term for a Senator is four years.  
C. A Senator must be a resident of the state that s/he represents.  
D. A Senator must be a citizen of the United States for at least nine years.
8. The presiding officer of the House of Representatives is  
A. the President.  
B. the Vice-President.  
C. the Majority Whip.  
D. the Speaker of the House.
9. Which of the following is not true of the House of Representatives?  
A. It has 435 members.  
B. A term for a Representative is two years.  
C. Each state gets the same number of seats in the House.  
D. A Representative must be a resident of the state and district that s/he represents.
10. The members of Congress do not do which of the following things?  
A. Make laws.                      B. Represent their constituents.  
C. Enforce laws.                      D. Serve on committees.

Name\_\_\_\_\_

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What groups make up the legislative branch? What does "bicameral" mean?
2. What are amendments?
3. How did the framers of the Constitution insure that our government represented "We the People?"
4. What powers does the legislative branch have over the executive branch?
5. Which branch of government has legislative power?
6. What is the significance of the "great compromise?"
7. What are the requirements for a Senator and a member of the House of Representatives? What is the term of office for each?
8. Where is most of the work of Congress accomplished?
9. What are the duties of Congress according to the video?
10. How is the system of checks and balances between all three branches used in the law-making process?
11. What are the three types of vetoes that a President may use?

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## POWERS OF CONGRESS

**Directions:** Match each definition of the powers of Congress with each example by placing its letter in the blank.

The following are some of the expressed powers of Congress. The expressed powers are those powers that are outlined in the Constitution and given to Congress to use.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| _____ 1. Power to tax: The power of Congress to collect taxes, duties, and provide for the common defense and welfare of the United States.  | A. Congress decides to take a loan to help pay for the current deficit crisis facing the Medicare system.            |
| _____ 2. Commerce powers: The power of Congress to regulate interstate and foreign trade.  | B. Congress decides that people who violate the Federal Civil Rights laws will be automatically jailed for 75 years. |
| _____ 3. Currency power: The power of Congress to coin money and regulate the value of it.   | C. Congress decides to print a new \$3 bill.   |
| _____ 4. Borrowing power: The power of Congress to borrow money on the credit of the United States.  | D. Congress decides to purchase 5,000 acres of land in the Florida Everglades and turn it into a National Park.      |
| _____ 5. Judicial powers: The power of Congress to create all federal courts below the Supreme Court. Congress also has the power to define federal crimes and provide for their punishment. | E. Congress passes a law that will increase the tax on cigarettes by 10%.  |
| _____ 6. Power over territories and other areas: The power of Congress to acquire, manage, and dispose of federal areas.   | F. Congress calls for an increased tariff to be placed upon imported Japanese automobiles.                           |
| _____ 7. Power over foreign relations: The Power of Congress to approve treaties and to act on matters affecting the security of the nation.   | G. Congress writes a bill that would increase economic aid to African nations.                                       |
| _____ 8. War powers: The power of Congress to declare war and raise and maintain an army.  | H. Congress declares war on Iraq.  |

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## POWERS OF CONGRESS

**Directions:** Match each definition of the powers of Congress with each example.

The following are the nonlegislative powers of Congress. These powers do not involve Congress's ability to write law.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Executive powers: The power of Congress to confirm all Presidential appointments made by the President and all treaties made by the President.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Impeachment powers: The power of Congress to bring formal criminal charges against and remove from office the President, Vice-President, and all civil officers.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Constitutional Amendment: The power of Congress to propose amendments to the Constitution with a two-thirds vote in each house.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. Investigative powers: The power of Congress to investigate for the purpose of gathering information useful to Congress in making law, to review the effectiveness of laws it has passed, and to find out if programs are being operated properly.

I. Congress passes the balanced budget amendment.

J. Congress calls for a study of the current welfare system, in order to check if it is being operated properly.

K. Congress may remove Senator Bill Smith from office for illegally using public funds.

L. Congress approves an arms reduction treaty with China.