

CHECKS AND BALANCES • LEVEL 2: ON LEVEL

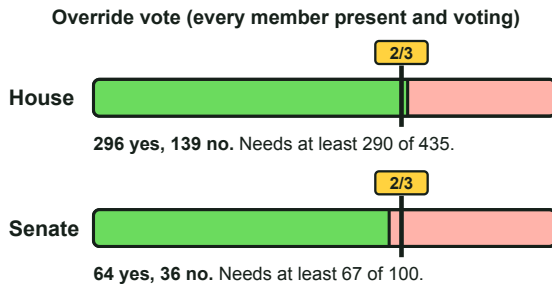
Checks and Balances: On Level Practice

Answer each question. Use complete sentences for written answers. Article and Section numbers refer to the U.S. Constitution. Every vote says all members are present and vote.

Part 1: From bill to law

- 1 The House and the Senate pass different versions of the same bill. What must happen before it can go to the President?
 - A. The President picks one version
 - B. The version with more yes votes goes forward
 - C. Both chambers pass one identical version
 - D. The Supreme Court picks one version
- 2 The President does not sign or return a bill. Ten days pass (Sundays excepted), and Congress is still in session. What happens?
 - A. It becomes law without the President's signature
 - B. It is vetoed automatically
 - C. It goes back to committee
 - D. It waits until the President signs it
- 3 A vetoed bill goes back to the chamber where it _____. Bills for raising revenue (taxes) must start in the _____.

- 4 Override votes. Every member is present and votes. Did the override reach two-thirds in that chamber? (House: 290 of 435. Senate: 67 of 100.)



ITEMS TO SORT

House: 312 yes, 123 no

House: 268 yes, 167 no

Senate: 70 yes, 30 no

Senate: 59 yes, 41 no

House: 296 yes, 139 no

Senate: 64 yes, 36 no

Reached two-thirds	Fell short

Part 2: Checks between the branches

- 5 Sort each check by the branch that uses it.

ITEMS TO SORT

Overrides a veto

Vetoes a bill

Declares a law unconstitutional

Confirms or rejects federal judges

Nominates federal judges

Rules an executive order unconstitutional

Legislative	Executive	Judicial

- 6 The _____ has the sole power of impeachment. The _____ tries all impeachments, and conviction takes _____ of the senators present.
- 7 A newspaper editor sues, saying part of a federal law breaks the First Amendment. Can the editor file the case directly in the Supreme Court?
- A. Yes, every federal case starts there
 - B. Yes, if Congress votes to send it there
 - C. No, courts cannot hear cases about federal laws
 - D. No, it starts in a lower court, and the Supreme Court can hear it on appeal
- 8 Explain how the veto checks Congress and how the override checks the President.

Answer Key

Checks and Balances: On Level Practice

Part 1: From bill to law

- 1 The House and the Senate pass different versions of the same bill. What must happen before it can go to the President?

C. Both chambers pass one identical version

Article I, Section 7: a bill must pass both chambers before it is presented to the President, so both must pass the same words.

- 2 The President does not sign or return a bill. Ten days pass (Sundays excepted), and Congress is still in session. What happens?

A. It becomes law without the President's signature

Article I, Section 7.

- 3 A vetoed bill goes back to the chamber where it _____. Bills for raising revenue (taxes) must start in the _____. A vetoed bill goes back to the chamber where it **started**. Bills for raising revenue (taxes) must start in the **House of Representatives**.

Article I, Section 7. Accept "originated" for the first blank and "House" for the second.

- 4 Override votes. Every member is present and votes. Did the override reach two-thirds in that chamber? (House: 290 of 435. Senate: 67 of 100.)

Reached two-thirds	Fell short
House: 312 yes, 123 no	House: 268 yes, 167 no
Senate: 70 yes, 30 no	Senate: 59 yes, 41 no
House: 296 yes, 139 no	Senate: 64 yes, 36 no

Article I, Section 7. The picture shows the last House and Senate tallies.

Part 2: Checks between the branches

- 5 Sort each check by the branch that uses it.

Legislative	Executive	Judicial
Overrides a veto	Vetoes a bill	Declares a law unconstitutional
Confirms or rejects federal judges	Nominates federal judges	Rules an executive order unconstitutional

The Senate (part of Congress) confirms or rejects judges.

- 6 The ____ has the sole power of impeachment. The ____ tries all impeachments, and conviction takes ____ of the senators present.

The **House of Representatives** has the sole power of impeachment. The **Senate** tries all impeachments, and conviction takes **two-thirds** of the senators present.

Article I, Section 2 (House) and Article I, Section 3 (Senate). Accept House for the first blank. A convicted official is removed from office.

- 7 A newspaper editor sues, saying part of a federal law breaks the First Amendment. Can the editor file the case directly in the Supreme Court?

D. No, it starts in a lower court, and the Supreme Court can hear it on appeal

Article III, Section 2: the Supreme Court hears cases first only when they affect ambassadors or a state is a party.

- 8 Explain how the veto checks Congress and how the override checks the President.

Sample answer: The veto lets the President block a bill Congress passed, and because an override needs two-thirds of both chambers (not just a majority), the veto is hard to undo. The override means the President cannot block a bill that has very broad support in Congress: if two-thirds of each chamber agree, it becomes law anyway.