

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Legislative Branch

What is the main job of the legislative branch?

The main purpose of the legislative branch is to make laws. There are two main parts to the legislative branch: the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each state has two Senators, no matter how many people live in that state. These Senators are elected every six years. The representatives from the House of Representatives are elected every two years. Each state has a different number of representatives in the House. The more people they have in the state, the more representatives they will have in the House of Representatives.

1. What is the main purpose of the legislative branch of government?

to make laws

2. What are the two parts of the legislative branch?

Senate & the House of Representatives

3. How many Senators does each state have?

2

4. How many representatives does each state have in the House of Representatives?

it depends on their population

How much power should be given to the legislative branch?

One of the major problems that faced the original Framers, or writers, of the Constitution, was how much power to give the national government. The Framers wanted to create a national government stronger than the one established by the Articles of Confederation. The Framers thought the Articles did not give Congress enough power to deal with trade and economic problems. More importantly, they thought Congress was not strong enough to control state governments. The problem with the Articles of Confederation was that Congress could not go directly to the people. If Congress passed a law, it had to depend on the states to enforce it. Congress could not raise taxes to support itself, it could only ask the states for money. Many states refused to pay.

Most Framers wanted a strong national government that could get the states to agree and work together. Others, however, feared a strong national government because their experience with England made them suspicious of national power. Finally they agreed on a government strong enough to protect the rights of the people, and yet not so strong that it could violate those rights.

1. According to the original Framers of the Constitution, what were two problems with the Articles of Confederation?

couldn't tax, collect money
couldn't control the states

2. According to the Framers of the Constitution, what was an advantage to a strong national government?

a strong gov't could get the states to work

3. Why did some people fear a strong national government?

because of their experience with England

4. What did they finally agree on?

a gov't strong enough to protect the people's
rights, but not too strong to violate
those rights.