

## Maggie's Civics Corner

### Lesson #14 – Separation of Powers



#### Maggie says ...

*In these difficult times, as our nation and the world pull together, it is more important than ever to understand our role as a citizen.*

**Today's lesson is about the SEPARATION OF POWERS in our government.** Did you know that the U.S. government is separated into 3 different branches? This works like my family! Each parent has certain jobs, and at other times they work together to get to the right answer. For example, it's my Mom's job to cut my hair, so my Dad isn't allowed to do it. But if I want a doggy treat, both of my parents must agree to let me have one. The U.S. government works the same way. The three branches – Legislative, Executive, and Judicial – each have a job only it can do, but sometimes the other branches must check and balance each other to make decisions together.

**Sticky Situation:** Imagine you are putting together a soccer team at recess. You can either have one team captain who makes all the decisions for the entire team, or three team captains who share the responsibility. Which would you choose? What are the benefits of giving each team captain specific jobs that they are responsible for?

**Activity:** Let's learn the different powers of America's three branches of Government. On the left are the three branches. On the right are their responsibilities, shuffled out of order. Draw a line from the branch connecting it to the correct responsibilities. Good luck!

Legislative

Includes the President and is responsible for enforcing the laws that Congress makes.

Executive

Determines when laws are unconstitutional through court cases.

Judicial

Made up of representatives from every state. This branch makes laws.

**Civics Resources:** Visit the [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov) website to learn more about the 3 branches of the U.S. government. Or, check out the iCivics interactive game – [Branches of Power](https://www.icivics.com/branches-of-power) – to act as each branch of government to create new laws.