



*Federal Government: SS.7.CG.3.3*  
**Articles I, II, and III**  
**VIDEO SCRIPT**

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1. The President, Congress and Supreme Court... what do they do? Where can we find their official powers? Where do these roles and responsibilities fit into the three branches of government? We'll address all 3 of these questions in this video, as we explore the three branches of government.

2. After watching, students will be able to:

- recognize the structure of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches
- compare the roles and responsibilities of the three branches of the national government, and
- identify the general powers described in Articles I, II, and III of the US Constitution.

So let's begin!

4. The U.S. Constitution is divided into a preamble, articles and amendments. The articles are the sections of the document that describe the powers and functions of the government.

5. There are seven Articles in the U.S. Constitution. Article I focuses on the legislative branch. Article II lists the powers of the executive branch and Article III describes the powers of the judicial branch. So let's begin with Article I, the legislative branch!

6. House of Representatives, Senate, Senator, Congresswoman... you've probably heard all of these terms before, or at least some of them. They are all part of the legislative branch. To understand the legislative branch, let's begin with the Constitution.

7. Article I of the U.S. Constitution describes the structure and powers of the legislative branch. The Constitution outlines that the United States will have a two-house (or, bicameral) legislature. This includes the House of Representatives and the Senate.

8. Together, these two houses are known as Congress. Members of the House of Representatives are known as Representatives or Congressmen or Congresswomen. Members of the Senate are known as Senators, and together, their responsibility is to make laws for the country.

9. Article I provides the enumerated, or listed, powers of Congress. These include the power to:
- a. collect taxes
  - b. coin money
  - c. rules about citizenship
  - d. regulate trade
  - e. create an army and navy
  - f. impeach and remove public officials
  - g. approve presidential appointments
  - h. ratify (approve) treaties, and
  - i. declare war
10. We've learned quite a bit about Congress so far, so let's check in. Try to answer the following question in your own words.
11. According to Article I of the Constitution, what is the main role and responsibility of Congress?
12. ANSWER TO QUESTION
13. Let's recap what we've learned so far, before we get to Article II. Article I covers the structure and function of the legislative branch. This is called Congress, and its main responsibility is to make laws. It's made up of the House of Representatives and the Senate.
14. The enumerated, or listed, powers of Congress include collecting taxes, coining money, making rules about citizenship, regulating trade, creating an army and a navy, impeaching and removing public officials, approving presidential appointments, ratifying (approving) treaties, and declaring war. So that's Congress, the legislative branch. But what about the executive branch in Article II?
15. The powers and structure of the executive branch are found in Article II of the U.S. Constitution. The executive branch includes the President and Vice President, and executive departments.
16. According to Article II, the main role and responsibility of the executive branch is to enforce the laws passed by the legislative branch, Congress. But what about the powers of the executive branch? What are they, according to Article II?
17. Article II gives the President a number of powers:
1. As Commander in Chief, the president has the power to send the armed forces into combat, though Congress declares war.
  2. As the head diplomat, he makes treaties, or agreements with other nations. These must be approved by the Senate, if they actually agree with the treaty.
  3. The president also has the power to nominate people to serve in high government positions, such as in his Cabinet, and those are the folks who head up the executive departments and act as his advisers, and, justices of the Supreme Court, the highest court in the United States. Senate must confirm presidential nominations if they agree with them.

4. The president also has the power to grant pardons, or formally forgive someone for a crime.
18. Those are quite a few powers of the president. Let's go ahead and summarize them to make sure we know them.
19. So according to Article II, in addition to nominating people to serve in high government positions and to grant pardons, the president can also make treaties with other nations and command the military. But his main responsibility is to enforce the laws passed by the legislative branch, Congress!
20. Let's check in. Try to answer the following question in your own words.
21. According to Article II of the US Constitution, what is the main role and responsibility of the executive branch?
22. ANSWER TO QUESTION
23. We've learned quite a bit about what Article II is about so far, so let's recap what we've learned. Remember that Article II establishes the structure and powers of the executive branch. The executive branch is made up of the president, the vice-president, and the executive departments. The main responsibility of the executive branch is to enforce the laws passed by Congress. And the powers of the president include the ability to command the military as commander-in-chief, negotiate treaties with other countries, nominate people for office, and grant pardons. So we've discussed Article I and Article II. Let's take a look now at Article III.
24. Article III describes the judicial branch of government. The judicial branch includes the U.S. Supreme Court and the lower courts. Article III of the U.S. Constitution names only the Supreme Court and allows Congress to create, remove, or modify the federal lower courts and the number of justices on the Supreme Court.
25. The main role and responsibility of the courts is to interpret the law. This means they consider constitutionality. Does a law or action violate the Constitution?
26. According to Article III, the Supreme Court has the power of original jurisdiction. This means they are the first to hear cases that involve:
- Arguments between two or more states
  - The United States government
  - Ambassadors
  - Issues concerning the Navy, or other sea-related issues
27. The Supreme Court also has appellate jurisdiction, which means it hears cases that have been first heard in the lower courts. Ultimately however, remember that the Supreme Court is trying to determine constitutionality, or whether something violates the Constitution.
28. Let's check in. Try to answer the following question in your own words.
29. What does it mean when it is said that the Supreme Court addresses issues around constitutionality?
30. ANSWER TO QUESTION

31. Let's recap what we've learned so far. Article III describes the structure and powers of the judicial branch. This branch is made up of the US Supreme Court and federal lower courts. The role and responsibility of the judicial branch is to determine if something is constitutional. And the Supreme Court has original and appellate jurisdiction.

32. We've learned a lot about Articles I, II, and III. And something about the 3 branches of government. So let's see if we can compare them. Try to complete the chart as it appears on the screen.

33. NARRATOR COMPLETES CHART

	<b>Legislative Branch</b>	<b>Executive Branch</b>	<b>Judicial Branch</b>
<b>Structure</b>			
<b>Main Responsibility</b>			

34. So we've learned quite a bit about Articles I, II, and III. And we know they provide the structure and powers of the three branches of government. But be sure to view the module for benchmarks SS.7.CG.3.7, 3.8 and 3.9 on the structure, powers, and processes of the national government to learn more about each of the 3 branches.

35. That's all the time we have for now. Keep building your civics knowledge by exploring some of our other topic areas on Civics360!