

Delaware Recommended Curriculum

This unit has been created as an exemplary model for teachers in (re)design of course curricula. An exemplary model unit has undergone a rigorous peer review and jurying process to ensure alignment to selected Delaware Content Standards.

Unit Title: **Branches of Government**

Designed by: **Rodney Collins, Lake Forest School District**
Fran O'Malley, University of Delaware
Dusty Shockley, Delaware Department of Education

Content Area: **Social Studies**

Grade Level: **4**

Summary of Unit

[Civics Standard One 4-5b](#) calls for understanding as to why the United States government is divided into three branches. The branches of government usually correspond to the three main functions of government: making law, enforcing or administering law, and adjudicating law.

In the U.S. system, these functions are entrusted to separate institutions called branches: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Each has a function that addresses a key aspect of fulfilling the purposes of government: make, administer, and adjudicate rules in order to provide for security, order, and welfare. Understanding the responsibilities and powers associated with these functions of government comes from understanding the purposes they serve. Once a student understands the purposes, the responsibilities and powers make sense and can be easily recalled or even derived. The divided branches also serve the purpose of checks and balances.

The list of central responsibilities and powers is relatively short. Responsibilities define the needs to be met; powers suggest the means to meet the needs. For example, the executive branch has the responsibility for national security. It is given the power to provide for the national defense, which includes establishing a military and conducting war. The responsibility of the judiciary is to adjudicate the law. It is given power to pass judgment on whether law was broken or not and decide punishments within the constraints of the law. The legislature, or Congress in the U.S. government, has the responsibility to make laws, which are the rules that keep order in society.

With regard to the context of this unit and its transfer task, occasion sometimes arises whereby all three branches of the government must work together in a timely manner to assure the well-being of its citizens. This unit can easily be adapted to recent and current events involving destruction and devastation by way of hurricane, tornado, flood, fire, etc. and how the branches of the United States Government acted within and throughout such circumstances.

Stage 1 – Desired Results

What students will know, do, and understand

Delaware Content Standards

- **Civics Standard One 4-5b:** Students will understand that the United States government is divided into executive, legislative, and judicial branches, each with specific responsibilities and powers.

Big Ideas

- Government
- Interdependence

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that:

- Governments are structured to address the basic needs of the people in a society.

Essential Questions

- Why should the responsibilities and powers of government be divided?
- Why are checks and balances important within the branches of government?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know...

- The role and purpose of each branch of the United States government
- The responsibilities of each branch of the United States government
- The power of each branch of the United States government
- How each branch of the United States government is able to monitor and challenge the work of the other branches through a system of checks and balances

Students will be able to...

- categorize and describe the specific purpose, power, and responsibilities of each branch of the United States government
- use current events, political cartoons, and other sources to make reasoned decisions, explanations, and conclusions
- work cooperatively to construct predictions and solutions to solve problems

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

Evidence that will be collected to determine whether or not Desired Results are achieved

Transfer Task

This summative assessment is a transfer task that requires students to use knowledge and understandings to perform a task in a new setting or context.

The assessment and scoring guide should be reviewed with students prior to any instruction. Students should do the assessment after the lessons have been completed.

Essential Question Measured by the Transfer Task

- Why should the responsibilities and powers of government be divided?

Prior Knowledge	Now that you understand the responsibilities and powers of each branch of the federal government, you are ready to show how all three branches can work together and how they check and balance one another in responding to a common situation.
Problem	A natural disaster has just ravaged the southeastern coast of the United States. Much damage has occurred to the coastline and to the property of the residents of that part of the country. There is a great need for the government to get involved in responding to the needs of its citizens in that part of the country.
Role/ Perspective	You will assume the role of a member of the press who will report on how one branch of the federal government should respond to the natural disaster faced by its citizens. You will also project how the other two branches of the federal government will respond to the action taken by the branch on which you focus.
Product/ Performance	Construct a web-based graphic organizer that shows the responsibilities and powers of your chosen branch of the national government in responding to the natural disaster. The graphic organizer will be used by the member of the press in reporting to the public during a news broadcast. Your web-based graphic organizer should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A detailed plan of action by your chosen branch of the federal government concerning its response to the natural disaster.• Responsibilities and powers of your chosen branch of the federal government.• A projected response by the other two branches of the federal government concerning your chosen branch's response to the needs of citizens affected by the natural disaster.• Evidence of checks and balances among the branches of the federal government within this situation.
Criteria for an Exemplary Response	An exemplary response will present a thorough and accurate plan of action for one branch of the United States government in responding to the needs of those citizens affected by the natural disaster, as well as a response to the action taken by the other two branches of the federal government.

Note: Teachers will find that using the graphic organizer tools found at www.gliffy.com will allow students to complete this task using technology. Should technological resources be unavailable to teachers, students may use poster board or chart paper in completing this transfer task.

Transfer Task Rubric

Scoring Category	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
The Graphic Organizer Provides...			
a detailed plan of action for one branch of the federal government concerning its response to the natural disaster	The content of the graphic organizer exhibits a well defined plan of action for one branch of the federal government.	The content of the graphic organizer exhibits a partially defined plan of action for one branch of the federal government.	The content of the graphic organizer exhibits a minimally defined plan of action for one branch of the federal government.
responsibilities and powers of the chosen branch of the federal government as it relates to responding to the natural disaster	Examples are often given and enhance understanding of one branch's purpose and role in responding to the needs of citizens.	Examples are sometimes given to enhance understanding of one branch's purpose and role in responding to the needs of citizens.	Examples are rarely given to enhance understanding of one branch's purpose and role in responding to the needs of citizens.
a projected response by the other two branches of the federal government regarding the chosen branch's action	A thoroughly explained response is provided for the other two branches of the federal government.	A moderately explained response is provided for the other two branches of the federal government.	A minimally explained response is provided for the other two branches of the federal government.
evidence of checks and balances among the branches of the federal government	Evidence of checks and balances is clearly demonstrated between branches of the federal government in their responses to the needs of citizens.	Evidence of checks and balances is somewhat demonstrated between branches of the federal government in their responses to the needs of citizens.	Evidence of checks and balances is vaguely or not demonstrated between branches of the federal government in their responses to the needs of citizens.

Total Score: _____

Above the Standard: 11 to 12

Meets the Standard: 8 to 10

Below the Standard: 5 to 7

Student Self-Assessment and Reflection

Students should keep a daily response log to catalog new information and to consider how it fits into the bigger picture of the unit as a whole. The daily response log will allow students to check and modify predictions throughout the course of the unit.

When students are required to think about their own learning, to articulate what they understand and what they still need to learn, achievement improves.

-Black and William, 1998; Sternberg, 1996; Young, 2000

How a teacher uses the information from assessments determines whether that assessment is formative or summative. Formative assessments should be used to direct learning and instruction and are not intended to be graded.

The Checks for Understanding at the end of each instructional strategy should be used as formative assessment and may be used as writing prompts or as small-group or whole-class discussion. Students should respond to feedback and be given opportunities to improve their work. The rubrics will help teachers frame that feedback.

An interactive notebook or writing log could be used to organize student work and exhibit student growth and reflection.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

(Design learning activities to align with Stage 1 and Stage 2 expectations)

Lesson One

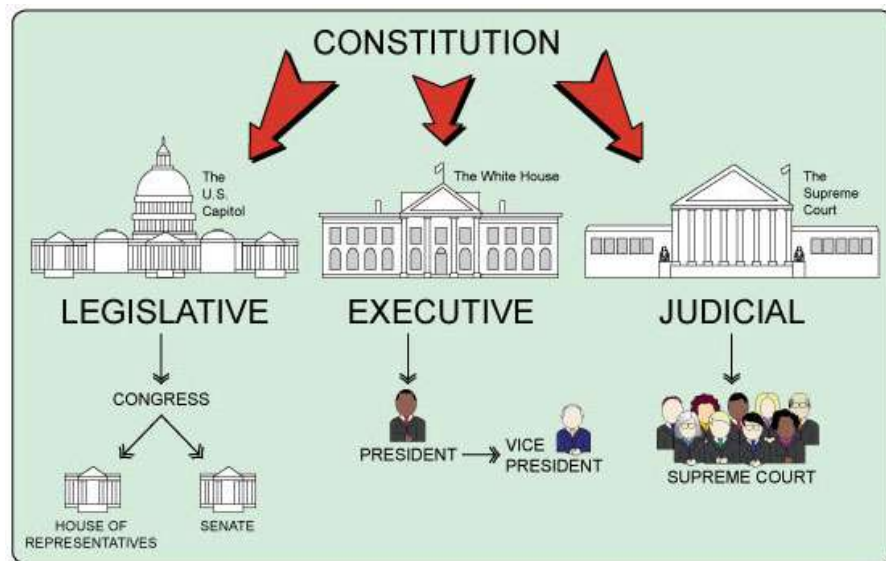
Essential Question

- Why should the responsibilities and powers of government be divided?

Background

The government of the United States is divided into three distinct branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. Each branch has specific responsibilities and powers, yet all three branches must work together in order to address the needs of America's citizenry. The legislative branch makes laws, the executive branch enforces laws, and the judicial branch interprets laws to see if they adhere to the principles found in the U.S. Constitution. In theory, no one branch is more powerful or more important than the other two. However, the balance of power does shift due to changes that may involve personalities, events, and public opinion.

Nevertheless, our three branch structure is designed to curb and direct power so that it promotes the general welfare.



Instructional Strategies

Strategy 1: Gathering Information

KIM Vocabulary Building¹

¹ Differentiation tip: Complete one or two columns in the graphic organizer to scaffold for struggling students.

The KIM vocabulary building strategy activates prior knowledge and organizes information for learning. This strategy will be used to introduce/review important vocabulary in this unit.

Display the following vocabulary terms on the board in no particular order:

Congress	Law	Court
Executive Branch	Senate	Enforce
Interpret	Judicial	Branch
House of Representatives	Government	Purpose
Responsibility	Legislative Branch	Veto
Checks and Balances		

Differentiation: "compact" the list in instances where it is clear that the students already know the terms. Have students grouped into pairs. Pass out a copy of a KIM vocabulary building chart for students to complete. An example of the KIM vocabulary building chart will look like this:

K. <i>(Key Word)</i>	I. <i>(Information/Definition)</i>	M. <i>(Memory Clue/Picture)</i>
Your Sentence:		

Students should focus on the vocabulary terms on the board while completing the KIM vocabulary building chart.

This activity can be done as a jigsaw. Some pairs may focus on more than one term and will need multiple copies of the KIM vocabulary building chart. Once completed,

student pairs will share their information with the class as a whole.²

The vocabulary terms should then be applied to a contextual situation. Use the following online demonstration to show these terms in the context of the role and purpose of each of the branches of United States government:

[Click here for an online resource](#) that provides a diagram and basic explanation of the three branches of U.S. government.³

Strategy 2: Gathering Information Practicing Transfer/Problem Solving

Literacy Connection: James Tilton’s Huts Teacher note (not to be shared with students at this point) Students will read the story of Delaware’s own James Tilton who came up with the idea of “Tilton huts” as a way of reducing the number of disease related deaths in field hospitals during the American Revolution.

Project an image of [Handout 1: Field Hospital](#). Explain to students that a field hospital is the name given to a temporary medical facility that moves from one battle site to another during wartime (e.g. some may have seen episodes of M.A.S.H.).

Tell the students that this simple diagram illustrates what the inside of a field hospital used to look like long ago during the Revolutionary War. Ask students to work with a partner to identify and explain any problem(s) that might arise in a field hospital organized or populated as it is in [Handout 1](#). Students should recognize that people with many different contagious diseases in the same room can spread the disease.

Have students share and explain any problems that they identified in their groups, then focus their attention on the fact that it is problematic from a medical perspective to place patients with different contagions in the same room and so close to one another. Indeed, more people have died in some wars because of the spread of diseases than battle wounds.

Ask students to think with a partner about possible solutions to the problem of diseases spreading in field hospitals. Then give students a pair of scissors and have

² Post the essential question for this lesson and begin a word wall for this unit. Visit http://www.theschoolbell.com/Links/word_walls/words.html to learn more about word walls.

Note: Word walls are not meant to be displays, but are intended to be interactive and to assist with vocabulary development. Over time, students add to their core of words with approximately five added per week. Each word should be displayed on a classroom wall in a legible and clear way. It is important to remember that terms found in the Delaware Social Studies Benchmarks are concepts that are meant to be understood – not just memorized. Students should contribute suggestions for the word wall, and their KIM vocabulary building charts may serve as entries on the word wall.

³ Note: Textbook materials may be used to help students know and understand the responsibilities and powers of each branch of government.

them cut out the various patients on [Handout 1: Field Hospital](#). Their task is to rearrange the patients in a way that solves any serious problems that they identified. The intent of the activity is to give students an opportunity to cut out the patients with different illnesses and place them in separate areas or rooms.

Circulate around the room in search of one group's work that is an exemplar of separating contagions. Have other students gather around the exemplar and have that group's members explain their "solution."

Debrief using the following questions:

- What was wrong with the organization of the field hospital?
- What was a good solution?

Strategy 3: Extending and Refining Pre-Reading Prediction

Write or project the following words:

<i>Dying</i>	<i>Revolutionary War</i>
<i>Hospitals</i>	<i>Filthy</i>
<i>Huts</i>	<i>Isolating</i>
<i>Preventing</i>	<i>Disease</i>
<i>Rate</i>	<i>Dropped</i>

Ask students if there are any words on the list that are unfamiliar. "Lifelines" available to them: students may use a dictionary; ask others; or ask the teacher to define.

Tell students that they are going to read a story about a famous Delawarean, James Tilton, who lived a very long time ago (1754-1822), but whose ideas are still used today. Ask them to use some or all of the words on the list above to write 2-3 sentences that predict what the story will be about.

Distribute copies of [Handout 2](#)⁴ and have the students read the passage.

During Reading: Ask students who are changing their predictions as they read to raise and wave their hands when their predictions change.

After Reading: Have students complete [Handout 3](#) for James Tilton.⁵

⁴ This reading has a [lexile measure](#) of 900, appropriate for the Common Core State Standards 4-5 grade cluster. [Handout 4](#) contains one of James Tilton's sketches of a Tilton Hut that teachers may want to share after students complete their Character Map.

⁵ Thanks to the following individuals and organizations for providing source materials about James Tilton:

**Strategy 4: Extending and Refining
Practicing Transfer**

Distribute copies of [Handout 5](#). Have students look over the powers described on the paper. Ask them what they think of these powers.

Have students work in pairs to respond to the following questions:

- Are these powers that governments should have or need?
- Is it a good idea for all of these powers to be held by one person or situated in one place? Why?
- How might this diagram be similar to the diagram that showed people with many different diseases in the same place?
- How might disease be similar to power?

Check for Understanding #1

Have students complete and explain the following analogies:

<p>_____ can be a problem in a hospital</p> <p>just like</p> <p>_____ can be a problem in a government.</p>	<p>Separating people with contagious diseases in a hospital</p> <p>is like</p> <p>_____.</p>
---	--

Check for Understanding #2

Ask students to apply what they just learned from the field hospital activity to government and power. Explain that [Handout 5](#) illustrates a situation in which a lot of power that can be abused by bad leaders is located in one place, person, or building. Students should

- a. Identify and explain any problem(s) with the government organization in the diagram.
- b. Come up with a solution to this problem in government.

Strategy 5: Extending and Refining

- Constance Cooper and Ellen Rendle of the Delaware Historical Society.
- Madeline Dunn, Curt Stickel, and Nena Todd of Delaware State Museums.

Think-Pair-Share

Lay the paper charts showing the different branches of government on the floor - see [Handout 6](#).⁶

Put students in pairs. Distribute copies of the various powers and functions of government out to the pairs (see the "Power Boxes" on [Handout 7](#)). Cut the *Power Boxes* up into individual boxes and give each pair one of them. Have partners discuss which branch they think the power in their *Power Box* should go and be able to justify their placements.

Ask each pair to bring their *Power Box* up to the floor, place it under the recommended "branch of government," and explain to the rest of the class why they think that power or function should be given to that particular branch.

The students should be given the option of placing powers in the House or Senate as well as the other two branches. Allow other students to challenge the placement, and then explain the error.

Check for Understanding

- Have students list 2-3 powers assigned to the 3 branches of government on [Handout 6](#).

Strategy 6: Extending and Refining Sentence Stems

As a whole group, have the class participate in [the online activity of matching powers and responsibilities to the branches](#) to which they belong.

Students should begin to notice likenesses and differences between and among the three branches of government.

At the conclusion of the online activity, have students work in pairs to complete two sentence stems that you will have listed on the board. The two sentence stems are:

The _____ branch and _____ branch are similar because _____.

The _____ branch and _____ branch are different because _____.

⁶ Consider using the poster maker machines at one of the 9 the [Delaware Teacher Center Resource Centers](#) around the State. The poster makers convert 8.5" x 11" papers into poster sized replicas in less than a minute. Delaware teachers can use them free of charge.

After collaboration in pairs, students will share out with the whole group. Commonalities and differences that are most prevalent should be discussed and emphasized.

A follow-up that would challenge students to deploy their understanding of the responsibilities of each branch in the context of solving a problem could revolve around one or more of the following situations:

Stem: How might the three branches of the United States government possibly respond to ...

- Schools that are consistently failing across the country?
- The chance that a species will become endangered?

Strategy 7: Extending and Refining **"Money Doesn't Grow on Trees" Role Play⁷**

To show students an example of how two branches of the U.S. government must work together and yet satisfy different responsibilities at the same time, use the lesson activity entitled [Money Doesn't Grow on Trees](#). In this lesson activity, students will learn the role of the executive branch in creating and carrying out laws. Using role-playing, the class will model the legislative and execution processes as they create a new coin in order to learn how the executive and legislative branches work together. They will follow the new coin from its inception as an idea in the executive branch to its creation at the U.S. Mint.

Show students coins (several denominations) you have brought for demonstration. Ask whether money really grows on trees, and if not, where do they think money comes from?

Explain that today students will be creating a new coin as a way of learning how the executive and legislative branches work together. Distribute coins of whatever denominations you feel comfortable letting students borrow. Ask students to study the coins to see what is on them.

Show the ["Look at Your Money" transparency](#) and use it to compile a list of what the class finds on the coins. (You can use the master either to create an overhead transparency or on your Smart Board.) Choose one student to act as the President.

Show [transparency master #2, "Step One: The President Gets an Idea."](#) Have the "President" you selected read the presidential announcement to the class. Ask the class to help you fill in the blanks in the "President's Requirements" section.

⁷ Note: All procedures and materials for this strategy are available online at:

<http://icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/executive-roles-money-doesnt-grow-trees>

Show the first half of [transparency master #3, "Step Two: Congress Makes a Bill."](#) Lead the class through a vote to decide on which coin should be updated. Write the name of the coin in the blank space in the bill. Read the bill with the class.

Show the second half of [transparency master #3, "Step Three: Presidential Approval."](#) With the class, walk through the President's requirements for the bill to see whether they are met. (They are.) Then have the "President" you selected approve the bill. Explain that if the requirements had not been met, the President would veto the bill. In that case, Congress could override the veto with a 2/3 vote.

Ask students who they think will actually choose a design and make the coins now that the law is passed. Will the President do it?

Show the first half of [transparency master #4, "Step Four: Execution at the U.S. Mint! Gathering Kids' Ideas."](#) Read through the contest rules and explain that the students will be making designs for a new coin.

Distribute one ["The Kids' Coin"](#) handout to each student. (The "Money Doesn't Grow on Trees?" worksheet should be on the back side of the handout.) Ask students to draw their ideas for the Kids' Coin. Give a limited amount of time for students to finish, according to how much time you have.

Show the second half of [transparency #4, "Step Five: Execution at the U.S. Mint! Making the Money."](#) Direct students' attention to the transparency, and use it to explain how the ideas would get transformed into actual coins that people could use.

Wrap up by having students complete the "Money Doesn't Grow on Trees?" worksheet. They should be able to put the correct words in the blanks without referencing the transparencies.

Debrief by asking the following questions:

- What are some examples of "checks" that arise in this activity?
- Does it appear that the powers given to each branch in this activity are "balanced" as intended by our Constitution?
- Why did the President have to turn to Congress with his idea?
- Why did Congress have to turn to the President to approve (or veto) the idea that they came up with?
- Are these requirements good for our country (or in our best interest)?

Check for Understanding

- How might branches of the U.S. government work together to meet their responsibilities? Support your answer with an example.

Rubric

2 – This response gives a valid explanation with an accurate and relevant example.

1 – This response gives a valid explanation with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no example.

Lesson Two

Essential Question

- Why are checks and balances important within the branches of government?

Background

To ensure that each of the three branches of U.S. government does not become too powerful, the framers set up a system of checks and balances to allow each branch to monitor what the other two branches are doing as they do their work. The separation of powers among the branches of government is more clearly seen when students understand that the action of one branch can be affected by the action of another.

Instructional Strategies

Strategy 1: Gathering Information⁸

Interactive Games

This strategy is based on [Three Branches Checking Game,](#)” by Fran O’Malley of the Democracy Project at the University of Delaware.

Students will play a game that is designed to help them understand the powers and responsibilities of the three branches of the United States government. This will reinforce students' understanding of the powers of the three branches of government while showing them that each branch has the ability to monitor the activities of the other branches.

Cut out the powers of the three branches of government and checks found [here](#) prior to administering the activity. You will need one set of cutouts for every 3 students in class. Place the [Powers Cutouts](#) in small bags making sure that the wording on each cutout faces down (i.e. is not visible to the students). Include one "check" (see [Checks Cutouts](#)) for each student in each bag.

Place students in groups of three and arrange their seats so that the 3 members (triads) of each group are facing each other. Give each student in a triad a picture or drawing of one of the three branches (e.g. Student A receives a picture of the White House, Student B receives a picture of the Capitol, and student C receives a picture of the Supreme Court). Ask each student to display the picture on their desk so that the others in the group can see it.

Tell the students that they are going to play a game that will reinforce and assess their understanding of the powers of the three branches of the U.S. government.

⁸ This strategy reviews the information presented in Lesson 1.

Explain that you are going to place a bag with cutouts on the desk (or table) of each group. Each cutout describes a power of one of the three branches of government. Proceeding clockwise and one at a time, each student is to draw a cutout from the bag. Read the power that is described on the cutout and place it on top of the picture that shows the branch that possesses that power.

Scoring: If the student is correct, he or she earns one point. If either of the two other members of the group believe that the student's placement is incorrect, they can "check" the placement by placing their check on top of the cutout and explain where he or she actually thinks it belongs. A student who correctly "checks" a response earns two points while the student who placed it incorrectly loses a point. Add up the total number of points earned by each student at the end of a round to determine a winner.

Preview **Strategy 2: Extending and Refining - Role Play** by explaining that the Framers intended to divide power relatively evenly among the three branches and that they also separated the powers of government believing that by separating power they would help to insure that no single person or group would be able to abuse power. By separating powers into three branches the Framers intended to give powers to each branch that would allow one branch to check the actions of the other two if either attempted to abuse or assume powers that they were never intended to have. Ask students to think of examples whereby one branch abuses power and one of the other two check that abuse.

Check for Understanding

- Why might the Framers of the Constitution have chosen to separate the powers of the three branches of government using the system of checks and balances? Support your answer with an example.

Rubric

2 – This response gives a valid explanation with an accurate and relevant example.

1 – This response gives a valid explanation with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no example.

Strategy 2: Extending and Refining Role Play⁹

Students will work collaboratively in small groups while completing [this strategy](#). Having already learned that each branch of government has its own powers, duties, and responsibilities, and that each branch has the power to monitor and ensure that the activities of the other branches is not allowing one branch to abuse its power, students will now reinforce their understanding of these ideas within the context of a different situation.

⁹ Note: All procedures and materials for this strategy are available online at:

<http://icivics.org/lesson-plans/separation-powers-whats-lunch>

Use the [Power Point](#) and the [overhead transparencies](#) as guides for the strategy. Distribute one ["Separation of Powers: What's for Lunch?" handout](#) to each student.

Ask students to answer the 3 survey question regarding rating school lunches and discuss their answers with the student sitting next to them.

Arrange students into groups of 2-3. Introduce the exercise by explaining to students that they will be designing a school lunch menu, and there will be 5 rounds to this activity.

Distribute one ["Designing the Menu" handout](#) to each group. Allow about 5 minutes for rounds 1, 2, and 5 and about 2 minutes for rounds 3 and 4. Tell students when it is time to pass along the handout to begin the next stage.

Tell students to complete the assignment for Round 1 as the "Lead Chefs." They should not begin Round 2 until everyone is done Round 1. When ready, instruct students to pass the handout to another group and complete the assignment for Round 2 as the "Writers."

For Round 3, return the handout to the original "Lead Chefs" to perform this task.

For Round 4, pass the handout back to the same "Writers" group to perform the assignment (if necessary).

For Round 5, pass the handout to a totally new group of students to complete the assignment.

For the "Final Result" category, ask the students to pass the handout back to the original "Lead Chefs" for that worksheet.

Review the jobs students performed in each round and analyze with students what happened.

Students should be able to equate the roles found and used in this activity with the roles of each of the branches of the United States government. Individually, ask students to fold a piece of white copy paper lengthwise from top to bottom and then approximately two inches across and down from the top of the paper to make a T-chart.

On the left side of the top of the chart, the student should write the name of a role found in the activity and label it. On the right side of the top of the chart, the student should write the name of the branch of the United States government to which that role corresponds. Below the horizontal fold line, the student will write ways in which the role and branch are similar. An example is found below:

Role from Activity	Corresponding Branch of Government

Have students complete the 5 question mini-review on their individual handout.

Check for Understanding

- Describe the system of checks and balances between the Lead Chef, the Writer, and the Judge in "What's for Lunch?"
- How is this system of checks and balances similar to the system found between the branches of U.S. government? Explain your answer with an example.

Rubric

2 – This response gives a valid similarity with an accurate and relevant example.

1 – This response gives a valid similarity with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no example.

Strategy 3: Extending and Refining "Branches of Power" Web-Based Game

For this strategy, students will apply all that they have learned in Lesson 2 thus far by playing a game entitled, "Branches of Power." The game allows players to control all three branches of government in growing issues into full-fledged laws.

[This web-based game, including instructions and tutorials, can be found online here.](#)

Have students work in pairs to play the game. After students have completed the game, initiate a whole group discussion regarding strategies used in working with all three branches of government to change issues into laws.

Check for Understanding

- Why is it important for all three branches to monitor one another and to work together in transforming issues into laws? Explain your answer.

Rubric

2 – This response gives a valid reason with an accurate and relevant explanation.

1 – This response gives a valid reason with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no explanation.

Strategy 4: Application

L-R-D (Listen-Read-Discussion)

This strategy includes three basic steps to set the stage for learning:

- **L – Listen** as the teacher provides the context for the topic or concept. This may take the any form the teacher feels is appropriate.
- **R –** The student will then **read** an article, essay, etc. associated with the topic or concept.
- **D –** Classroom **discussion** then commences.

For this activity, the teacher should begin by stating that work done by the three branches of the U.S. government is ongoing and that it affects all Americans to some degree or another. The teacher should also review the idea that current events are reported on by news agencies so that the public may know what is happening when events take place. **(Listen)**

Divide the class into pairs, and assign each pair a specific branch of the United States government with the goal of having each pair find examples of ways in which their assigned branch of government exercises its power or responsibilities to solve a problem.

Pairs may be directed to complete one or more of these activities:

1. Provide several current event news articles that describe different branches of the U.S. government exercising their power and/or satisfying one of their responsibilities.
2. Have student pairs conduct research online at <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/> or <http://scholasticnews.com/> to find a news article that describes a branch of the U.S. government exercising its power and/or satisfying one of its responsibilities.
3. Have student pairs visit the website <http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/page/speakouts> to read a current event question and its response, and to determine how their assigned branch of United States government might respond or take action regarding its content.

Student pairs will read the news article provided or found. They will then write a summary telling which branch of government is featured in the article and how that branch of government exercised its power and/or satisfied one of its responsibilities using specific details from the news article. **(Read)**

When research, reading, and summary time has concluded, pairs will reveal their findings in a whole group format. **(Discuss)**

Check for Understanding

- How might the work of one of the branches of the U.S. government have an effect on you? Support your answer with an example.

Rubric

2 – This response gives a valid explanation with an accurate and relevant example.

1 – This response gives a valid explanation with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no example.

Resources

Print

Hamilton, John C. Branches of Government: Government in Action! Checkerboard Books, 2004.

Sobel, Sylvan A. How the U.S. Government Works. Hong Kong: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1999.

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. Center for Civic Education, 2003.

Web Sites

www.gliffy.com

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/government/branches.html>

<http://government.pppst.com/3branches.html>

www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/usgovernmentandlaw/branchesofgovernment/

http://www.theschoolbell.com/Links/word_walls/words.html

www.sheppardsoftware.com/usa_game/government/branches_government.htm

<http://icivics.org>

www.timeforkids.com/TFK/

<http://scholasticnews.com/>

<http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/page/speakouts>

Common Core State Standards Connections

Content Standards integrated within instructional strategies

Grade 4 Reading Standards for Informational Text

- Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to grade 4 Social Studies.

Grade 4 Writing Standards for Literacy in Social Studies

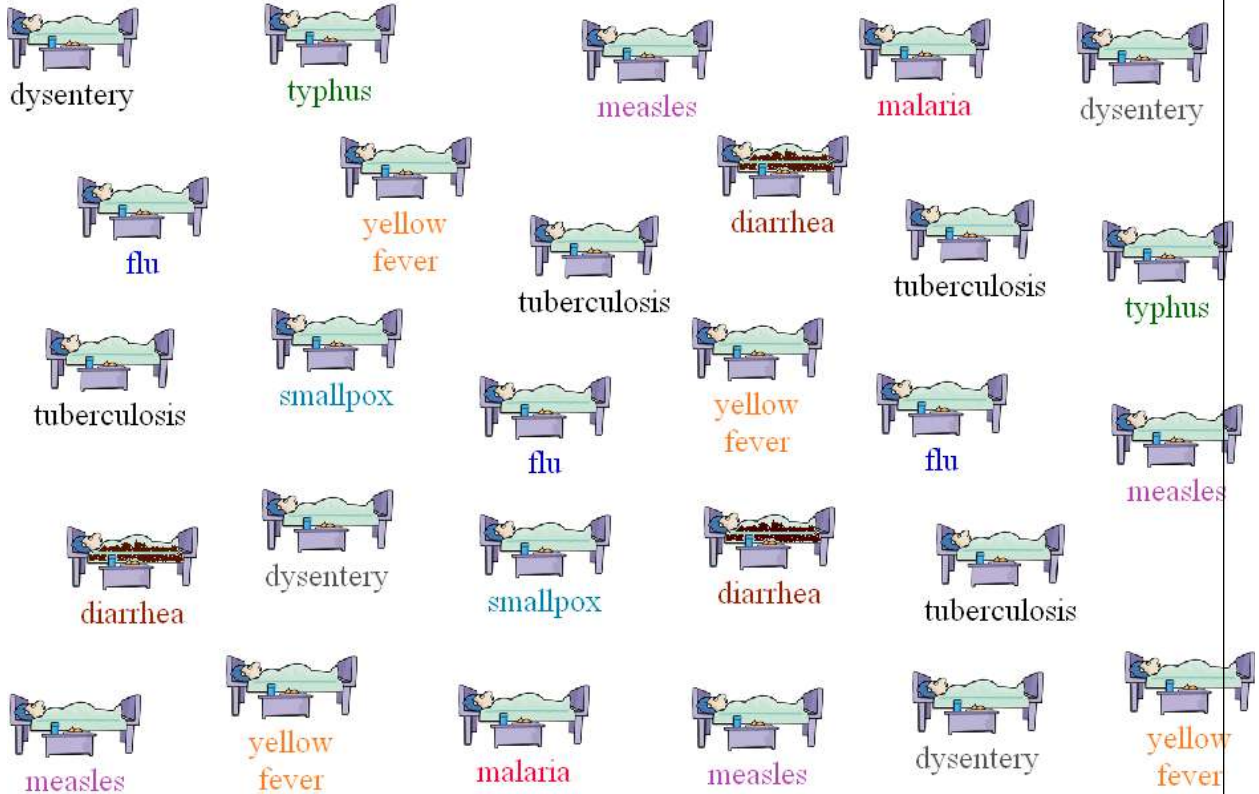
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Grade 4 Speaking and Listening Standards

- Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Handout 1

Field Hospital



Discuss the following with a partner:

1. What may be wrong with the way that this field hospital is organized? Explain why.
2. What might be done to improve it?

Activity: Take a pair of scissors, cut out the various patients, and re-arrange them in a way that solves any serious problems that you identified.

Handout 2

James Tilton's Huts

This is a story about a famous person who came up with a great idea!

Some people think that James Tilton was Delaware's greatest doctor. He was born on June 1, 1745, in Kent County. When the Revolutionary War broke out in 1776, he served in an army hospital in Wilmington.

Doctor Tilton noticed that more people were dying of "hospital fever" in all of the Army hospitals he visited than were killed in battle or dying of wounds. Soldiers came to the hospital to get better. Instead, they got fevers and died. As Dr. Tilton himself wrote, "Many a fine fellow have I seen, brought into the hospital, for slight...affections and carried out dead of a hospital fever."

To help solve this problem, Doctor Tilton came up with the idea of "Tilton Huts." These huts were smaller than the big, one-room hospitals that were being used. Tilton believed in "the importance of separating those ill of fevers ...from the wounded..." In other words, his idea was to keep patients separated in smaller huts so that diseases would not spread as easily. This made things better very quickly. Because of Doctor Tilton's hut idea, there were fewer cases of "hospital fever." Doctors today still use his idea to treat patients.

Adapted from these sources:

Shands, Alfred R. Delaware Medical Journal. *James Tilton, M.D. Delaware's Greatest Physician (1745-1822)*. January 1974, Volume Number 46, Number 1, Pages 24-27. Accessed at the Delaware Historical Society.

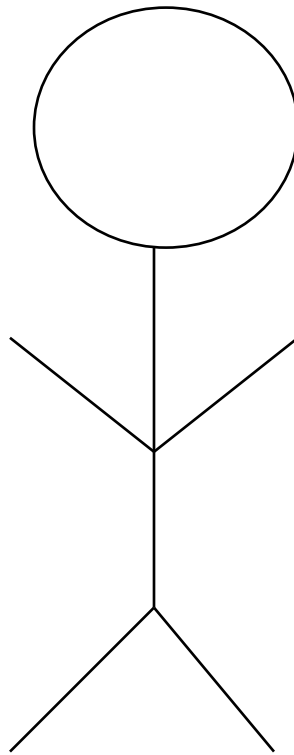
Tilton, James. (1813) *Economical Observations on Military Hospitals*. Wilmington: J. Wilson.

Handout 3

**Character Map
for**

James Tilton

Problem he saw

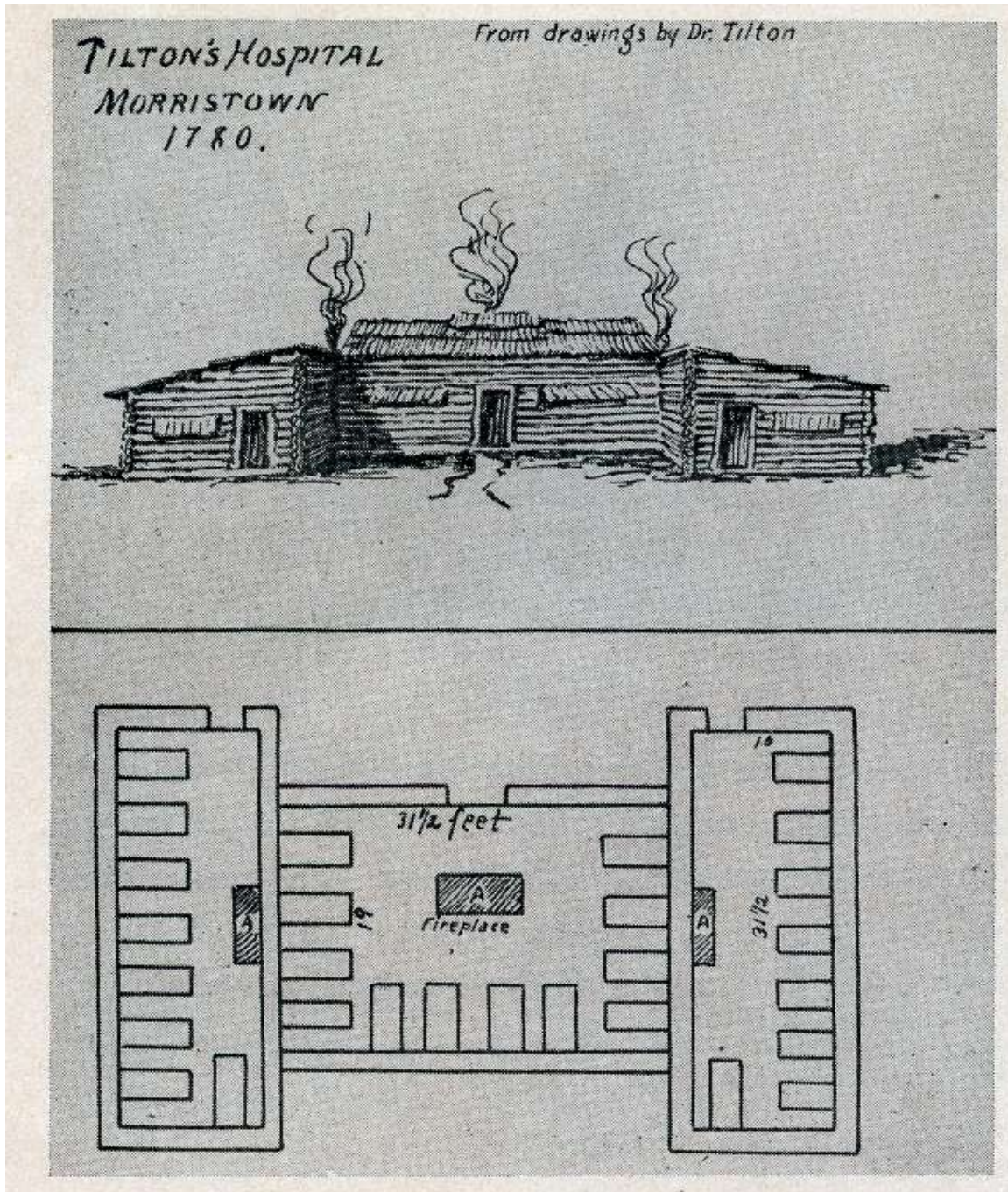


**Solution he
came up with**

Handout 4

Use the space below to draw what you imagine a *Tilton Hut* looked like.

Sketch of a Tilton Hut



Source: Shands, Alfred R. Delaware Medical Journal. *James Tilton, M.D. Delaware's Greatest Physician (1745-1822)*. January 1974, Volume Number 46, Number 1, Pages 24-27. Used with permission from the Delaware Historical Society. Delaware Historical Society.

Handout 5

A Government and Its Powers

declare war raise taxes draft people into the army

accuse people of a crime decide whether a person is guilty or innocent

arrest people make laws interpret the laws

decide who can get married decide who can get a driver's license

decide how tax money will be used decide who has to go to school

decide what students have to do to graduate

decide how many hours a person may work each week

decide how much a person must get paid for their work

take people's homes to build roads, hospitals, fire stations

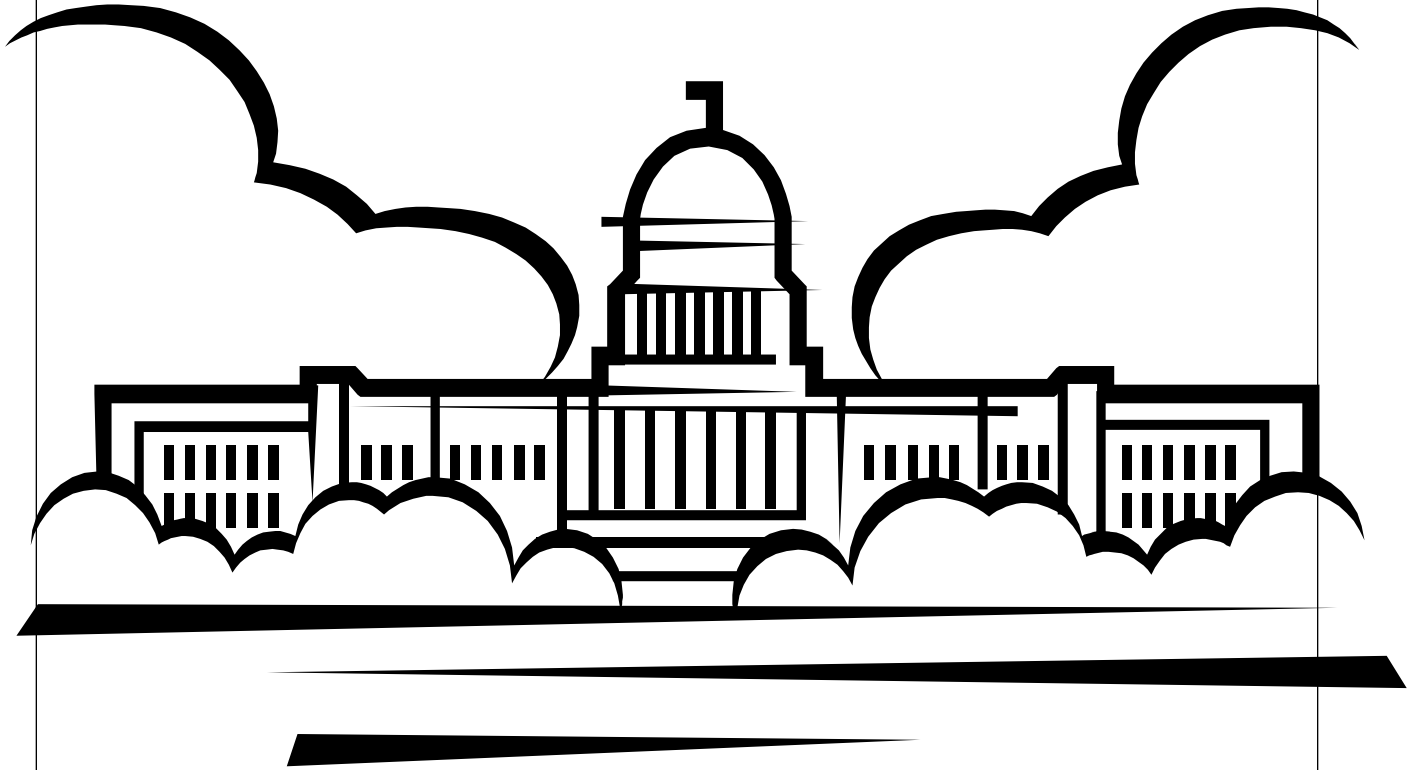
carry out the laws make treaties with other countries

make money veto laws decide whether a law is constitutional

impeach elected officials remove elected officials

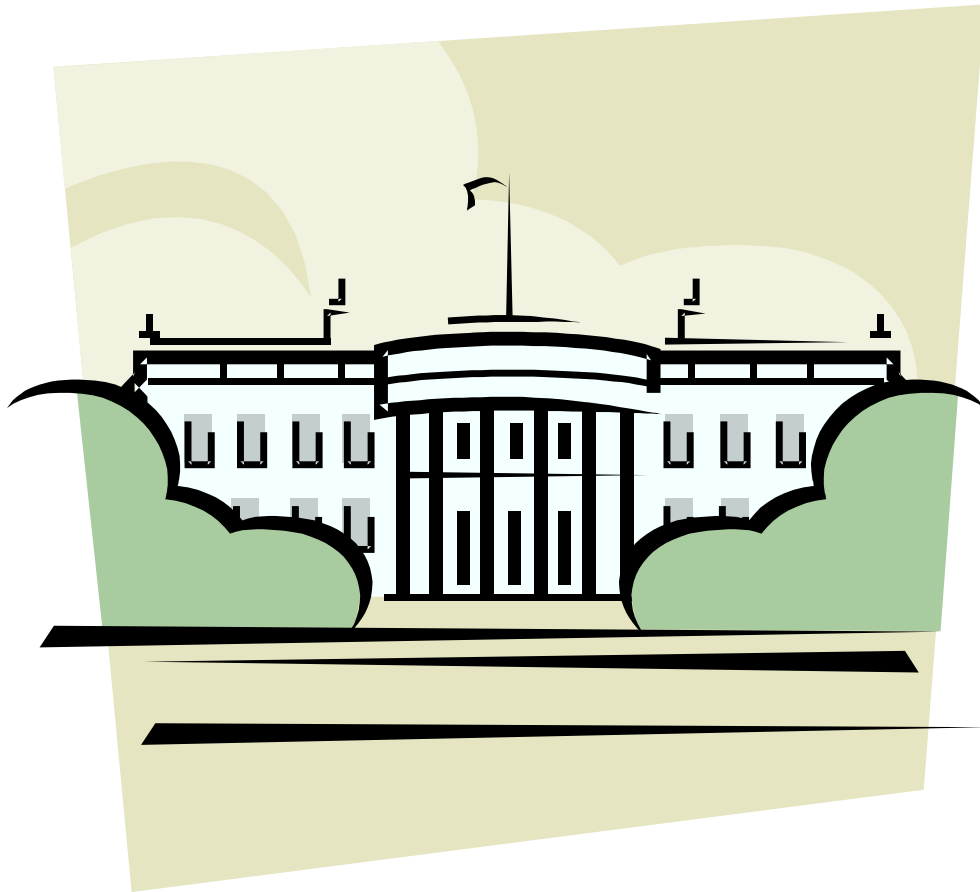
Handout 6

Legislative Branch Congress



House	Senate
435 members	100 members

Executive Branch



The President

Judicial Branch Supreme Court



9 Justices

**Handout 7
Power Boxes**

Power Box #1

Declare war.

Power Box

Make laws.

Power Box #3

Make sure that
the laws are
carried out.

Power Box

Veto laws.

Power Box #5

Interpret laws.

Power Box

Make treaties

Power Box #7

Approve treaties.

Power Box

Propose tax

Power Box #9

Impeach elected officials.

Power Box

Try impeach officials.

Power Box #11

Appoint people to the Cabinet.

Power Box

Appoint jud