



Name: _____ Date: _____

YOUR MISSION: THE CAPITOL INTERN. Congratulations—you've landed the most coveted internship in Washington, D.C. But it's day one, the mailroom is overflowing, and somebody in this town is always trying to grab power they don't have. Watch the episode, then execute the tasks as you take on more responsibility.

Level 1 | NEW INTERN—Learn the Building

You can't deliver the mail if you don't know who's who. As you watch, match each term to its meaning—write the letter in the blank.

1. ____ Checks and Balances	A. Interprets the laws and settles disputes; its highest court is the nine-justice Supreme Court
2. ____ Executive Branch	B. The president's role as head of the U.S. military
3. ____ Legislative Branch (Congress)	C. Enforces federal laws; headed by the president
4. ____ Judicial Branch	D. The head judge of the U.S. Supreme Court
5. ____ The Cabinet	E. Each branch restrains the others so no one part of government becomes too powerful
6. ____ Commander in Chief	F. The president's power to refuse to sign a bill into law
7. ____ Veto	G. Makes federal laws; made up of the House (435 members) and the Senate (100 senators)
8. ____ Chief Justice	H. Advisors—the secretaries of defense, labor, and more—who run the agencies of the executive branch

Level 2 | MAILROOM DUTY—Route the Mail

*Five letters just landed on your desk, and each must go to the part of government with the power to act. Careful: the Founders divided power between the federal branches and the states—one of these letters doesn't belong to any federal branch at all. Route each letter using the word bank: **Executive, Legislative, Judicial, State Government.***

The letter says...	Forward letter to:	Because...
"Our town needs a new federal law to protect veterans' memorials. Who can write one?"		_____ _____ _____
"This new law goes against the Constitution! Which branch can review it?"		_____ _____ _____
"Who commands our military during this crisis?"		_____ _____ _____



The letter says...	Forward letter to:	Because...
"Our local school needs funding and new textbooks. Who handles education?"		
"Congress passed the bill—but it isn't a law yet! What's the final step?"		

Special delivery: a bill's paperwork got shuffled. Number the steps 1–4 for the trajectory of a bill.

- ____ The president signs the bill into law—or vetoes it.
 ____ A bill is introduced in the House or the Senate.
 ____ The courts may review the law if it is challenged as unconstitutional.
 ____ Both the House and the Senate vote to pass the bill.

Level 3 | SECURITY DETAIL—Power Grab Alert

Sirens! Someone is reaching for power the Constitution doesn't give them. For each alert, name who has the constitutional power to stop it—and the exact tool they use. Remember: every power is enumerated—listed in the Constitution—so the government can't do anything that isn't on the list.

The power grab	Who stops it?	How? (rule or authority)
ALERT 1: Congress passes a bill the President believes is a terrible idea.		
ALERT 2: The president signs a law that violates the Constitution.		
ALERT 3: The president announces he will simply make a new federal law himself—no Congress needed.		

Level 4 | CHIEF OF STAFF—The Memo

You've been promoted. A student visiting from another country asks you: "So... who's in charge of America?" Write your reply memo (4–6 sentences) including the three ideas below:

- ☐ All three branches and their jobs
 ☐ One real check in action
 ☐ Why power is divided

Rank achieved: ☐ Intern ☐ Mailroom ☐ Security ☐ Chief of Staff

Answer Key | American Government

Level 1 | New Intern

1-E, 2-C, 3-G, 4-A, 5-H, 6-B, 7-F, 8-D

Level 2 | Mailroom Duty—Route the Mail

1. **Legislative.** Only Congress makes federal laws.
2. **Judicial.** The courts interpret the laws and review what the other branches enact for constitutionality.
3. **Executive.** The president is commander in chief of the military.
4. **State government.** The trap letter—education belongs to the states, not to any federal branch (along with police protection, safety, and land use). Look for students catching that not every problem is a federal problem.
5. **Executive.** A bill becomes a law when the president signs it.

Special delivery sequence (top to bottom): 3, 1, 4, 2.

Level 3 | Security Detail—Power Grab Alert

1. **The president stops it** with the veto—refusing to sign the bill, preventing it from becoming law at that time. He has the constitutional power to check Congress by refusing to sign the bill.
2. **The judicial branch stops it.** The courts review the law and can strike it down as unconstitutional. This power of “judicial review” flows from Article III of the Constitution and was cemented by the famous *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) ruling.
3. **Congress stops it.** Making federal laws is an enumerated power that belongs only to the legislative branch; the government cannot do anything that isn’t listed in the Constitution. Look for students citing the rule (enumerated powers/only Congress makes laws) rather than just “he can’t do that.”

Level 4 | Chief of Staff—The Memo

Memos will vary. Mark student responses correct if the memo accurately (1) names all three branches with their jobs—Congress makes laws, the president enforces them, the courts interpret them; (2) describes one real check, such as the veto, judicial review, or that only Congress can legislate; and (3) explains the “why”: the Founders feared any one person or group holding too much power, so they divided it. The strongest memos answer the visitor’s question directly: *no one* is in charge alone—that’s the design.

Note: This worksheet can be completed with the episode alone or as part of the full lesson—see the accompanying lesson plan.