

# Checks & Balances

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

## Your Task

In a cohesive paper or presentation, you will:

- Present an argument that:
  - Includes a precise, knowledgeable claim that states a position.
  - Provides reasoning supported by relevant and credible evidence.
- Provide background on the event or action by explaining how one branch checked or could have checked another during this time. Include two or more examples.
- Provide reason(s) for your claim. Include an analysis that evaluates whether or not the actions of a particular administration, court, and/or congress/legislature prevented another branch from exercising too much power.
- Refer explicitly in the paper or presentation to three or more credible sources that provide relevant information:
  - Cite your sources when you draw information from them: for instance, when you summarize, paraphrase, or quote, and when you refer to facts, figures, and ideas.
  - Provide complete publication information for each source in your bibliography or list of works cited.

## Checks & Balances Rubric

Score	4	3	2	1
Claim	I stated a claim regarding the issue; my claim is clear, specific, and arguable.	I stated a claim regarding the issue; my claim is clear and arguable, but not specific.	I stated a claim regarding the issue; my claim is clear and arguable, but lacks specificity.	I stated a claim regarding the issue; my claim is confusing, vague, and/or not arguable.
Civics Concepts	I included background on the event or action, explaining how one branch could have checked, or did check another. I provided two or more examples and: A thorough evaluation of how effective the principle of checks and balances was in this case. A fair/balanced interpretation and refutation of a counterclaim that contrasts with my claim.	I included background on the event or action, explaining how one branch could have checked, or did check another. I provided two or more examples and: An evaluation of how effective the principle of checks and balances was in this case. A fair/balanced interpretation and refutation of a counterclaim that contrasts with my claim.	I provided a description of the event or action, without an evaluation of how effective the principle of checks and balances worked in this case. I mentioned a counterclaim that contrasts with my claim.	My description of the event or action was partial or unclear. I did not address the principle of checks and balances. I did not mention a counterclaim that contrasts with my claim.
Evidence	I provided thorough and convincing evidence for the claim. My reasoning is clear and coherent and connects the evidence to the claim. I made explicit connections between corroborating evidence.	I provided adequate evidence for the claim. My reasoning is mostly clear and coherent and connects the evidence to the claim. I presented corroborating evidence without making explicit connections.	I provided uneven, cursory evidence for the claim. Some of my reasoning connecting evidence to the claim has flaws in logic. I presented no corroborating evidence.	I provided minimal or irrelevant evidence for the claim and used few or no facts and details from sources. Most of my reasoning connecting evidence to the claim has flaws in logic. I presented no corroborating evidence.
Citations	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to the Constitution and three or more credible sources that provide relevant information.	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to the Constitution and two credible sources that provide relevant information.	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to the Constitution and one credible source that provides relevant information.	I referred explicitly in the paper or presentation to the Constitution <i>or</i> one credible source that provides relevant information.
Sources	My sources are varied (primary and secondary), represent more than one point of view, and provide in-depth and reliable information.	My sources are varied (primary and secondary) and represent more than one point of view.	My sources are not varied, and they represent one point of view far more than another.	My sources are not varied, and I rely too much on one source for my evidence.

**No Score (NS)** is given if the work is unintelligible, in a language other than English, off topic, off purpose, or copied.