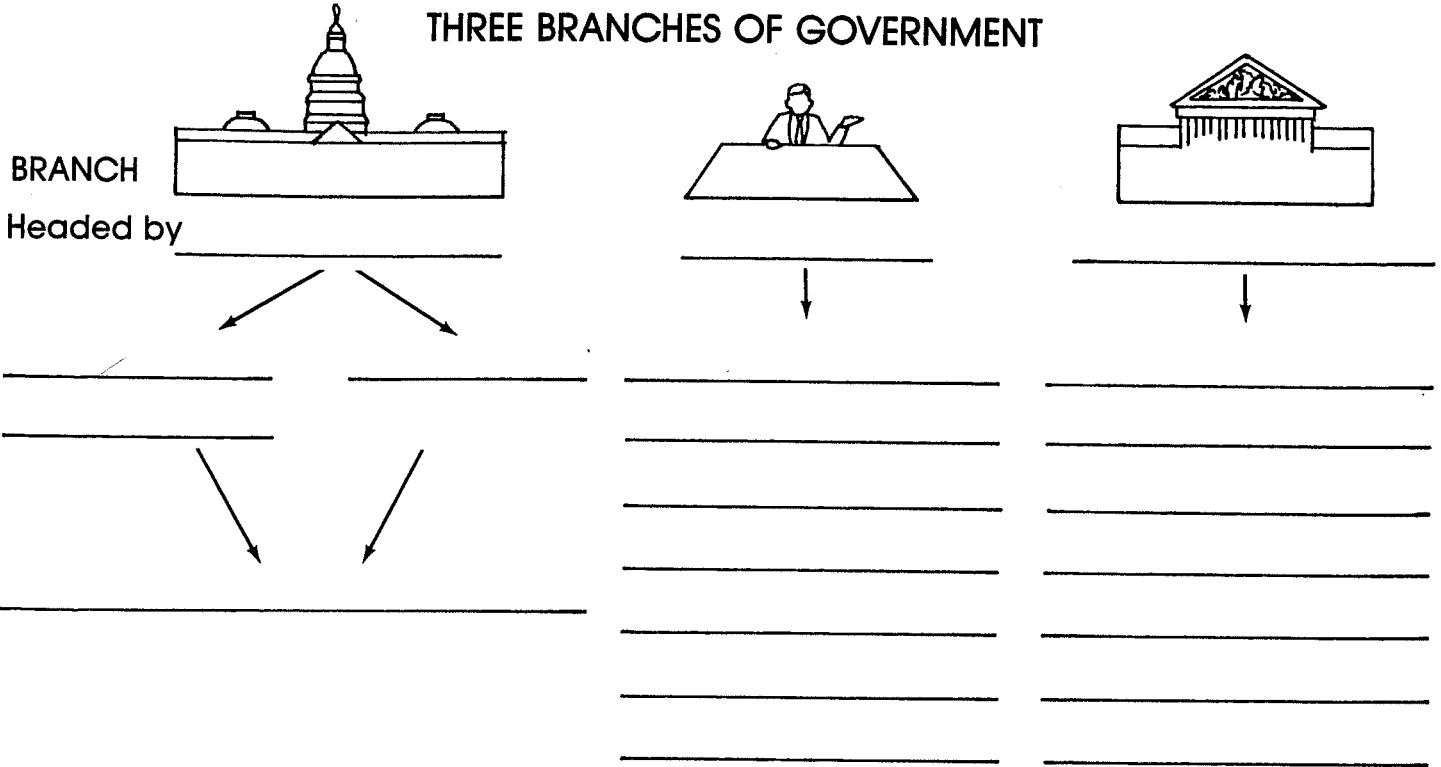


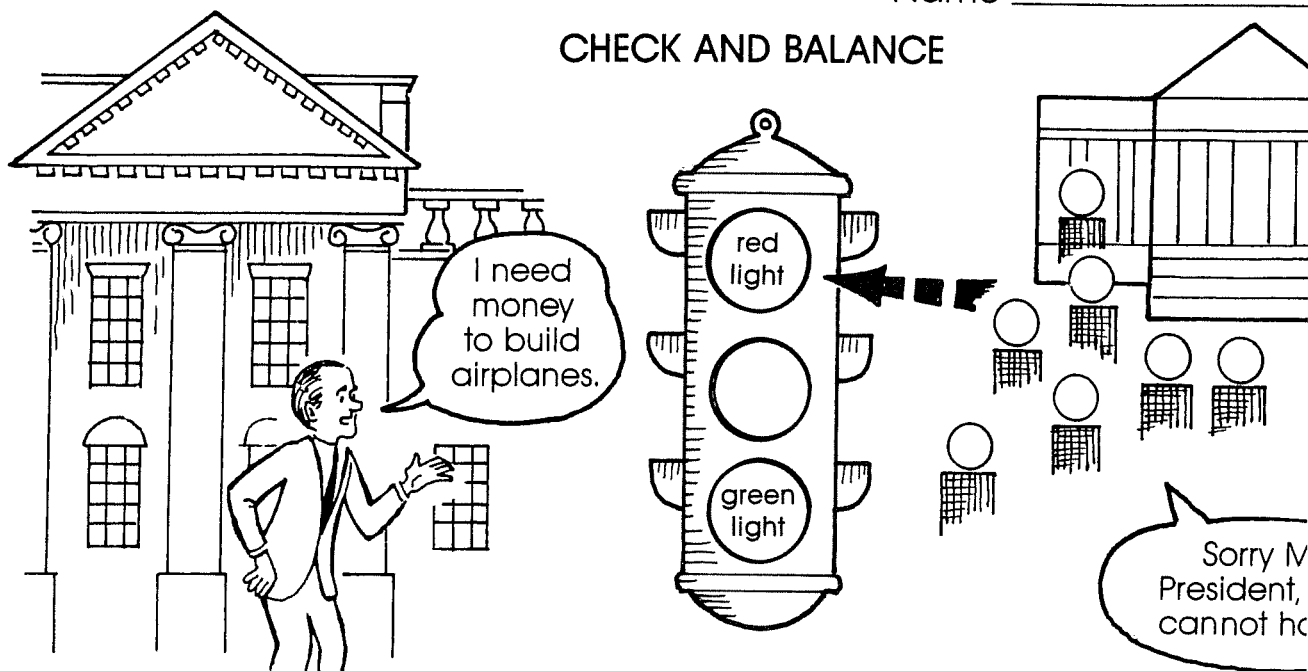
THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT



The Founding Fathers did not want all the powers given to the government to be controlled by one man, or even just a few men. They feared if a small group was given too much power, the United States would once again be ruled by a tyrannical government like it had been under England. To avoid such a situation they divided the new government into three branches: the executive, the legislative and the judicial. The executive branch is headed by the President of the United States who carries out federal laws and recommends new ones, directs national defense and foreign policy and performs ceremonial duties. The legislative branch is headed by Congress which consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Their main task is to make the laws. The judicial branch is headed by the Supreme Court. This branch interprets the laws, decides cases in which federal laws apply and settles troubles between states. The Constitution built in a "check and balance" system so that no one branch could become too powerful. Each branch is controlled by the other two in several ways. The President may veto a law passed by Congress, but Congress may override his veto with a two-thirds vote. The Senate must approve any treaty the President makes and approve many of the appointments he makes. Any money the President needs for national defense must come from the Congress. The Supreme Court may check the Congress or the President by declaring a law unconstitutional. And, the Court is appointed by the other two and may be impeached by Congress.

Label the branches of the government above and write in their Constitutional duties.

CHECK AND BALANCE



Fill in the chart below. Use the information from the preceding page.

POWER	HOW IT CAN BE CHECKED
Congress passes a law.	The President may
	The President may
	The Supreme Court may
The President vetoes a law passed by Congress.	Congress may
The President appoints a Supreme Court judge.	The Senate may
A Supreme Court judge shows misconduct in office.	Congress may
The President makes a treaty with another country.	The Senate may
President enforces a law.	The Supreme Court may
The President asks for money for defense.	Congress may