

SOL 3.9 United States Government

3.9a - What Is the Purpose of Government?

- explain the **purpose of governments** and understand that other countries have governments similar to and different from that of the United States

A **government** is a group of leaders who make **rules and laws** to help keep people safe, organized, and protected.

- Governments also provide **important services** like schools, roads, police, and firefighters.
- Other countries have governments too — some are **similar** to the United States and some are **very different**.

Think About It:

- Why do people need **rules** and **leaders**?
- How might another country's government be **different** from ours?

3.9b - The U.S. Constitution

- explain how the **Constitution** supports the structure of the United States government



U.S. Constitution

The **Constitution** is the **supreme law of the land** — the most important rulebook for our country.

- It explains how the **government works** and **protects the rights** of all American citizens.
- It tells us who has **power** and how to make sure the government is **fair**.

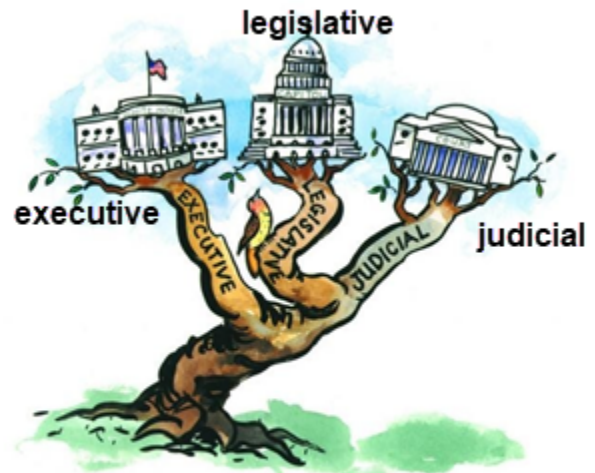
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Think About It:

- How does the **Constitution** protect your **rights**?
- Why is it important that everyone follows the **Constitution**?

3.9c – The Three Branches of Government

- identify and explain the **three branches** of government



Three branches of government

The United States government is divided into **three branches**.

- The **legislative branch** makes the laws and is made up of **Congress**.
- The **executive branch** carries out or **enforces the laws**, and is led by the **President**.
- The **judicial branch** is made up of the **courts and judges**, and they decide if the laws are fair and follow the **Constitution**.
- These three branches **share power** so that no one person or group becomes too powerful.

3.9d – What Governments Do at Each Level

d. Explain what governments do at the **national**, **state**, and **local** levels; and

- The **national government** makes laws and decisions for the entire **United States**.
- The **state government**, like the government of **Virginia**, makes laws for just our state.
- The **local government**, such as a **city** or **county**, helps with things close to home like schools, police, fire departments, libraries, and trash collection.
- **Each level** of government works to keep people safe, solve problems, and provide important services to the community.

3.9e – How Government Is Organized

e. explain how local, state, and national governments are organized.

Each level — **national, state, and local** — has all three branches (legislative, executive, and judicial).

- This helps **share the power** and **protect people’s rights**.
- The government works to **keep people safe**, teach students, build roads, and solve problems in the community.

💬 Think About It:

- Who are your **leaders** today — like the President, Virginia Governor, or your local mayor or school board?
- How do **judges and courts** make sure the laws follow the Constitution?