American Government

Who Can Do That? Federal and state power, and its limits

Student Workbook · Grades 8-12 · Suggested 0.5 high school credit

A free Openly Learning class · openlylearning.live/american-government

© 2026 Openly Learning LLC. Free to print and copy for personal, family, co-op, and classroom use. Not for sale.

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

This workbook teaches how government works. It is nonpartisan and is not legal advice. Openly Learning is an education marketplace, not an accredited school. Hours and any credit are recorded and awarded by the parent.

How to Use This Workbook

This course teaches what each part of the federal and state government can do, what it cannot do, and what it would take to get something done. There are 12 modules, and each one is built around one question.

Every module follows the same pattern: Start Here, Read, Reflection, an optional Faith Connection, Apply It, Self-Reflection, and a Self-check.

Apply It uses the Power Simulator at openlylearning.live/american-government. Pick a role and try each challenge. Before you check, write your prediction in the workbook. If you are working offline, the simulator answers for every challenge are printed at the back of this workbook.

Plan on about 5 to 7 hours per module, about 65 to 70 hours in all. Record your time in the Hours Log. We suggest this course as a half (0.5) high school credit in American Government or Civics; your parent decides.

Constitution quotations use the National Archives transcription, which keeps the original spelling (like “chuse” and “defence”). This course is nonpartisan: it teaches how the system works, not which party or policy to support.

The Faith Connection is optional and kept separate from the facts of how government works.

MODULE 1 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

Who holds power in America?

Start Here

If you could design a government from scratch, who would get to make the rules, and what would stop them from abusing that power?

Read

Read the Preamble and skim the headings of all seven Articles of the Constitution (National Archives transcription). It takes about 30 minutes.

> *"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."*
>
> — Preamble

The Constitution begins with "We the People," not "We the States" or "We the Government." The idea is called popular sovereignty: power starts with the people, who lend it to the government through a written agreement.

The Framers who met in Philadelphia in 1787 had lived under a king, and then under the Articles of Confederation, which made the national government too weak to pay its debts or settle fights between states. They wanted a government strong enough to work but not strong enough to become a tyranny. They used four big ideas:

- **Separation of powers.** Three branches with three different jobs: Congress makes laws (Article I), the President carries them out (Article II), and courts decide cases under them (Article III).
- **Checks and balances.** Each branch can block or limit the others. The President can veto, Congress can override and impeach, courts can rule on whether actions follow the Constitution.
- **Federalism.** Power is split between the national (federal) government and the states. Each has its own jobs.
- **Limited government.** The government has only the powers the people gave it, and the Bill of Rights lists things no government may do.

Every question in this course comes back to these four ideas. When you try an action in the Power Simulator, ask: Which branch holds this power? Which level of government, federal or state? And is it something no government may do at all?

This course is nonpartisan. It teaches how the system works, not which party or policy to support. Where people disagree about how to read the Constitution, the course shows the main views fairly so you can think it through.

Answer this module's question in your own words: Who holds power in America?

Reflection

In your own words, what does "We the People" mean? Why do you think the Framers started there?

Which of the four big ideas seems most important to you for protecting freedom? Why?

Think of a team, co-op, or club you belong to. Who makes the rules, who enforces them, and who settles arguments? Is that power separated or held by one person?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *"For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; it is he who will save us."*
>
> — Isaiah 33:22 (NIV)

Some writers have noticed that this verse names three roles (judge, lawgiver, king) that the Constitution splits among three branches. Historians debate how much the Framers drew on it. Either way, why might it be wise to keep those three roles apart when they are held by people instead of by God?

Apply It: Power Simulator

Open the Power Simulator below the modules. Pick the role of Citizen first. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
Citizen	Hold a peaceful protest or send a petition to the government		
Citizen	Pass a new federal law all by yourself		
President	Pass a new federal law all by yourself		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Draw a simple chart with three boxes (Congress, President, Courts) and one box above them labeled "We the People." Draw arrows showing one way each branch can check another. Keep it; you will add to it all course.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read the Preamble and skimmed all seven Articles.
☐ I can name the four big ideas.
☐ I tried three actions in the Power Simulator.
☐ I drew my branches chart.

Self-Check

1. The Constitution's first three words are:
   a) We the States
   b) We the People
   c) In God We Trust
   d) Congress shall make

2. Which idea splits power between the national government and the states?
   a) Separation of powers
   b) Judicial review
   c) Federalism
   d) Popular sovereignty

3. Which Article creates Congress?
   a) Article I
   b) Article II
   c) Article III
   d) Article V

4. What was a main problem with the Articles of Confederation?
   a) The national government was too strong
   b) The national government was too weak
   c) There were no states
   d) It created a king

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 2 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

What can Congress do?

Start Here

If you were elected to Congress tomorrow, what could you actually do, and what would be off-limits?

Read

Read Article I, Sections 1 through 8, in the National Archives transcription (about 45 minutes).

> *“All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.”*
>
> — Article I, Section 1

Congress has two chambers. The House of Representatives has 435 voting members, with seats divided among the states by population and counted again after every ten-year census. Representatives serve two-year terms. The Senate has two Senators from every state, 100 in all, who serve six-year terms. This compromise gave big states power in the House and small states equal power in the Senate.

Notice the words "herein granted." Congress has only the powers the Constitution lists, called enumerated powers. Most are in Article I, Section 8. Here are some of them, in the Constitution's own words:

- "To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises"
- "To borrow Money on the credit of the United States"
- "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes"
- "To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization"
- "To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof"
- "To establish Post Offices and post Roads"
- "To declare War"
- "To raise and support Armies"
- "To provide and maintain a Navy"

The last clause of Section 8 is the Necessary and Proper Clause. It lets Congress "make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers." People have argued since 1789 about how far this reaches. One view reads it narrowly, so Congress stays close to its listed powers. Another reads it broadly, letting Congress choose many means to reach its listed goals. In McCulloch v. Maryland (1819) the Supreme Court took the broader view and upheld the law creating a national bank as "a law made in pursuance of the constitution."

Each chamber also has special jobs. Only the House can start tax bills and impeach. Only the Senate confirms nominees, approves treaties, and holds impeachment trials.

Answer this module's question in your own words: What can Congress do?

Reflection

Why do you think the Framers gave Congress, and not the President, the power to tax and to declare war?

Pick one power from Section 8. Give an example of how it affects your family today (for instance, the Post Office or money).

Which reading of the Necessary and Proper Clause do you find more convincing, narrow or broad? Give one reason, and one reason someone might disagree.

Faith Connection (optional)

> *"For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers."*
> — Proverbs 11:14 (NIV)

Congress is a body of 535 people who must debate and agree. When is it wiser to decide with many voices, and when can it slow things down?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, play as U.S. Representative, then as U.S. Senator. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
U.S. Representative	Create a new federal tax		
U.S. Senator	Create a new federal tax		
U.S. Senator	Put a new Justice on the Supreme Court		
U.S. Representative	Impeach (formally charge) a federal official		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Look up who represents you in Congress (your home or domicile address). Write their names, their party, and when their terms end. Then find one bill one of them introduced this year on Congress.gov and write a one-paragraph summary in your own words.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read Article I, Sections 1 through 8.

☐ I can list five enumerated powers.

☐ I tried four actions as a member of Congress.

☐ I looked up my members of Congress and one bill.

Self-Check

1. How many Senators does each state have?
   a) One

b) Two
c) It depends on population
d) Four

2. Where must tax bills begin?
a) The Senate
b) The White House
c) The House of Representatives
d) The Supreme Court

3. Powers listed in the Constitution for Congress are called:
a) Reserved powers
b) Enumerated powers
c) Executive powers
d) Implied rights

4. How long is a Senator's term?
a) Two years
b) Four years
c) Six years
d) Life

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 3 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

How does a bill become a law?

Start Here

What would it really take to turn your best idea into a federal law?

Read

Read Article I, Section 7 slowly. It is one paragraph, but every step of lawmaking is in it.

> *"Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated"*
>
> — Article I, Section 7

Here is the path, step by step:

- **1. Idea.** Anyone can suggest a law: a citizen, a group, the President.
- **2. Introduction.** A member of the House or Senate files it as a bill. (Tax bills must start in the House.)
- **3. Committee.** A small group of members studies it, holds hearings, and can change it. Most bills never leave committee.
- **4. Floor vote.** If the committee approves it, the whole chamber debates and votes. A majority is needed to pass.
- **5. The other chamber.** The bill goes through the same steps in the other house. Both houses must pass the exact same text.
- **6. The President.** The President signs it, or vetoes it. If the President does nothing for ten days (Sundays excepted) while Congress is in session, it becomes law anyway.
- **7. Override.** If vetoed, it can still become law if two-thirds of the House and two-thirds of the Senate vote again to pass it.

> *"If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law."*
>
> — Article I, Section 7

In the Senate, most bills also face the filibuster. Under the Senate's own rules (Article I, Section 5 lets each house "determine the Rules of its Proceedings"), ending debate on most bills takes 60 votes. People disagree about whether the filibuster protects the minority or blocks the majority, and the Senate can change its rules.

The system is slow on purpose. The Framers wanted laws to win support from different groups, chosen in different ways, before they bind everyone.

Answer this module's question in your own words: How does a bill become a law?

Reflection

Why do you think both houses must pass the exact same words?

Is it good or bad that most bills never become law? Explain both sides.

Describe a time you had to get several people to agree before something could happen. How was it like passing a bill?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.”*
>
> — Romans 13:7 (NIV)

Even when we disagree with a law or a leader, how can we show respect? What does that look like for a citizen?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, follow one bill through the roles. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
U.S. Representative	Introduce a new bill in Congress		
U.S. Senator	Write the rules for how your chamber of Congress debates and votes		
President	Veto (reject) a bill Congress passed		
U.S. Representative	Override a presidential veto		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Write your own bill (one page): a title, a short purpose, and three sections saying what it does. Then list each step it would need to pass and who you would need to convince at each one. Keep it nonpartisan: choose something like park trails, a National Homeschool Week, or road signs.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read Article I, Section 7.

☐ I can list the seven steps.

☐ I followed a bill through four roles in the simulator.

☐ I wrote my own bill.

Self-Check

1. What happens if the President vetoes a bill?
   a) It is dead forever
   b) Congress can override with two-thirds of each house
   c) The Supreme Court decides

d) The states vote

2. Where do most bills stop?
   a) In committee
   b) At the President's desk
   c) In the Supreme Court
   d) At the states

3. What vote does a bill need to pass a chamber (without a veto)?
   a) Unanimous
   b) Two-thirds
   c) A majority
   d) Three-fourths

4. Who can introduce a federal bill?
   a) Only the President
   b) Any citizen
   c) Only members of Congress
   d) Only the Speaker

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 4 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

What can the President do?

Start Here

The President is often called the most powerful person in the world. Which powers does the Constitution actually give?

Read

Read Article II (all four Sections) in the National Archives transcription.

> *“The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America.”*
> — Article II, Section 1

The President must be at least 35 years old, a natural born citizen, and a resident for 14 years. The President serves a four-year term and, under the 22nd Amendment, can be elected only twice. The President is chosen by the Electoral College: each state gets electors equal to its number of Representatives plus Senators, and today every state lets its voters choose them.

Article II lists the President's powers:

- **Commander in Chief:** "The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States"
- **Pardons:** "he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment."
- **Treaties:** with two-thirds of the Senate.
- **Appointments:** nominate judges, ambassadors, and officers, with Senate consent.
- **Report and recommend:** the State of the Union.
- **Receive ambassadors:** speak for the nation abroad.
- **Carry out the laws:** "he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed"

To carry out the laws, the President leads the executive branch: the executive departments (like State, Treasury, and Defense), whose heads form the Cabinet, plus many agencies. The President directs them through executive orders, which must rest on the Constitution or on a law Congress passed.

Before taking office, the President swears this oath: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." (Article II, Section 1)

Answer this module's question in your own words: What can the President do?

Reflection

Why do you think the oath is to "the Constitution" and not to the country or the people?

Which presidential power do you think matters most? Which one would you limit more if you could?

The President leads millions of federal workers. What qualities would someone need to do that well, no matter their party?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”*
>
> — 1 Timothy 2:1-2 (NIV)

This was written when Christians lived under emperors they did not choose. What could it look like to pray for leaders you voted for, and leaders you did not?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, play as President. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
President	Command the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Space Force		
President	Pardon someone convicted of a federal crime		
President	Make a treaty with another country		
President	Issue an executive order telling federal agencies how to carry out a law		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Find one recent executive order on the Federal Register (federalregister.gov, the government's official daily journal). Write down its title, the law or constitutional power it cites, and what it tells agencies to do. Do not judge whether it is good; just describe it accurately.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read all of Article II.
☐ I can list six presidential powers.
☐ I tried four actions as President.
☐ I described one executive order.

Self-Check

1. How old must the President be?
   a) 25
   b) 30
   c) 35
   d) 40

2. A presidential pardon can cover:
   a) State crimes
   b) Federal crimes
   c) Impeachments
   d) All of these

3. Who must approve a treaty?
   a) The House
   b) Two-thirds of the Senators present
   c) The Supreme Court
   d) The governors

4. What must an executive order rest on?
   a) The President's opinion
   b) The Constitution or a law passed by Congress
   c) A vote of the Cabinet
   d) Nothing

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 5 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

What can't the President do?

Start Here

If the President is so powerful, what stops a President from doing whatever they want?

Read

Re-read Article I, Sections 8 and 9, looking only for limits on the President. Then read Amendments XX and XXII.

The Constitution gives the President real power, but almost every power comes with a check:

- The President commands the military, but only Congress can "declare War" and fund an army, and army funding cannot last more than two years.
- The President can propose a budget, but "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law" (Article I, Section 9).
- The President nominates judges and Cabinet members, but the Senate must consent.
- The President negotiates treaties, but two-thirds of the Senate must approve.
- The President can veto, but Congress can override.
- The President cannot fire federal judges, cut their pay, or overrule the courts.
- The President can be impeached by the House and removed by the Senate.

A famous test: the steel mills

In 1952, during the Korean War, steelworkers planned a strike. President Truman ordered the government to take over the steel mills to keep making weapons. The companies sued. In Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer, the Supreme Court ruled against the President:

> *"In the framework of our Constitution, the President's power to see that the laws are faithfully executed refutes the idea that he is to be a lawmaker."*
>
> — Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer (1952), opinion of the Court

The majority found that no law passed by Congress allowed the seizure, and that the Constitution does not let the President make laws on his own, even in wartime. Several Justices also wrote their own opinions explaining where they thought the line falls. Read the opinion on Cornell LII to see the reasoning in the Court's own words.

Line-item veto

In 1996 Congress passed a law letting the President cancel parts of spending bills. In Clinton v. City of New York (1998) the Court struck it down, explaining: "There is no provision in the Constitution that authorizes the President to enact, to amend, or to repeal statutes."

Time limits matter too: "No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice" (22nd Amendment), and the term ends "at noon on the 20th day of January" (20th Amendment).

Answer this module's question in your own words: What can't the President do?

Reflection

Why does it matter that a court can rule against the Commander in Chief, even during a war?

Put the Court's reasoning in your own words: why couldn't the President seize the mills without a law from Congress?

Which check on the President do you think is the strongest? Which is the weakest?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.”*
>
> — Proverbs 29:2 (NIV)

Checks and balances assume leaders are human and can fail. Why might a system that limits power be good even when a good person holds it?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, play as President and try to go past the limits. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
President	Declare war on another country		
President	Spend federal money that Congress has not approved		
President	Use an executive order to create a brand-new law Congress never passed		
President	Run for a third term as President		
President	Fire a federal judge because you disagree with a ruling		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Make a two-column chart: "The President can..." and "But..." with at least eight rows. In each "But" box, name the branch or clause that checks that power.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read the limits in Article I and Amendments XX and XXII.

☐ I can explain the steel mill case.

☐ I tried five actions that go past the President's limits.

☐ I made my "can... but..." chart.

Self-Check

1. In Youngstown (1952) the Court ruled that President Truman:
   a) Could seize the mills as Commander in Chief

b) Could not seize the mills without authority from Congress
c) Had to resign
d) Could ignore the ruling

2. Who has the power to declare war?
a) The President
b) Congress
c) The Secretary of Defense
d) The Supreme Court

3. Why was the Line Item Veto Act struck down?
a) It was too expensive
b) The Constitution does not let the President amend or repeal laws
c) Congress did not pass it
d) States objected

4. When does a President's term end?
a) Whenever they choose
b) Noon on January 20
c) Election Day
d) December 31

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 6 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

What do the federal courts decide?

Start Here

Nine Justices who were never elected can decide a law is unconstitutional. Where does that power come from?

Read

Read Article III (three short Sections) and Article VI in the National Archives transcription.

> *"The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish."*
>
> — Article III, Section 1

The Constitution creates only one court, the Supreme Court. Congress created the rest: 94 district courts, where trials happen, and 13 courts of appeals. The Constitution does not say how many Justices sit on the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court explains: "The Constitution places the power to determine the number of Justices in the hands of Congress." It has been nine since 1869.

Federal judges are nominated by the President, confirmed by the Senate, and "shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour," meaning for life unless impeached. Their pay cannot be cut. These protections let judges rule without fear of losing their jobs.

Judicial review

The Constitution does not say in so many words that courts can strike down laws. In Marbury v. Madison (1803), Chief Justice John Marshall reasoned that the Constitution is the highest law, so when a law conflicts with it, a court must follow the Constitution:

> *"It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is."*
>
> — Marbury v. Madison (1803)

Courts have limits, too. They decide only real "Cases" and "Controversies" (Article III, Section 2), so they cannot give opinions on a law until someone harmed by it brings a case. They have no army and no money; they depend on the other branches and the public to respect their rulings.

And the Court decides which cases to hear: it "receives approximately 7,000-8,000 petitions for a writ of certiorari each Term" and hears about 80.

People disagree about how judges should read the Constitution. Some focus on the original meaning of the words when they were adopted. Others focus on applying the Constitution's principles to new situations. You will meet both views in court opinions.

Answer this module's question in your own words: What do the federal courts decide?

Reflection

Why do you think the Framers gave judges lifetime terms instead of elections?

Is judicial review a good check, or does it give unelected judges too much power? Argue both sides.

Courts have no army. Why do people and officials usually obey their rulings?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.”*
>
> — Leviticus 19:15 (NIV)

Statues of Justice are often shown blindfolded. How does this verse describe the same idea? Why is it hard for any judge?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, play as Supreme Court Justice, then as Citizen. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
Supreme Court Justice	Rule that a law breaks the Constitution		
Supreme Court Justice	Give an advisory opinion on whether a law is constitutional before anyone brings a case		
Citizen	Ask the Supreme Court to hear your case		
U.S. Senator	Change the number of Supreme Court Justices		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: On supremecourt.gov, find the list of current Justices. For each, write who nominated them and the year they joined. Then read the short summary (syllabus) of one decided case from the Court's opinions page and explain the question and the answer in five sentences.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read Article III and Article VI.

☐ I can explain Marbury v. Madison.

☐ I tried four court actions in the simulator.

☐ I listed the Justices and summarized one case.

Self-Check

1. Which case established judicial review?
   a) McCulloch v. Maryland
   b) Marbury v. Madison
   c) Youngstown v. Sawyer
   d) Texas v. White

2. Who sets the number of Supreme Court Justices?
   a) The Constitution fixes it at nine
   b) Congress, by law
   c) The Chief Justice
   d) The President alone

3. How long do federal judges serve?
   a) Ten years
   b) Until age 70
   c) During good behavior (life)
   d) Four years

4. Can federal courts rule on a law before anyone brings a case?
   a) Yes, anytime
   b) No, they decide only real cases and controversies
   c) Only if the President asks
   d) Only in wartime

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 7 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

How do the branches check each other?

Start Here

If one branch went too far, what could the other two do about it?

Read

Using the National Archives transcription, find and copy every sentence that mentions impeachment (there are several in Articles I, II, and III).

The Federalist No. 51, an essay published in 1788 to defend the Constitution and usually credited to James Madison, explained the plan: give each branch "the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others." In other words, let power check power.

Impeachment and removal

> *"The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment."*
>
> — Article I, Section 2

> *"The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments."*
>
> — Article I, Section 3

Impeachment is a formal charge by a majority of the House, like an indictment. Then the Senate holds a trial, and conviction takes two-thirds of the Senators present. Officials can be impeached for "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors" (Article II, Section 4). When the President is on trial, the Chief Justice presides.

The full web of checks

- **Congress checks the President:** override vetoes, control spending, confirm or reject nominees, approve or reject treaties, impeach and remove.
- **Congress checks the courts:** creates lower courts, sets the number of Justices, confirms judges, can impeach judges, and can propose amendments.
- **The President checks Congress:** veto, recommend laws, call special sessions.
- **The President checks the courts:** nominates judges, pardons federal crimes.
- **The courts check both:** rule that laws or actions violate the Constitution, in real cases.
- **The people check all three:** elections, petitions, free press, and amendments.

These checks create friction on purpose. Sometimes the result is gridlock, when the branches cannot agree. Some people see gridlock as a failure; others see it as the system doing its job by forcing compromise.

Answer this module's question in your own words: How do the branches check each other?

Reflection

Why do you think removal takes two-thirds of the Senate but impeachment takes only a majority of the House?

Is gridlock a bug or a feature? Give your view and the best argument against it.

Which check in the list do the people use most often? Which could you use someday?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.”*
>
> — Exodus 18:21 (NIV)

Moses's father-in-law warned him not to carry every decision alone. How is spreading out authority wise, both in a nation and in a family or co-op?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, try the checks from every side. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
U.S. Representative	Impeach (formally charge) a federal official		
U.S. Senator	Remove an impeached official from office		
Supreme Court Justice	Remove an impeached official from office		
President	Choose the Secretary of State and other Cabinet leaders		
President	Fire a Cabinet secretary		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Add to the branches chart you started in Module 1: draw at least twelve labeled arrows, one for each check, and color-code who is checking whom.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I copied every mention of impeachment.
☐ I can list two checks each branch has.
☐ I tried five checks in the simulator.
☐ I finished my twelve-arrow chart.

Self-Check

1. Who has the sole power to impeach?
   a) The Senate
   b) The House of Representatives
   c) The Supreme Court
   d) The Vice President

2. What vote does the Senate need to convict?
   a) A majority

b) Two-thirds of the Senators present
c) Three-fourths
d) Unanimous

3. Who presides when the President is tried?
a) The Speaker
b) The Vice President
c) The Chief Justice
d) The Attorney General

4. Which is a check the President has on Congress?
a) Judicial review
b) The veto
c) Impeachment
d) Confirming judges

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 8 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

What can no government do?

Start Here

Is there anything the government can't do, even if the President, Congress, and most voters all want it?

Read

Read Article I, Sections 9 and 10, and the Bill of Rights (Amendments I-X) in the National Archives transcriptions.

Some limits apply to every branch and, in most cases, every level of government. Article I, Section 9 lists limits on the federal government, and Section 10 lists limits on the states. Among them:

- "The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it."
- "No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed."
- "No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States"
- "No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State."

When the states ratified the Constitution, many demanded a list of rights. James Madison drafted amendments, and the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791. It begins:

> *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."*
>
> — Amendment I

At first the Bill of Rights limited only the federal government. After the Civil War, the 14th Amendment (1868) said no state shall "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." Over the 1900s, the Supreme Court ruled that most of the Bill of Rights applies to the states through this amendment.

Later amendments added more limits, especially on voting. No government may deny the vote because of race (15th, 1870), sex (19th, 1920), failure to pay a poll tax in federal elections (24th, 1964), or age for anyone 18 or older (26th, 1971).

Rights are not unlimited. Courts weigh them against other interests: free speech does not protect true threats, and police may search without a warrant in some emergencies. Deciding where the lines are is a big part of what courts do, and people disagree about many of those lines. For a deeper study, take Openly's free Bill of Rights course.

Answer this module's question in your own words: What can no government do?

Reflection

Why do you think the Framers put limits like habeas corpus in the original Constitution, even before the Bill of Rights?

Which right in the Bill of Rights matters most to your family? Why?

Why might it be important that some rights cannot be voted away, even by a large majority?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."*
> — Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV)

Many of the amendments you read were won by people speaking up for those without power. Whose rights could you speak up for?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, play as several roles and try to cross the lines. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
President	Shut down a newspaper or website for criticizing the government		
U.S. Senator	Make one official national religion		
Governor	Order police to search a family's home without a warrant		
State Legislator	Pass a law declaring a specific person guilty of a crime with no trial		
Governor	Take a family's land to build a highway without paying them		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Create a "Rights Field Guide": ten index cards (or one page with ten boxes), each naming a right, the amendment or clause, the exact words, and one real-life example.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read Article I, Sections 9-10 and the Bill of Rights.
☐ I can explain how the 14th Amendment applied rights to states.
☐ I tried five "no one can" actions.
☐ I made my Rights Field Guide.

Self-Check

1. What does habeas corpus protect against?
   a) High taxes

b) Being jailed without a judge reviewing why
c) Quartering soldiers
d) Unequal voting districts

2. At first, the Bill of Rights limited:
a) Only the states
b) Only the federal government
c) Both equally
d) Only private businesses

3. Which amendment lowered the voting age to 18?
a) 15th
b) 19th
c) 24th
d) 26th

4. A bill of attainder is:
a) A tax bill
b) A law punishing a named person without a trial
c) A treaty
d) A pardon

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 9 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

What belongs to the states?

Start Here

Why can you get a learner's permit at one age in one state and a different age in another?

Read

Read Article IV, Article VI, and Amendment X in the National Archives transcriptions.

> *“The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”*
>
> — Amendment X

Federalism means two levels of government share power over the same people. The federal government has the powers the Constitution lists. The states keep the rest, often called reserved powers or police powers: most criminal law, schools, driver's licenses, marriage, property, local government, and running elections.

Education is a good example. The U.S. Department of Education says: "Education is primarily a State and local responsibility in the United States." That is why homeschool laws differ so much from state to state.

When federal and state law collide

> *“This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land”*
>
> — Article VI (the Supremacy Clause)

When a valid federal law conflicts with a state law, the federal law wins. But the Court has also protected the states: in Printz v. United States (1997) it ruled that Congress cannot order state officers to carry out federal programs. And after the Civil War, in Texas v. White (1869), it ruled that states cannot leave the Union: "The Constitution, in all its provisions, looks to an indestructible Union, composed of indestructible States."

How states treat each other

Article IV is the part of the Constitution that most matters to traveling families:

- "Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State." (Section 1)
- "The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States." (Section 2)
- The Supreme Court has also recognized a right to travel between states. In Saenz v. Roe (1999) it said the right is "firmly embedded in our jurisprudence."

Some powers belong to both levels at once, called concurrent powers: both can tax, borrow, make and enforce laws, and run courts. Some are denied to the states entirely: making treaties, coining money, or going to war unless invaded (Article I, Section 10).

Answer this module's question in your own words: What belongs to the states?

Reflection

List three things in your life controlled mostly by your state, and three controlled mostly by the federal government.

Why might it be good for states to try different laws? Why might it be a problem?

If your family travels, how does Article IV protect you when you are in another state?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”*
> — Jeremiah 29:7 (NIV)

Israel's exiles lived far from home. Traveling families also live in many places. How can you seek the good of each town you pass through?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, compare federal and state roles on the same actions. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
Governor	Print or coin money		
State Legislator	Write the homeschool laws for your state		
U.S. Senator	Write the homeschool laws for your state		
Governor	Have your state ignore a federal law it disagrees with		
State Legislator	Stop Americans from moving to your state		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Pick two states your family has lived in or visited. Compare one state-controlled rule between them (for example, the age for a learner's permit, homeschool notice requirements, or a state park fee). Use only official state .gov websites and write down the exact page you used.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read Article IV, Article VI, and Amendment X.

☐ I can explain reserved, concurrent, and denied powers.

☐ I compared federal and state roles in the simulator.

☐ I compared a rule in two states using .gov sources.

Self-Check

1. Powers kept by the states are called:

a) Enumerated powers
b) Reserved powers
c) Executive powers
d) Implied powers

2. If a valid federal law conflicts with a state law:
a) The state law wins
b) The federal law wins
c) Voters decide
d) Both are void

3. Which clause protects visitors' basic rights in other states?
a) Commerce Clause
b) Privileges and Immunities Clause
c) Necessary and Proper Clause
d) Establishment Clause

4. Which power is denied to the states?
a) Taxing
b) Running schools
c) Coining money
d) Issuing driver's licenses

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 10 OF 12 · ABOUT 5 TO 6 HOURS

How do state governments work?

Start Here

Your state has its own constitution, its own three branches, and its own leaders. How are they alike from state to state?

Read

Find your state's constitution on your state legislature's official website. Skim its table of contents and find the articles on the legislature, the governor, and the courts.

Every state has its own written constitution, and they are usually much longer than the U.S. Constitution. They follow the same basic plan of three branches, but each state fills in the details differently.

- **Legislative branch.** Every state has a legislature (some call it the General Assembly or General Court). Nearly every state has two chambers, like Congress. Nebraska is the one state with a single chamber. State legislators write state laws and pass the state budget.
- **Executive branch.** Every state elects a governor, who carries out state laws, proposes a budget, signs or vetoes bills, commands the National Guard when it is not in federal service, and in many states can pardon. Most states also elect other executive officers, such as an attorney general and a secretary of state.
- **Judicial branch.** Every state has its own courts, with trial courts and a highest court (usually called the supreme court). According to the federal courts, state courts hear most criminal cases, most contract and injury cases, and family law such as marriages, divorces, and adoptions. Many states elect their judges or have voters approve them, unlike federal judges.

States also create local governments: counties (called parishes in Louisiana and boroughs in Alaska), cities, towns, and school districts. Local governments have only the powers their state gives them.

Some states give citizens extra tools that do not exist at the federal level: the initiative (citizens put a law on the ballot), the referendum (voters approve or reject a law), and the recall (voters remove an official early). Which tools your state has depends on its constitution.

State governments must also follow the U.S. Constitution. Article IV, Section 4 promises: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government."

Answer this module's question in your own words: How do state governments work?

Reflection

Why do you think state constitutions are so much longer than the U.S. Constitution?

Would you rather have judges who are appointed for life or elected? Give one reason each way.

Which level of government (federal, state, or local) affects your daily life the most? Explain.

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”*
> — Micah 6:8 (NIV)

State and local officials make many decisions that touch daily life. How could this verse guide someone serving on a city council or in a state legislature?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, play the three state roles. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
Governor	Call up your state's National Guard after a flood or hurricane		
Governor	Veto just one part of a spending bill and keep the rest (line-item veto)		
State Legislator	Pass your state's budget		
State Judge	Have the final word on what your state constitution means		
State Judge	Serve as a judge for life		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Make a side-by-side chart: U.S. government vs. your state government. For each branch, list the name of the body or office, how people get the job, term length, and one power. Use your state constitution as the source.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I found and skimmed my state constitution.
☐ I can describe the three state branches.
☐ I played the three state roles in the simulator.
☐ I made my U.S. vs. state chart.

Self-Check

1. Which state has a one-chamber legislature?
   a) Texas
   b) Nebraska
   c) Florida
   d) South Dakota

2. Where are most criminal cases heard?
   a) Federal courts
   b) State courts
   c) The Supreme Court
   d) Congress

3. Local governments get their powers from:
   a) The U.S. Constitution directly
   b) Their state
   c) The President
   d) Congress

4. A recall lets voters:
   a) Write a law
   b) Remove an official early
   c) Amend the U.S. Constitution
   d) Pick judges for life

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 11 OF 12 · ABOUT 6 HOURS

What does YOUR state's government do?

Start Here

Every family in this course lives under a different state government. What are the rules where you call home?

Read

Use your home state's official .gov websites and your state constitution for this whole module. If your family travels full-time, use your domicile state: the state where you are registered to vote, licensed to drive, and file state taxes.

In Modules 9 and 10 you learned what all states share. Now you will research the details of one state. Traveling families: many full-time travelers keep a domicile state even while on the road. Ask a parent which state that is for your family.

Fill in the Your State worksheet below. For every answer, write down the exact web page or constitution article where you found it. If you cannot find an answer on an official source, write "not found" rather than guessing.

When you finish, go back to the Power Simulator. Every action marked "Depends on your state" now has an answer for you. Write those answers in the last part of the worksheet.

Your State Worksheet

Question	My state's answer	Source (page or article)
My home or domicile state		
Year the current state constitution was adopted		
Name of the legislature and its two chambers (or one)		
Number of members and term length in each chamber		
Are there term limits for legislators?		

Governor's term length and term limits		
Does the governor have a line-item veto?		
Vote needed to override the governor's veto		
Other elected executive officers (attorney general, etc.)		
Name of the highest state court and number of justices		
How state judges get the job (elected, appointed, retention vote)		
Who grants pardons for state crimes?		
Can citizens propose laws by initiative?		
Can voters recall state officials?		
How is the state constitution amended?		
My state legislators (names and districts)		
My governor's name and when the term ends		
My state's homeschool law: what it requires		
Age for a learner's permit		
How to register to vote (and pre-register, if allowed)		

Answer this module's question in your own words: What does YOUR state's government do?

Reflection

What surprised you most about your state's government?

Which of your state's citizen tools (initiative, referendum, recall) would you like to see used, and for what kind of issue?

If you could change one thing in your state's constitution, what would it be, and how would you do it under your state's amendment process?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”*
>
> — Romans 13:1 (NIV)

Christians have discussed this verse for centuries, including what to do when laws conflict with conscience. What does it suggest about knowing and following the laws of the place you live?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, find every "Depends on your state" answer for the Governor, State Judge, and Citizen roles. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
Governor	Pardon someone convicted of a state crime		
Citizen	Put a new law directly on your state's ballot by collecting signatures		
Citizen	Remove your governor before the term ends through a recall election		
Citizen	Change your state's constitution		
State Judge	Give an advisory opinion on whether a law is constitutional before anyone brings a case		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Complete the Your State worksheet. Then write a one-page "Guide to My State Government" a new family moving there could use.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

- ☐ I identified my home or domicile state.
- ☐ I completed the Your State worksheet with sources.
- ☐ I answered every "Depends" action for my state.
- ☐ I wrote my one-page state guide.

Self-Check

1. A traveling family's domicile state is usually where they:
   a) Spent last night
   b) Are registered to vote and licensed to drive
   c) Were born
   d) Like best

2. Where should you find your state's rules for this module?
   a) Social media
   b) Official state .gov sites and the state constitution
   c) A friend
   d) Any blog

3. If you cannot find an answer in an official source, you should:
   a) Guess
   b) Write "not found"

c) Copy another state
d) Skip the module

4. "Depends on your state" answers in the simulator mean:
a) The answer is secret
b) Each state constitution decides
c) Nobody knows
d) Congress decides

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

MODULE 12 OF 12 · ABOUT 6 TO 7 HOURS

What can citizens do, and how do we change the rules?

Start Here

You are not a President, Senator, or judge yet. What power do you have right now, and how could the Constitution itself be changed?

Read

Read Article V and Amendments XIII through XXVII in the National Archives transcriptions.

> *"The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof"*
>
> — Article V

Amending the Constitution takes two steps. First, two-thirds of both houses of Congress propose an amendment (a convention called by two-thirds of the states can also propose, though that has never happened). Second, three-fourths of the states, 38 of 50, ratify it. The President has no role. The Constitution has been amended 27 times.

Many of the biggest changes in American government came through amendments: ending slavery (13th), equal protection (14th), voting rights (15th, 19th, 24th, 26th), and direct election of Senators (17th). Most were pushed by ordinary citizens who organized for years.

What citizens can do now

- **Vote** at 18, under the 26th Amendment, after registering under your state's rules.
- **Petition and speak:** write to your members of Congress and state legislators, testify at hearings, and assemble peacefully (1st Amendment).
- **Serve:** jury duty, poll worker, volunteer, and someday run for office (House at 25, Senate at 30, President at 35).

- **Go to court** when your rights are harmed.
- **Use state tools** like initiatives and recalls where your state allows them.
- **Stay informed** by reading primary sources, just as you did in this course.

Teens can do most of these before 18: contact officials, testify, volunteer on campaigns, attend city council meetings, and in many places pre-register to vote. Check your state's rules.

Answer this module's question in your own words: What can citizens do, and how do we change the rules?

Reflection

Why do you think the Framers made amending the Constitution so hard?

Which amendment do you think changed America the most? Why?

What is one issue in your community you could do something about as a citizen this year?

Faith Connection (optional)

> *“not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”*
> — Philippians 2:4 (NIV)

Good citizenship asks us to think about our neighbors, not only ourselves. How can you serve your community this year?

Apply It: Power Simulator

In the Power Simulator, finish as Citizen, then try changing the Constitution from three roles. Write your prediction before you check.

Role	Action	My prediction	Actual answer
Citizen	Vote in federal elections at age 18		
Citizen	Run for the U.S. House of Representatives		
U.S. Representative	Change the U.S. Constitution		
State Legislator	Change the U.S. Constitution		
President	Change the U.S. Constitution		

Which answers matched your prediction, and which surprised you? Why?

Project: Capstone (choose one): (A) Write a proposed constitutional amendment, then a two-page explanation of why it is needed, the strongest argument against it, and the path it would take under Article V. (B) Write a respectful letter to one of your members of Congress or state legislators about an issue you care about; send it only with a parent's OK. (C) Attend (in person or online) a city council, county, or state legislative meeting and write a two-page report on what powers you saw used.

Self-Reflection

What surprised me most in this module, and what question do I still have?

Module Checklist

☐ I read Article V and Amendments XIII-XXVII.

☐ I can explain both steps of amending.

☐ I tried changing the Constitution from three roles.

☐ I finished my capstone.

Self-Check

1. How many states must ratify an amendment?
   a) Half
   b) Two-thirds
   c) Three-fourths (38)
   d) All 50

2. What role does the President have in amendments?
   a) Signs them
   b) Vetoes them
   c) None
   d) Proposes them alone

3. How many times has the Constitution been amended?
   a) 10
   b) 17
   c) 27
   d) 50

4. At what age can you serve in the U.S. House?
   a) 18
   b) 21
   c) 25
   d) 30

Study It Your Way (pick one)

• One-page visual guide: draw this module's idea on one page with labels.
• Quiz me: have someone ask you the self-check questions out of order.
• Explain it back: teach this module to a younger sibling or parent in 3 minutes.
• Key 20%: write the three facts from this module you most need to remember.

Power Simulator Answers

Use these after you predict. Each answer names the rule that decides it.

Module 1

- Citizen, “Hold a peaceful protest or send a petition to the government”: Yes, this role can. (Amendment I)
- Citizen, “Pass a new federal law all by yourself”: No, this role cannot. (Article I, Section 7)
- President, “Pass a new federal law all by yourself”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 7)

Module 2

- U.S. Representative, “Create a new federal tax”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 8)
- U.S. Senator, “Create a new federal tax”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 8)
- U.S. Senator, “Put a new Justice on the Supreme Court”: Only with others. (Article II, Section 2)
- U.S. Representative, “Impeach (formally charge) a federal official”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 2)

Module 3

- U.S. Representative, “Introduce a new bill in Congress”: Yes, this role can. (Article I, Section 1)
- U.S. Senator, “Write the rules for how your chamber of Congress debates and votes”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 5)
- President, “Veto (reject) a bill Congress passed”: Yes, this role can. (Article I, Section 7)
- U.S. Representative, “Override a presidential veto”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 7)

Module 4

- President, “Command the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Space Force”: Yes, this role can. (Article II, Section 2)
- President, “Pardon someone convicted of a federal crime”: Yes, this role can. (Article II, Section 2)
- President, “Make a treaty with another country”: Only with others. (Article II, Section 2)
- President, “Issue an executive order telling federal agencies how to carry out a law”: Yes, this role can. (Article II, Sections 1 and 3)

Module 5

- President, “Declare war on another country”: No, this role cannot. (Article I, Section 8)
- President, “Spend federal money that Congress has not approved”: No, this role cannot. (Article I, Section 9)
- President, “Use an executive order to create a brand-new law Congress never passed”: No, this role cannot. (Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer (1952))
- President, “Run for a third term as President”: No, this role cannot. (Amendment XXII)
- President, “Fire a federal judge because you disagree with a ruling”: No, this role cannot. (Article III, Section 1)

Module 6

- Supreme Court Justice, “Rule that a law breaks the Constitution”: Only with others. (Marbury v. Madison (1803))
- Supreme Court Justice, “Give an advisory opinion on whether a law is constitutional before anyone brings a case”: No, this role cannot. (Article III, Section 2)
- Citizen, “Ask the Supreme Court to hear your case”: Yes, this role can. (Article III, Section 2)
- U.S. Senator, “Change the number of Supreme Court Justices”: Only with others. (Article III, Section 1)

Module 7

- U.S. Representative, “Impeach (formally charge) a federal official”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 2)
- U.S. Senator, “Remove an impeached official from office”: Only with others. (Article I, Section 3)
- Supreme Court Justice, “Remove an impeached official from office”: No, this role cannot. (Article I, Section 3)
- President, “Choose the Secretary of State and other Cabinet leaders”: Only with others. (Article II, Section 2)
- President, “Fire a Cabinet secretary”: Yes, this role can. (Article II, Section 1)

Module 8

- President, “Shut down a newspaper or website for criticizing the government”: No, this role cannot. (Amendment I)
- U.S. Senator, “Make one official national religion”: No, this role cannot. (Amendment I)
- Governor, “Order police to search a family's home without a warrant”: No, this role cannot. (Amendment IV)
- State Legislator, “Pass a law declaring a specific person guilty of a crime with no trial”: No, this role cannot. (Article I, Section 9)
- Governor, “Take a family's land to build a highway without paying them”: No, this role cannot. (Amendment V)

Module 9

- Governor, “Print or coin money”: No, this role cannot. (Article I, Section 8 and Section 10)
- State Legislator, “Write the homeschool laws for your state”: Only with others. (Amendment X)
- U.S. Senator, “Write the homeschool laws for your state”: No, this role cannot. (Amendment X)
- Governor, “Have your state ignore a federal law it disagrees with”: No, this role cannot. (Article VI)
- State Legislator, “Stop Americans from moving to your state”: No, this role cannot. (Saenz v. Roe (1999))

Module 10

- Governor, “Call up your state's National Guard after a flood or hurricane”: Yes, this role can. (Article II, Section 2)
- Governor, “Veto just one part of a spending bill and keep the rest (line-item veto)”: Depends on the state. (Clinton v. City of New York (1998))
- State Legislator, “Pass your state's budget”: Only with others. (Amendment X)
- State Judge, “Have the final word on what your state constitution means”: Only with others. (Amendment X)
- State Judge, “Serve as a judge for life”: Depends on the state. (Article III, Section 1)

Module 11

- Governor, “Pardon someone convicted of a state crime”: Depends on the state. (Article II, Section 2)
- Citizen, “Put a new law directly on your state's ballot by collecting signatures”: Depends on the state. (Amendment X)
- Citizen, “Remove your governor before the term ends through a recall election”: Depends on the state. (Amendment X)
- Citizen, “Change your state's constitution”: Depends on the state. (Amendment X)
- State Judge, “Give an advisory opinion on whether a law is constitutional before anyone brings a case”: Depends on the state. (Article III, Section 2)

Module 12

- Citizen, “Vote in federal elections at age 18”: Yes, this role can. (Amendment XXVI)
- Citizen, “Run for the U.S. House of Representatives”: Yes, this role can. (Article I, Section 2)
- U.S. Representative, “Change the U.S. Constitution”: Only with others. (Article V)
- State Legislator, “Change the U.S. Constitution”: Only with others. (Article V)
- President, “Change the U.S. Constitution”: No, this role cannot. (Article V)

Self-Check Answers

Module 1: 1) b; 2) c; 3) a; 4) b
Module 2: 1) b; 2) c; 3) b; 4) c
Module 3: 1) b; 2) a; 3) c; 4) c
Module 4: 1) c; 2) b; 3) b; 4) b
Module 5: 1) b; 2) b; 3) b; 4) b
Module 6: 1) b; 2) b; 3) c; 4) b
Module 7: 1) b; 2) b; 3) c; 4) b
Module 8: 1) b; 2) b; 3) d; 4) b
Module 9: 1) b; 2) b; 3) b; 4) c
Module 10: 1) b; 2) b; 3) b; 4) b
Module 11: 1) b; 2) b; 3) b; 4) b
Module 12: 1) c; 2) c; 3) c; 4) c

Hours Log

Module	Date finished	Hours
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
Total		

Sources

Every quotation in this workbook was checked word for word against these sources on 2026-11-11.

• National Archives. The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription. https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript

Every quotation from Articles I-VII and the Preamble, checked word for word on 2026-11-11.

• National Archives. The Bill of Rights: A Transcription. https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript

Every quotation from Amendments I-X, checked 2026-11-11.

• National Archives. The Constitution: Amendments 11-27. https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/amendments-11-27

Quotations and ratification years for Amendments XI-XXVII (15th 1870, 19th 1920, 22nd 1951, 24th 1964, 26th 1971), checked 2026-11-11.

• Marbury v. Madison, 5 U.S. 137 (1803). Cornell Law School, Legal Information Institute. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/5/137

"It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is."

• Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer, 343 U.S. 579 (1952). Cornell LII. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/343/579

"In the framework of our Constitution, the President's power to see that the laws are faithfully executed refutes the idea that he is to be a lawmaker."

• Clinton v. City of New York, 524 U.S. 417 (1998). Cornell LII. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/524/417

"There is no provision in the Constitution that authorizes the President to enact, to amend, or to repeal statutes."

• Texas v. White, 74 U.S. 700 (1869). Cornell LII. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/74/700

"The Constitution, in all its provisions, looks to an indestructible Union, composed of indestructible States."

• Saenz v. Roe, 526 U.S. 489 (1999). Cornell LII. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/98-97.ZO.html

"Yet the "constitutional right to travel from one State to another" is firmly embedded in our jurisprudence."

• Pierce v. Society of Sisters, 268 U.S. 510 (1925). Cornell LII. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/268/510

"The child is not the mere creature of the state; those who nurture him and direct his destiny have the right, coupled with the high duty, to recognize and prepare him for additional obligations."

• Supreme Court of the United States. FAQ: General Information. https://www.supremecourt.gov/about/faq_general.aspx

"The Constitution places the power to determine the number of Justices in the hands of Congress." "The Court receives approximately 7,000-8,000 petitions for a writ of certiorari each Term." "The Court grants and hears oral argument in about 80 cases."

• Supreme Court of the United States. The Court as an Institution. https://www.supremecourt.gov/about/institution.aspx

"The number of Justices on the Supreme Court changed six times before settling at the present total of nine in 1869."

• U.S. Senate. About Declarations of War by Congress. https://www.senate.gov/about/powers-procedures/declarations-of-war.htm

"Congress has declared war on 11 occasions, including its first declaration of war with Great Britain in 1812."

• U.S. Department of Education. Federal Role in Education. https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-overview/federal-role-in-education

"Education is primarily a State and local responsibility in the United States."

• The Federalist No. 51 (1788). Yale Law School, The Avalon Project. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed51.asp

"the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others." (The page credits the essay to Hamilton or Madison; most scholars credit Madison.)

• National Archives. McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), Milestone Documents. https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/mcculloch-v-maryland

The Court ruled the act creating the Bank of the United States was "a law made in pursuance of the constitution."

• Printz v. United States, 521 U.S. 898 (1997). Cornell LII. https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/521/898

"Today we hold that Congress cannot circumvent that prohibition by conscripting the State's officers directly."

• United States Courts. Court Role and Structure. https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure

"There are 13 appellate courts that sit below the U.S. Supreme Court" and "The nation's 94 district or trial courts are called U.S. district courts."

• U.S. House of Representatives. The House Explained. https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained

"The number of representatives with full voting rights is 435"; "each representative is elected to a two-year term."

• United States Courts. Comparing Federal and State Courts. https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure/comparing-federal-state-courts

State court system: "Most criminal cases, probate (involving wills and estates)"; "Most contract cases, tort cases (personal injuries), family law (marriages, divorces, adoptions), etc."

• Nebraska Legislature. History of the Unicameral. https://nebraskalegislature.gov/about/history_unicameral.php

"Nebraska remains the only state with a unicameral legislature"

• Scripture: The Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV), 2011. Faith Connection verses checked word for word on BibleHub.com on 2026-11-12.