

Separation of Powers: What's for Lunch?

Time Needed: Two class periods

Materials Needed:

Student worksheets

Projector (PowerPoint optional)

Copy Instructions:

Simulation Activity (4 pages; one packet per group)

Post-Simulation Activity (*1/2 sheet; class set*)

Real-Life Crossover (2 pages; class set)

Learning Objectives. Students will be able to:

- Simulate the roles of each of the three branches of government
- Identify the main role and function of each of the three branches
- Compare the simulation to a real-life example of a bill that became law
- Compare and contrast the simulation activity to the real-life interaction of the three branches

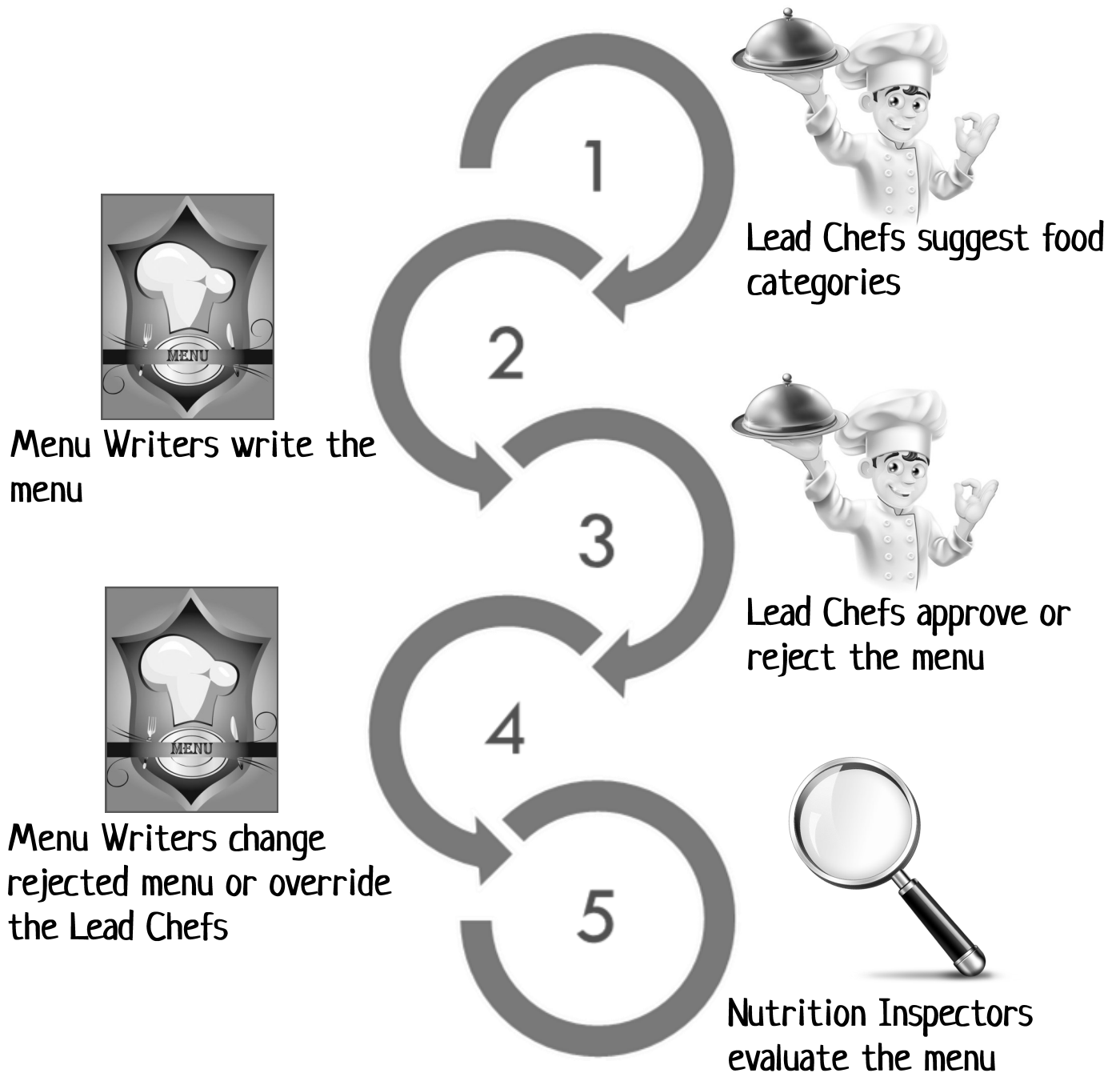
STEP BY STEP

- ANTICIPATE** by quickly polling the class: Is it easier if one person makes a decision, or if several groups work together to make a decision? Remind them that in our government, decisions about laws are made by several parts of government. Tell students that today they will do an activity that simulates the way laws in our country are made.
- DIVIDE** students into groups. Make sure you have at least three groups.
- PROJECT** the "Official Procedure for Deciding New School Lunch Menus" master. Explain that the activity will have 5 rounds, and that each group will act as Lead Chefs, Menu Writers, and Nutrition Inspectors, depending on the round. (This master is also available as a Power Point slide in the Power Point presentation.)
- DISTRIBUTE** the Simulation Activity so each group has one 4-page packet.
- PROCEED** with the activity according to the instructions on the Simulation Activity Teacher Guide (found with the other Teacher Guide pages at the end of the lesson).

After the simulation activity...

- DISTRIBUTE** a Post-Simulation Activity half sheet to each student. Assign students to complete. Alternatively, do the Power Point versions of these activities as a class.
- DEBRIEF** students by reviewing the answers to the half sheet and asking groups to talk about the process. Were their menus vetoed? Did their menus pass inspection by the Nutrition Inspectors?
- DISTRIBUTE** a Real-Life Crossover reading and activity page to each student.
- READ** the Real-Life Crossover reading with the class. Pause to discuss as appropriate.
- ASSIGN** students to complete the Real-Life Crossover activity page. Make sure students understand that they won't find the exact answers in the reading. They will have to use what they learned to draw conclusions and make educated guesses.
- REVIEW** the answers together as a class, pausing to discuss and make connections with the simulation
- CLOSE** by asking students to share which role they liked best during the activity and why.

OFFICIAL PROCEDURE FOR DECIDING NEW SCHOOL LUNCH MENU



WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

A Three Branches Simulation Activity

Our government has three separate branches: a legislative branch, an executive branch, and a judicial branch. But how do these three branches work together? This activity will show you! As a group, you will play the role of Lead Chefs, Menu Writers, and Nutrition Inspectors to create a fictional healthy lunch menu for your school's cafeteria.

Round 1: Suggest Food Categories

Responsibility: LEAD CHEFS



Lead Chef Group Members: (write names here)

Round 1 Directions: As Lead Chefs, it is your job to suggest food categories for the new healthy lunch menu. As a group, **choose 5 categories of healthy food** to be served each day at your school.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| _____ hot beverages | _____ salads | _____ sandwiches | _____ desserts |
| _____ cold beverages | _____ vegetables | _____ meat/fish | _____ rice/grains |
| _____ cheese/dairy | _____ fruits | _____ pizza | _____ fried foods |
| _____ candy | _____ chips | _____ pasta | _____ eggs |
| _____ breads | _____ beans | _____ potatoes | _____ Your Pick: |



Now, your suggestions must go to the Menu Writers. They will use your categories to decide exactly what the menu will offer.

When your teacher tells you to, pass THIS paper to another group.

Round 2: Write the Menu

Responsibility: MENU WRITERS



Menu Writer Group Members: (write names here)

Round 2 Directions: As Menu Writers, now your job is to **create the exact menu for one day's lunch**. First, look to see what five categories the Lead Chefs chose. (These may NOT be the same categories that your group chose when you were Lead Chefs!). Write them on the left side of the table. Then, as a group, **decide on two specific menu offerings for each category**.

Lead Chefs' Suggested Categories	The menu will offer...
	1. 2.
	1. 2.
	1. 2.
	1. 2.
	1. 2.



Now, your menu must be approved by the Lead Chefs.

When your teacher tells you to, pass THIS paper back to the same Lead Chefs who created your categories.



Round 3: Approve the Menu

Responsibility: LEAD CHEFS

Round 3 Directions: As Lead Chefs, you must now decide whether the menu that the Menu Writers created fits with your concept of a healthy lunch.



Menu approved!



Menu not approved

(Mark the disapproved items on the menu for the Menu Writers)



If you approved the menu, the Nutrition Inspectors must now decide whether the menu is actually healthy. SKIP Round 4 and pass THIS paper to a third group who will act as Nutrition Inspectors.

If you did not approve the menu, pass THIS paper back to the Menu Writers and go to Round 4.



Round 4: Revise or Override

Responsibility: MENU WRITERS

Round 4 Directions: Uh-oh... The Lead Chefs didn't approve your menu! Now you have two choices: You can revise the parts they didn't approve of, or you can override them and keep the menu as-is.

To Override: Take a vote in your Menu Writers group. You need a 2/3 of your group to vote in favor of keeping the menu in order to override the Lead Chefs. That means

- If you have 3 people in your group, you need 2 votes
- If you have 4 people in your group, you need 3 votes
- If you have 5 people in your group, you need 4 votes

To Revise: Go back to your original menu. Look at the disapproved items that the Lead Chefs marked. Make changes that you think the Lead Chefs will approve and give the menu back to the Lead Chefs for approval.

VOTE RESULTS

___ keep menu

___ revise

Enough votes to
override Lead Chefs?

Yes No



If you overrode the Lead Chefs, the Nutrition Inspectors must now decide whether the menu is actually healthy. Pass THIS paper to a third group who will act as Nutrition Inspectors and move on to Round 5.

If you did not override the Lead Chefs, revise the menu, pass THIS paper back to the Lead Chefs, and GO BACK to Round 3.

Separation of Powers

Name: _____

Round 5: Evaluate the Menu

Responsibility: NUTRITION INSPECTORS



Nutrition Inspector Group Members: (write names here)

Round 5 Directions: The Lead Chefs and the Menu Writers had one rule: The menu had to be healthy. As Nutrition Inspectors, you must ***decide whether the menu is actually healthy***. As a group, you will do two things: 1) decide what "healthy" means, and 2) decide whether the menu meets your definition.

DEFINITION OF "HEALTHY"

(Develop 3 criteria)

A school lunch is "healthy" if:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

VOTE RESULTS

___ Menu meets all 3 criteria

___ Menu does not meet all criteria

Does a majority believe the menu meets the criteria for a healthy lunch?

Yes No



If a majority of Nutrition Inspectors voted that the menu is healthy, mark MENU MAY BE SERVED below.

If a majority voted that the menu does not meet the criteria, mark MENU MAY NOT BE SERVED below.

That's it! The decision of the Nutrition Inspectors is final.



MENU MAY BE SERVED!



MENU MAY NOT BE SERVED.

Separation of Powers

Name: _____

A. Who's Who? Draw lines to match the roles in the simulation with the roles they represent in real life:

Lead Chef	Congress
Menu Writers	Supreme Court
Nutrition Inspectors	President

B. Unscramble It! Use what you learned in the simulation activity to put these real-life steps in order. Number them from 1 to 5.

- 1 _____ Supreme Court decides whether the law is unconstitutional.
- 2 _____ Congress makes changes to the bill or overrides the President's veto
- 3 _____ President sets the agenda for laws that are important
- 4 _____ Congress writes bills that may become law
- 5 _____ President vetoes the bill or signs it into law

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Name: _____

Suggestion: Protect Military Medals

When a handful of concerned citizens in Colorado learned that some people were wearing fake military medals they'd never earned, they decided to do something about it. They went to their Congressional representative and made a suggestion. They wanted him to introduce a bill in Congress making it illegal to lie about military medals. After learning more about the problem, the representative agreed.



An Army Medal of Honor



Writing the Bill

Representative John Salazar of Colorado drafted a bill called the Stolen Valor Act that would penalize people who falsely claim to be decorated military veterans. The bill said lies about military medals "damage the reputation and meaning of these medals." Under the bill, anyone who lied about receiving one of these medals could be fined, imprisoned not more than six months, or both. Representative Salazar introduced the Stolen Valor Act to the House of Representatives in July 2005.

A few months later, a similar bill was introduced in the Senate by Senator Kent Conrad of North Dakota. Senator Conrad's bill passed the Senate in September 2006. It was sent to the House of Representatives, which passed the bill in December.

Approved!

The bill was then sent to the president for approval. President George W. Bush signed the Stolen Valor Act into law on December 20, 2006.



Unconstitutional!



New Law Fails Inspection

Two years later, California resident Xavier Alvarez told everyone at a public meeting, "I am a retired marine of 25 years. I retired in the year 2001. Back in 1987, I was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. I got wounded many times by the same guy." These were all lies. Alvarez was charged with a crime under the Stolen Valor Act. In court, Alvarez argued that his lies were protected by the First Amendment right to free speech. His case eventually went all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court agreed with Alvarez, saying "one of the costs of the First Amendment is that it protects the speech we detest as well as the speech we embrace." The Court said that unless these lies are used to commit fraud or for financial gain, they are protected by the First Amendment.

Back to the Bill Writers

In response, a new version of the Act was drafted. On January 15, 2013, Congressman Joe Heck of Nevada introduced a bill making it a crime to receive any tangible benefit from lying about receiving a military medal. The revised Stolen Valor Act passed both the House of Representatives and the Senate in May 2013. Finally, on June 2, 2013, President Barak Obama signed the new bill into law.

New and Improved!

(and Constitutional)



Separation of Powers

Name: _____

1. Ideas for Laws. The president sets the agenda for laws that are important. The president can also think of ideas for laws. Who else can suggest ideas for laws?

✓ Check ALL that you think are correct.

CIRCLE the group that suggested the Stolen Valor Act.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lawmakers | <input type="checkbox"/> The president |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supreme Court justices | <input type="checkbox"/> Comic book superheroes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dogs | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizations interested in a cause | |



2. Menu Writers. In real life, there are two groups of "Menu Writers." Who are they?

The _____
and the _____

3. Final Say. The "Menu Writers" had to re-write the Stolen Valor Act even though the "Lead Chef" approved it. Who has the final say about whether a law can stand? (circle one)

- A. The President, who can veto a bill or sign it into law.
- B. The Supreme Court, who can decide whether a law is constitutional.
- C. Congress, who can override the president's veto.

4. Inspection Time. Do you think the Supreme Court automatically "inspects" all bills that are signed into law?

- YES NO

What has to happen first? ✓ Check ALL the things you think could lead the Court to look at whether a law is constitutional:

Someone...

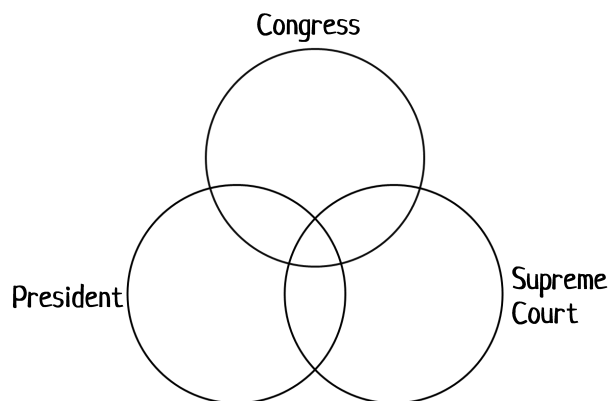
- Is punished under the law
- Loses money because of the law
- Doesn't like the law
- Loses property because of the law
- Is harmed in some way because of the law
- Has a friend who was harmed by the law

Even if something inappropriate happens, the Court still won't look at the law unless the person... (circle one)

- A. Asks the Court pretty please.
- B. Writes a letter to the Court explaining how the law caused them harm.
- C. Brings a case in a trial court and works their way up the court system.
- D. Sends chocolate to the justices.

5. Separation of Powers. Write the letter of each power in the space where it belongs on the diagram. Overlapping parts of the diagram are where shared powers go.

- A. Signs bills into law
- B. Writes laws
- C. Vetoes bills and returns them to Congress
- D. Hears disputes about laws
- E. Is part of the United States government
- F. Decides whether laws are constitutional
- G. Can override a veto with a large vote



What do you notice about the overlapping parts of the diagram?

SIMULATION ACTIVITY TEACHER GUIDE

- DISTRIBUTE** the Simulation Activity worksheets so each group has one 4-page packet.

ROUND 1

- REVIEW** instructions for Round 1. Make sure the students write their names on the Round 1 Group Members line. Allow each group to complete the Round 1 Activity.
- TELL** each group to pass their paper to any other group.

ROUND 2

- REVIEW** instructions for Round 2. Make sure the students write their names on the Round 2 Group Members line. Allow each group to complete the Round 2 Activity.
- TELL** each group to pass the paper back to the group that completed Round 1 (the group listed as "Lead Chefs" on the paper).

ROUND 3

- REVIEW** instructions for Round 3. Allow the original Lead Chefs to complete the Round 3 Activity.
- TELL** the Lead Chefs to return the paper to the group that completed Round 2 (the group listed as "Menu Writers" on the paper).

ROUND 4

- REVIEW** instructions for Round 4. Allow the original Menu Writers to complete the Round 4 Activity.
- TELL** each group to pass the paper to a group that has not yet had that paper.

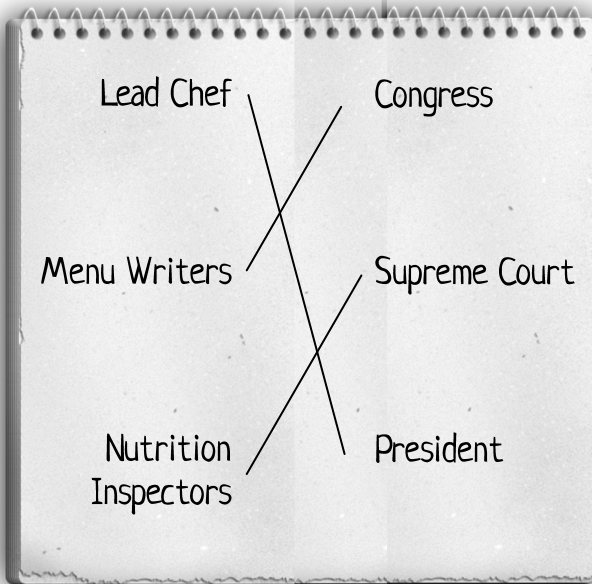
ROUND 5

- REVIEW** instructions for Round 5. Make sure the students write their names on the Round 5 Group Members line. Allow each group to complete the Round 5 Activity.

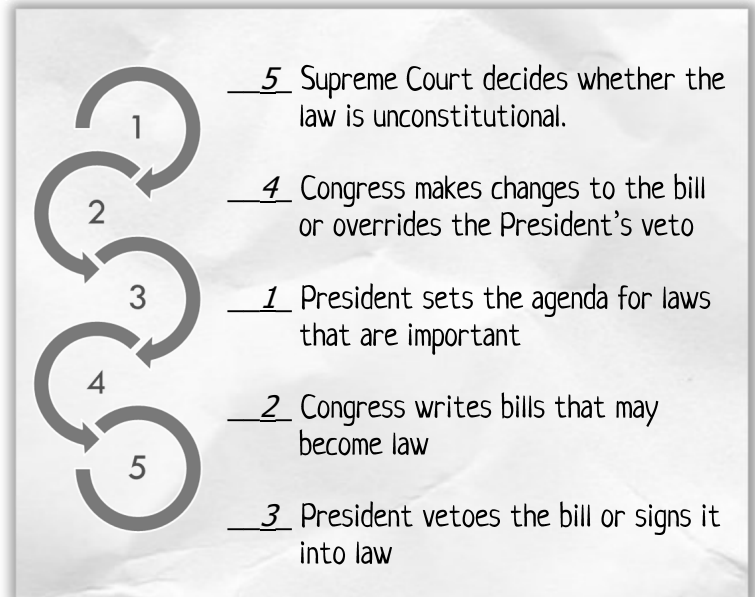
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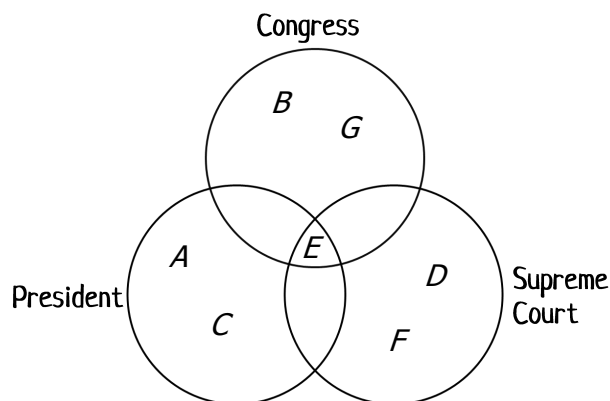
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They're empty! The powers don't overlap.