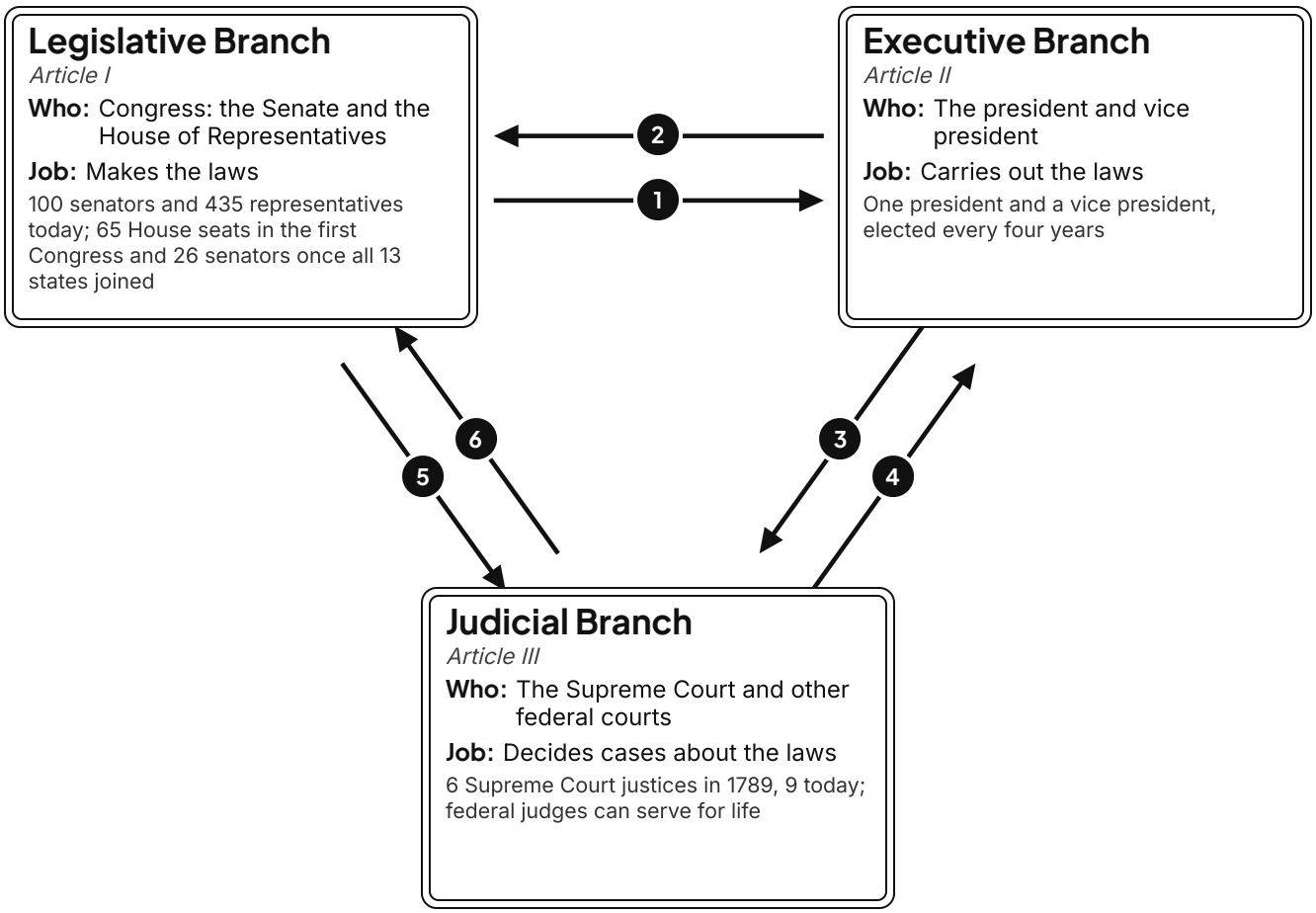
Name _____

THREE BRANCHES AND CHECKS AND BALANCES

The Constitution splits the national government into three branches so that no one person or group holds all the power. This is separation of powers. Each branch can also limit, or check, the other two. The arrows show six checks, one in each direction between each pair of branches. Use the How the Constitution Works reading.



◆ THE SIX CHECKS ◆

1. **Legislative checks Executive:** Congress can override the president's veto with a two-thirds vote of both houses, and it can impeach and remove a president.
2. **Executive checks Legislative:** The president can veto, or reject, a bill passed by Congress.
3. **Executive checks Judicial:** The president nominates, or chooses, federal judges.
4. **Judicial checks Executive:** Courts can rule that an action of the president is unconstitutional, so it cannot stand.
5. **Legislative checks Judicial:** The Senate confirms or rejects the judges the president nominates, and Congress can impeach judges.
6. **Judicial checks Legislative:** Courts can rule that a law is unconstitutional (judicial review, claimed in Marbury v. Madison, 1803; not written in the Constitution).