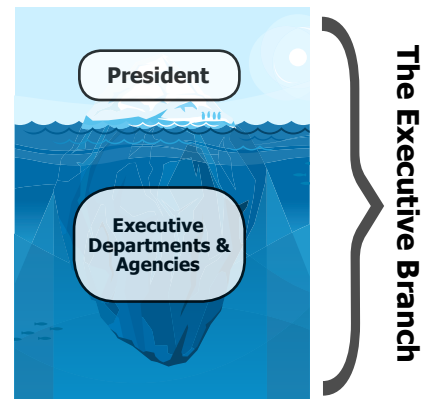


A Very Big Branch

Name: _____

We've Got a Job to Do

The job of the executive branch is to carry out the laws that the legislative branch passes. When you think of the executive branch, you probably think of the president. But the president is only the head of the executive branch. He is like the tip of the iceberg: underneath, there is a giant organization with lots of people doing many different jobs. In fact, the executive branch is the largest branch of our government!



Help from Many



Chief Justice John Roberts swearing in Attorney General William Barr as President Trump stands as witness.

Most of the executive branch is made up of departments and independent agencies. **Departments** are the main organizations in the executive branch. There are 15 departments. Each one focuses on a specific type of activity such as education, transportation, defense, or energy. Each department has smaller agencies that do specific jobs. For example, the Department of Justice (DOJ) operates our justice system and works to prevent crime. Two agencies inside the DOJ are the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The FBI investigates certain kinds of crimes, while the DEA deals with crime related to drugs and controlled substances.

The president appoints a **secretary** to lead each department. (But the head of the Department of Justice is called the Attorney General.) These secretaries do more than just lead a department. They are the president's **cabinet**—a group of people that give advice to help the president make important decisions. Officials who hold these cabinet-level positions such as the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Education, or the Secretary of Homeland Security are very important players in the executive branch.

Government Corporations

Some parts of the executive branch are businesses that the government owns, such as AMTRAK, which operates passenger trains, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), which insures bank deposits in case a bank fails.

Independent agencies are government organizations that also focus on specific issues, but they are different from departments because they aren't directly controlled by the president or executive branch. These agencies are created by Congress in order to address concerns not easily solved through legislation. They are often controlled by a board or commission, and there are usually restrictions on how the president appoints and removes the members.

Carrying Out Laws: Enforcement

What does it mean to "carry out" a law? That depends on the kind of law that needs to be carried out. Some laws make things illegal and describe consequences for those who do those things. Executive agencies **enforce** the law when someone isn't following it. There are several things an agency can do to enforce a law:

- Educate the public about new laws
- Monitor the public to make sure laws are being followed
- Catch individuals or organizations not following the law
- Take the offenders to court
- Follow any other enforcement procedures the agency may have



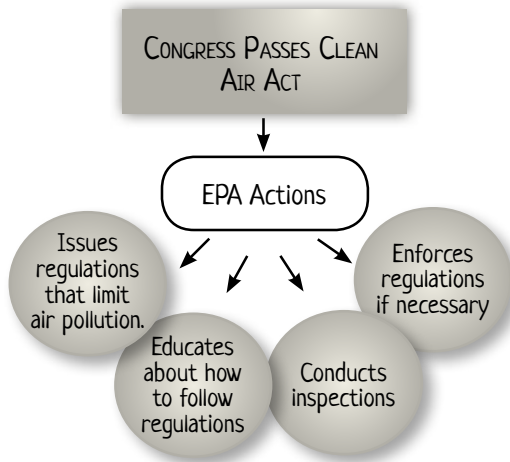
The U.S. Marshals Service is the oldest federal law enforcement agency. Marshals provide court security, hunt fugitives, and offer witness protection.

A Very Big Branch

Name: _____

Carrying Out Laws: Regulations

Other laws are just instructions about something that must be done, such as installing new security procedures at the nation's airports. A law like this will not include every last detail about how it should be carried out. Instead, the law will authorize the executive branch to decide these details. The rules the executive branch makes about how the law will be carried out are called **regulations**. Regulations have power similar to laws. Some regulations make activity illegal, and others give instructions for how something must be done.



Agencies Enforce and Regulate

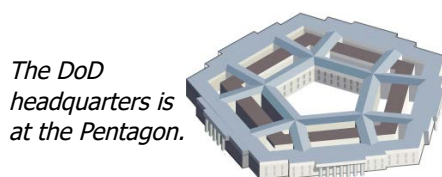
Most departments and agencies both enforce laws and make regulations. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is an independent agency whose goal is to protect the environment and human health. It carries out laws passed by Congress, such as the Clean Air Act that is designed to limit air pollution. The Clean Air Act authorizes the EPA to set limits on how much pollution can be put into the air. To do this, the EPA issues regulations that say exactly how much pollution vehicles, factories, and other sources can put into the air. The EPA then works to enforce these regulations. Violating them can result in penalties.

Maintaining Order and Safety

We depend on many parts of the executive branch to keep us safe and to keep order. For example, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is responsible for protecting the United States against all kinds of threats. It includes agencies that deal with terrorism, natural disasters, and border protection. It also includes the Secret Service, whose agents protect the president and vice president and their families. Inside the DHS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) responds to natural disasters to help people get the help they need in an orderly way. The Coast Guard, also part of DHS, patrols our nation's coastlines to watch for threats and helps boats in distress.



A Secret Service agent stands guard outside the White House.



The DoD headquarters is at the Pentagon.

The Department of Defense (DoD) is the biggest department. It includes all the military departments such as the Army, Navy, and Air Force, as well as many other agencies. Together, all the parts of the Department of Defense work together to make sure our armed forces are prepared to protect our nation's security.

Busy, Busy

Remember that most of the day-to-day activity in the executive branch involves ordinary people doing the work that needs to be done: an FBI agent conducts an investigation, a soldier participates in training exercises, or a worker monitors a nuclear reactor at an energy plant. The executive branch needs people to answer phones, program computers, file papers, do scientific research, process mail, fly airplanes, and clean bathrooms. In fact, the federal government is the nation's largest employer, and most of those jobs are in the executive branch.



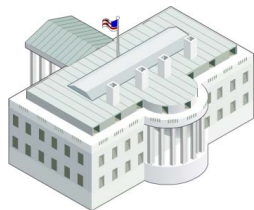
A U.S. Postal Service employee works hard to deliver your mail.

A Very Big Branch

Name: _____

A. Cabinet Departments. Use the word bank to fill in the missing words from the graphic organizer:

Attorney armed basic needs college highway countries farmers
military homes money fuel public lands wages terrorists trade legal



The President's Cabinet

Executive Branch Departments

SECRETARY OF STATE

Department of State

Manages our relationships with
foreign _____

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

Department of the Treasury

Collects taxes, prints _____,
deals with the nation's finances

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Department of Defense

Manages the _____
forces and conducts wars overseas

GENERAL

Department of Justice

Enforces laws and represents the
United States in
_____ matters

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

Department of the Interior

Manages and protects the nation's

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

Department of Agriculture

Works with _____
and regulates farm products

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Department of Commerce

Supervises _____
and promotes U.S. businesses

SECRETARY OF LABOR

Department of Labor

Helps workers get fair _____
and working conditions

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

Department of Transportation

Oversees _____
safety and air, rail, and sea travel

SECRETARY OF ENERGY

Department of Energy

Researches sources of
_____ and electricity
for the nation

SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Department of Education

Gives money for K-12 schools and
student _____ loans

SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Department of Veterans Affairs

Provides services for people who
served in the _____

SEC. OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Dep't of Health & Human Services

Gives services for Americans' health
and _____

SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Department of Homeland Security

Protects against _____
and other threats

SEC. OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Dep't of Housing & Urban Development

Creates strong communities and
affordable _____

B. Who Said That? Identify which secretary might give the following advice or information:

1. Sec. of _____: "We need to invest in more solar electricity."
2. Sec. of _____: "We saw a decrease in highway deaths this year."
3. Sec. of _____: "Agents intercepted a terrorist threat this morning."
4. Sec. of _____: "It's time to take the penny out of circulation."
5. Sec. of _____: "We need to combat bark beetles in the national forest."

A Very Big Branch

Name: _____

C. Whose Job Is It, Anyway? Identify the executive agency that would most likely execute each act:

The Veterans Educational Assistance Act (2008)



Increases educational benefits for military veterans who have served since September 11, 2001.

Agency: _____

Protect America Act (2007)



Provides the intelligence community tools to gather important information about terrorists.

Agency: _____

Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (1994)



Increased the number of police officers, funding for prisons, and crime prevention programs.

Agency: _____

No Child Left Behind Act (2001)



Ensures that students in every public school achieve important learning goals by well-prepared teachers.

Agency: _____

Helping Families Save Their Homes Act (2009)



Prevents families from losing their homes to foreclosure.

Agency: _____

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (2009)



Gives funds to projects like ones that support improving roads, bridges, and other public structures.

Agency: _____

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (2010)



Makes it easier for Americans to be covered by health insurance and get medical attention.

Agency: _____

Farm Security and Rural Investment Act (2002)



Provides support to American farmers.

Agency: _____

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act (1982)



Created a national program for safe and permanent disposal of radioactive waste.

Agency: _____

D. Enforce and Regulate. The Department of Labor (DOL) works to protect public health and safety. Decide if each item on the list is a DOL regulation (R) or enforcement activity (E).

Enforcement	Regulation	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	1. Monitor workplaces to see if they are following safety and health standards.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	2. Employers must use a certain method for calculating overtime pay.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	3. Employers must record and report work-related fatalities, injuries, and illnesses.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	4. Evaluate possible cancer-causing substances found in the workplace.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	5. Employees can file a charge if they feel they've been discriminated against
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	6. Educate employers about how to follow the Fair Labor Standards Act.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	7. Make sure agricultural workers are receiving fair treatment required by law.
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	8. Employers must post a notice explaining laws about the minimum wage.