

# Six Big Constitution Principles

## Assignment

The framers of the U.S. Constitution designed the structure of the new national government with the recent abuses of King George III in mind. The framers remembered the tyranny of the King and were determined to never allow one person, or even a small group of people, to dominate their new national government. The framers designed the U.S. Constitution with several principles that would assure that the newly formed national government could not abuse its power.

### Separation of Powers

Definition:	The act of vesting the legislative, executive, and judicial powers of government in separate bodies.
Purpose:	To make sure power is separated equally and there isn't one powerful government.
Example:	The United States has separation of powers with the Executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

### Checks and Balances

Definition:	counterbalancing influences by which an organization or system is regulated, typically those ensuring that political power is not concentrated in the hands of individuals or groups.
Purpose:	To make sure the branches don't have too much power they can check on each other to share power equally.

Example:	The legislative makes laws and then the executive can veto the laws if they think they are reasonable then the judicial checks to see if they are constitutional.
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## **Federalism**

Definition:	Federalism is a mixed or compound mode of government that combines a general government with regional governments in a single political system.
Purpose:	This allows the states to have some power by being able to make their own regional laws and decisions but they cannot overturn the national government.

Example: States have the power to build schools, or make voting rules, and minor laws but the national government makes laws that affect the whole country.

## **Popular Sovereignty**

Definition:	a doctrine in political theory that government is created by and subject to the will of the people.
Purpose:	The government is by the people for the people.

Example: The united states, Canada and Mexico are all countries that have popular sovereignty

## Limited Government

Definition:	In political philosophy, limited government is the concept of a government limited in power. It is a key concept in the history of liberalism.
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Purpose:	Limited government made sure that the government couldn't have too much power or control.
Example:	The U.S government is a prime example of limited government

## Judicial Review

Definition:	holds that the courts are vested with the authority to determine the legitimacy of the acts of the executive and the legislative branches of government.
Purpose:	This allows the judicial branch to keep the legislative and executive branches in check and make sure they are constitutional.

Example: Roe v. Wade (1973): The Supreme Court ruled that state laws prohibiting abortion were unconstitutional.

## Scenarios:

1. A federal judge accepts a \$1 million bribe from an American businessman who has been found guilty of a federal crime. The judge sentences him to probation, despite the fact that the defendant should have been sentenced to many years in prison. How can the

constitutional system of **checks and balances** be used to deal with this abuse of power? Explain.

2. The President of the United States is worried about the size of the national debt so he declares, unilaterally, that he has decided to do away with the system of Social Security that was established by law in 1935. How can the constitutional principle of **separation of powers** be used to deal with this abuse of power? Explain.
  
3. Congress becomes worried about the increasing death rate among teenage drivers, so they introduce a bill to increase the minimum driving to age 20 across the United States. How can the constitutional principle of **federalism** be used to deal with this abuse of power? Explain.
  
4. The federal government wants to read all citizens' mail coming into or going out of the country. How can the constitutional principle of **limited government** deal with this abuse of power? Explain.
  
5. The state of Georgia passed a law that bans all abortions under all circumstances. How can the constitutional principle of **judicial review** deal with this abuse of power? Explain.
  
6. The state of Georgia passed a law that requires all voters to pay a fee before being allowed to vote in any elections. How can the constitutional principle of **popular sovereignty** deal with this abuse of power? Explain.