

Checks and Balances CBA

A responsible citizen of the United States understands how the constitutional principle of checks and balances protects the three branches of government. You will develop a presentation or write an essay about the effectiveness of the system of checks and balances related during a particular administration, congress/legislature, or court.

Directions to students¹

In a cohesive paper or presentation², you will:

- State a position that evaluates whether the system of checks and balances worked during a particular administration, court, or congress/legislature by evaluating whether it prevented one branch from exercising too much power.
- Provide background on your position by describing the administration, court, or congress/legislature.
- Provide background on your position by explaining how one branch checked or could have checked another during this time with two or more examples.
- Provide reason(s) for your position that include:
 - An evaluation of whether one branch increased its power during this administration, court, or congress/legislature relative to another with two or more examples to support your position.
- Make explicit references within the paper or presentation to three or more credible sources that provide relevant information AND cite sources within the paper, presentation, or bibliography.

¹ This directions page guides students towards the “proficient” level (level “3”) for this CBA. To help students reach “excellent” (level “4”), please refer to the rubric or, if available, the graphic organizer.

² Students may do a paper or presentation in response to the CBA provided that for either format, there is documentation of this response that someone outside their classroom could easily understand and review using the rubric (e.g., a videotaped presentation, an electronic written document).

High School - Checks and Balances Rubric (Recommended for 11th Grade)

←-----PASSING-----→		NOT PASSING -----→		
GLE (EALR)	4 - Excellent	3 - Proficient	2 - Partial	1 - Minimal
1.2.2. Evaluates the effectiveness of the system of checks and balances during a particular presidential administration, Supreme Court, or Congress. (11 th Grade) (EALR 1.2. Understands the purposes, organization, and function of governments, laws and political systems.) 5.4.1. Evaluates and interprets other points of view on an issue within a paper or presentation. (EALR 5.4. Creates a product...)	States a position that evaluates whether the system of checks and balances worked during a particular administration, court, or congress/legislature/local council by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating whether it prevented one branch from exercising too much power. AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing the legacy of the administration, court, or congress/legislature for the functioning of government. 	States a position that evaluates whether the system of checks and balances worked during a particular administration, court, or congress/legislature/ local council by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating whether it prevented one branch from exercising too much power. 	States a position on whether the system of checks and balances worked during a particular administration, court, or congress/legislature/ local council WITHOUT evaluating whether it prevented one branch from exercising too much power.	Discusses the system of checks and balances during a particular administration, court, or congress/legislature/ local council without taking a position.
1.2.2. Evaluates the effectiveness of the system of checks and balances during a particular presidential administration, supreme court, or congress (11 th Grade) (EALR 1.2. Understands the purposes, organization, and function of governments, laws and political systems.)	Provides background on the administration, court, or congress/legislature by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describing the administration, court, or congress/legislature and Explaining how one branch checked or could have checked another during this time with three or more examples. 	Provides background on the administration, court, or congress/legislature by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describing the administration, court, or congress/legislature and Explaining how one branch checked or could have checked another during this time with two examples. 	Provides background on the administration, court, or congress/legislature by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describing the administration, court, or congress/legislature and Explaining how one branch checked or could have checked another during this time with one example. 	Provides background on the administration, court, or congress/legislature by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describing the administration, court, or congress/legislature WITHOUT explaining how one branch checked or could have checked another during this time.
	Provides reason(s) for the position supported by evidence. The evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation of whether one branch increased its power during this administration, court, or congress/legislature relative to another with three or more examples. 	Provides reason(s) for the position supported by evidence. The evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation of whether one branch increased its power during this administration, court, or congress/legislature relative to another with two examples. 	Provides reason(s) for the position supported by evidence. The evidence includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An evaluation of whether one branch increased its power during this administration, court, or congress/legislature relative to another with one example. 	Provides reason(s) for the position without any supporting evidence.
5.4.2. Creates strategies to avoid plagiarism and respects intellectual property when developing a paper or presentation. (10 th Grade) (EALR 5.4. Creates a product...) 5.2.2. Evaluates the validity, reliability, and credibility of sources when researching an issue or historical event in the United States. (11 th Grade) (EALR 5.2: Uses inquiry-based research.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes explicit references within the paper or presentation to four or more credible sources that provide relevant information. Cites sources within the paper, presentation, or bibliography. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes explicit references within the paper or presentation to three credible sources that provide relevant information. Cites sources within the paper, presentation, or bibliography. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes explicit references within the paper or presentation to two credible sources that provide relevant information. Cites sources within the paper, presentation, or bibliography. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes explicit references within the paper or presentation to one credible source that provides relevant information. Cites the source within the paper, presentation, or bibliography.

* OSPI recommends that this CBA be used at a particular grade level and thus, the GLEs included in the rubric are for that grade. However, if the CBA is used at another grade level within the grade band (3-5, 6-8, or 9-12), the GLEs may need to change to match the appropriate content.

** Please also refer to the document "Scoring Notes for Secondary Social Studies CBAs" when evaluating student work.