

## The State Governor

**Time Needed:** One class period

**Materials Needed:**

Student worksheets

2 pennies per pair or trio of students

Scissors (*if students will cut cards*)

**Copy Instructions:**

Reading (*1 page; class set*)

Game Board (*1 per pair or trio of students*)

Game Materials (*1 page double-sided; book-fold so Governor's Handbook is hidden in the center; 1 per pair/trio of students*)

Game Cards (*2 pgs back to back with card design; 30 total per set; 1 set per pair/trio of students*)

**Learning Objectives.** Students will be able to:

- Describe the structure, powers, and authority of the state executive branch
- Identify the source of a governor's power
- Decide which of a governor's powers is best used in specific situations.
- Describe how a governor can use executive power to maintain order and safety in the state
- Evaluate the role of state government in issues related to public safety and maintaining order

### STEP BY STEP

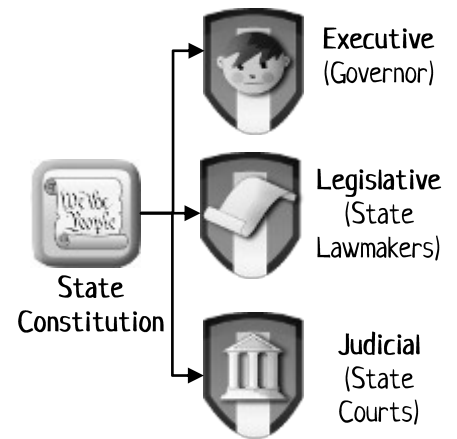
- DISTRIBUTE** one reading page to each student. (Do this first in the interest of time.)
- ANTICIPATE** by asking students who is the head of their state's executive branch. Can they name this person?
- READ** the page with the class, pausing to discuss.
- TELL** students they will be playing a board game where they take the role of governor and decide which of the governor's powers to use in specific situations.
- PAIR** students together, or put them in groups of three. The game materials are not designed for groups larger than three.
- DISTRIBUTE** one game board, one set of cards, and two pennies to each pair or trio. If students are going to cut the cards themselves, have them do this now. Important: Have students make sure their cards are well-shuffled.
- WRITE** these penny values on the board: heads/heads = 1; tails/tails = 2; heads/tails = 3. (Using this method keeps game play slow and forces students to land on more spaces, giving more opportunity for learning.)
- SHOW** students the game materials handout before you distribute it. (Make sure you pre-fold these with the Governor's Handbook in the middle to make it harder for students to see game answers by mistake.)
- PROJECT** the game instructions and walk through them before you distribute the materials.
- DISTRIBUTE** one pre-folded game materials handout to each pair or group.
- TELL** students to cut out their game pieces. If you've pre-cut the cards and they don't have scissors, just tell them to tear out the pieces.
- ALLOW** students time to play the game.
- CLOSE** by asking students to silently recall the 10 "Governor's Tools" they used in the game. Call on students until all have been named.

# The State Governor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Country & President—In Miniature

In many ways, a state is like a miniature country. It has its own Constitution, its own government, and its own laws. State governments have three branches—executive, legislative, and judicial—just like the country does. States even have their own “president”! This person is called a **governor** and leads the state’s executive branch. Just as the national executive branch must execute, or carry out, laws passed by the U.S. Congress, a state executive branch carries out laws passed by the state’s legislature. That’s why both national and state executive branches are mostly made up of departments and agencies that do the day-to-day work of putting laws into action.



## A Governor’s Power

Just as the U.S. Constitution tells what powers each of the national government’s three branches have, a **state constitution** describes the powers of a state’s three branches. A governor’s powers come from the state constitution and state laws. For example, state constitutions say that when the state legislature passes a bill, the governor has the power to *sign* it and make it law or *veto* it and send it back. (Sound familiar?)



## Executive Orders

An **executive order** is a set of instructions that acts like a law but is issued by the governor alone—without the legislature. (The president can issue executive orders, too.) An executive order is one of the most important tools a governor has, but it is very limited. A governor can only issue executive orders about certain things. Here are some examples:

- *Proclaim a state of emergency.* During a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or other emergency, this releases all possible resources to help. The governor can even call out the state’s National Guard!
- *Make rules* for state government employees or the state government itself. Most state government is part of the executive branch, which the governor controls.
- *Form a task force* to study a problem and recommend solutions.
- *Create a new executive office or council* to carry out a necessary task.
- *Call the legislature into a special session.* If the legislature is on a break and a law needs to be passed, the governor can force lawmakers back into session to take care of business.
- *Reduce a prisoner’s sentence or pardon* a convicted person completely.

### Executive Order

- ✓ Limited to certain topics and situations
- ✓ Does not need the state legislature
- ✓ Valid when signed by the governor
- ✓ Creates limited instructions for a special situation

### Law

- ✓ Can be about any topic
- ✓ Must be passed by the state legislature
- ✓ Valid when signed by the governor
- ✓ Creates a law that applies to everyone

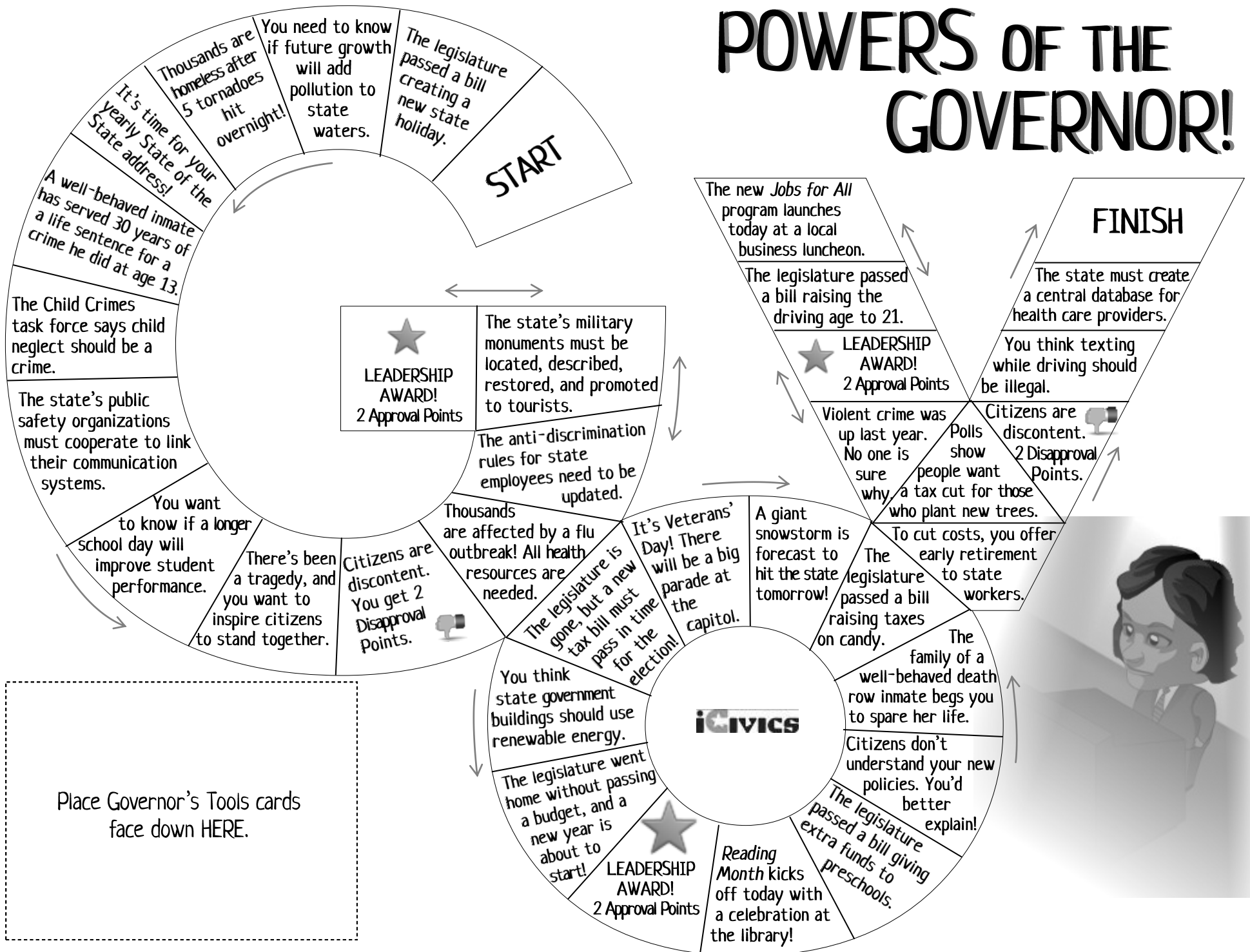


Maryland’s governor calls attention to the need for school breakfasts.

## The State’s Leader

A governor’s most visible job is to be a leader for the state’s citizens. The governor sets the state’s agenda—the list of high-priority issues the state needs to address. The governor makes speeches to explain to citizens and lawmakers why these issues are important. Governors attend many events and ceremonies to launch new state programs or just to show support for what people are doing. In times of crisis, they reassure citizens that the state government is doing everything possible to help.

# POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR!



Place Governor's Tools cards face down HERE.



## POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR!

### How to Play:

- 1) Deal 6 Governor's Tools cards to each player. Place the rest of the cards face down on the game board.
- 2) Put your game piece in the START box. Decide which player will go first. (Game pieces are located at the bottom of the instruction page.)
- 3) Toss the pennies. Move your game piece ahead the correct number of spaces.
- 4) Read what it says in the box where you landed. As a Governor, you will need to respond to the situation using the correct tool. If you hold the correct tool, play that card by placing it face up on the table. If you do not hold the correct tool, say PASS and take a new card.
- 5) If you played the correct card, check ONE Approval Points box below your name on the score card. Take a new card. If you played the wrong card, check ONE Disapproval Points box, and do not take a new card.
- 6) Your opponent may decide whether you played the correct card by checking the Governor's Handbook.
  - If you check the Governor's Handbook to help yourself decide which card to play, and you then play the correct card, you get no points of either type.
- 7) Your turn ends when you have played a card or passed.
- 8) If you passed, on your next turn you may either stay in your space and play a card OR toss the pennies and move forward.
- 9) Continue taking turns tossing the pennies and moving ahead. You **MUST** move your piece **ONLY** in the direction indicated by the arrows.
  - You may move both directions in places with double-ended arrows, but...
  - Once you have gone into an area with a double-ended arrow and started to return, you cannot turn around. (In other words, you can't keep going back and forth in a double-ended arrow section just to gain more points.) You do not need to go to the end of the double-arrow section before returning.
- 10) All players must cross the finish line. (You don't need an exact penny toss.) The player that crosses the finish line with the highest **TOTAL** wins. Calculate your Total by subtracting your Disapproval Points from your Approval Points.

# The State Governor

## POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR!

### How to Play:

- Deal 6 Governor's Tools cards to each player. Place the rest of the cards face down on the game board. Choose and cut your game piece (bottom of this page).
- Put your game piece in the START box. Decide which player will go first.
- Toss the pennies. Move your game piece ahead the correct number of spaces.
- Read what it says in the box where you landed. As a Governor, you will need to respond to the situation using the correct tool. If you hold the correct tool, play that card by placing it face up on the table. If you do not hold the correct tool, say PASS and take a new card.
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**Game Pieces:** Choose and cut your game piece:



## POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR! Score Sheet

<u>Player 1</u>	<u>Player 2</u>	<u>Player 3</u>
Name: _____	Name: _____	Name: _____
Approval Points:	Approval Points:	Approval Points:
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Disapproval Points:	Disapproval Points:	Disapproval Points:
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
TOTAL SCORE:	TOTAL SCORE:	TOTAL SCORE:
Approval Points: _____	Approval Points: _____	Approval Points: _____
Disapproval Points: - _____	Disapproval Points: - _____	Disapproval Points: - _____
TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____

## POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR!

### Governor's Handbook

**Tool: Propose a new law to the state legislature**

- The Child Crimes task force says child neglect should be a crime.
- Polls show people want a tax cut for those who plant new trees.
- You think texting while driving should be illegal.

**Tool: Veto a bill and send it back or sign a bill so it becomes law**

- The legislature passed a bill raising the driving age to 21.
- The legislature passed a bill giving extra funds to preschools.
- The legislature passed a bill raising taxes on candy.

**Tool: Executive order to create a task force to study a problem**

- Violent crime was up last year. No one is sure why.
- You need to know if future growth will add pollution to state waters.
- You want to know if a longer school day will improve student performance.

**Tool: Executive order to reduce or eliminate a prison sentence**

- A well-behaved inmate has served 30 years of a life sentence for a crime he did at age 13.
- The family of a well-behaved death row inmate begs you to spare her life.

**Tool: Executive order to create an office or council to carry out a task**

- The state's military monuments must be located, described, restored, and promoted to tourists
- The state's public safety organizations must cooperate to link their communication systems.
- The state must create a central database for health care providers.

**Tool: Attend a ceremony or event to show your support**

- Reading Month kicks off today with a celebration at the library!
- It's Veterans Day! There will be a big parade at the capitol.
- The new Jobs for All program launches today at a local business luncheon.

**Tool: Give a speech**

- It's time for your yearly State of the State address!
- Citizens don't understand your new policies. You'd better explain!
- There's been a tragedy, and you want to inspire citizens to stand together.

**Tool: Executive order to make rules for state employees/government**

- To cut costs, you offer early retirement to state workers.
- The anti-discrimination rules for state employees need to be updated.

**Tool: Executive order to proclaim a state of emergency**

- Thousands are homeless after 5 tornadoes hit overnight!
- Thousands are affected by a flu outbreak! All health resources are needed.
- A giant snow storm is forecast to hit the state tomorrow!

**Tool: Executive order to call the state legislature into special session**

- The legislature went home without passing a budget, and a new year is about to start!
- The legislature is gone, but a new tax bill must pass in time for the election!

**PROPOSE A  
NEW LAW**

to the state  
legislature

**VETO A BILL**  
and send it back  
\*\* OR \*\*  
**SIGN A BILL**  
so it becomes law!

Issue an  
EXECUTIVE ORDER  
to  
**CALL THE STATE  
LEGISLATURE**  
into  
**SPECIAL SESSION**

Issue an  
EXECUTIVE ORDER  
To  
**REDUCE OR  
ELIMINATE A  
PRISON SENTENCE**

**ATTEND A  
CEREMONY OR  
EVENT**  
to show your  
support

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<p>Give a SPEECH</p>	<p>Issue an EXECUTIVE ORDER to <b>CREATE A TASK FORCE</b> To study a problem and recommend solutions</p>	<p>Issue an EXECUTIVE ORDER to <b>MAKE RULES</b> for <b>STATE EMPLOYEES</b> and <b>STATE GOVERNMENT</b></p>	<p>Issue an EXECUTIVE ORDER to <b>CREATE A NEW OFFICE OR COUNCIL</b> to carry out a task</p>	<p>Issue an EXECUTIVE ORDER to <b>PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY</b></p>
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