

# Tennessee Studies Weekly

LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

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## Government Branches

Rev built a clubhouse for him and his friends. He invites his friends to come over, but they just can't seem to get along. They decide they need to have their own government. They think they can solve their own problems. Let's learn how you can help them create a government for their clubhouse.



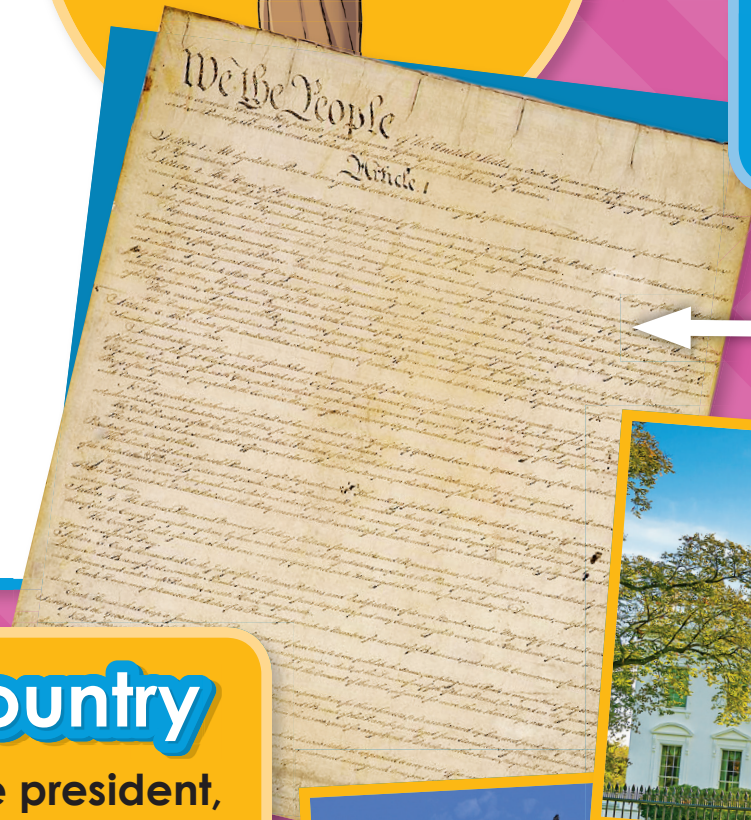


# Government Branches

## The Constitution

The Constitution lists the basic laws of our country. The Constitution says that a government needs to be formed. The U.S. government has three branches. You can think of these branches as being essential parts of a strong tree. Each branch has its own functions.

The three branches are the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. Their mission is to provide security and to protect the rights and freedoms of all Americans.



## The Judicial Branch

Another branch of our government is the judicial branch. This branch includes the Supreme Court and other federal courts. The Supreme Court has nine judges called justices. Their motto is "Equal Justice Under Law." All courts must obey the decisions made by them. They also make sure the president is following the Constitution. They set laws that are fair to everyone.



This is the U.S. Constitution. Why do you think this document is important to our country?

## The Leaders of Our Country

The executive branch is formed by the president, the vice president and the Cabinet. The Cabinet is a group of people who help the president do their job. They are the leaders of our country. The executive branch's job is to carry out the laws of the country.

Next, there is the legislative branch. This branch includes senators and representatives. Its job is to make laws that meet the needs of the people.



## Checks and Balances

What is the system of checks and balances?

Each of the three branches of our government keeps track of the other branches. Each branch makes sure that things are running as the Constitution says they should. Each branch has certain powers. They must operate from a fair and legal stand. The power of government is balanced with each other as the branches check on each other.



