

# The Power of 3: Three Branches of Government

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<b>Grade Level</b>	2
<b>Duration</b>	1 class period

National Standards	AZ Standards	Arizona Social Science Standards
<b>GEOGRAPHY</b> <b>Element 4: Human Systems</b> 13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.	<b>MATHEMATICS</b> <b>Geometry</b> 2.G.A.1 Identify and describe specified attributes of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, according to the number and shape of faces, number of angles, and the number of sides and/or vertices. Draw two-dimensional shapes based on the specified attributes (e.g., triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, and hexagons). <b>Standards for Mathematical Practices</b> 2.MP.2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively 2.MP.4. Model with mathematics	<b>GEOGRAPHY</b> <b>Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.</b> 2.G4.1 Identify different physical and cultural regions in the world. <b>CIVICS</b> <b>Citizens have individual rights, roles, and responsibilities.</b> 2.C2.1 Describe roles and responsibilities of people in authority within our country and world. <b>Process, rules, and laws direct how individuals are governed and how society addresses problems.</b> 2.C4.1 Explain how people work together to identify and solve problems within our world.

## Overview

The United States formed a strong government when it became a country more than 200 years ago. The forefathers created a system of checks and balances to ensure our government would function with no one branch operating in disregard for the other two. They must work together.

## Purpose

In this lesson students will determine the strongest shape and then will build a model to symbolize and remember our strong system of government.

## Materials

- Background information and video links (see resources)
- Computer and projector
- Brads
- Cardstock
- National and Arizona Triangle pieces
- Power of Three Assessment

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Identify and build the strongest shape.
2. Name the three branches of government.
3. Identify the functions of the three branches.

## Procedures

*Prior to the lesson: Build a sample square, rectangle and triangle model for each group to explore and a large national and state government triangle as a model. Print National and Arizona triangle pieces on cardstock.*

1. In groups have the students explore the various shapes and determine which shape is the strongest. After a few minutes of exploration have groups share out their opinions and reasons. (The triangle is the strongest shape and does not collapse like 4-shaped figures. Many structures like bridges and large buildings

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use triangles because they can hold more weight and do not collapse) View Triangles are the Strongest Shape (1.13 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCI6LMWk2jk>

2. Tell the students that today they will be learning about our government and the strong structure our Founding Fathers set up so that we would be a strong country even today. Watch No More Kings video clip to lead up to a discussion on why we just don't have one person (the President) run everything. (.15 min)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oT7dMHAIcFs&feature=related>
3. Introduce the three branches of government using the terms:
  - Executive: The President carries out the laws.
  - Legislative: Congress makes the laws.
  - Judicial: The Supreme Court decides what the laws mean. Then watch the US Government Kid's Edition video to learn about the 3 branches. (3.17 min)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5EASiHAKpY>
4. After the videos and discussion on a powerful government based on three branches of government, have students cut up their National Government triangle pieces. Have them read the information found on the triangle and write or draw on the back two things that will help them remember each branch of the government. Then have the students assemble the pieces into a triangle (see examples) with the brads.
5. Show the students the State Government triangle and explain that our state government follows the same structure so that they have a strong government too.
6. Have students share out in pairs, small groups or whole class the three branches of government using their notes on the back side of their triangles.

## Assessment

### Social Science and Mathematics

Students will complete the Power of Three assessment. Mastery will be considered 80% or higher on the assessment.

## Extensions

Students can continue to research more information about the three branches of government.

Students can watch the Smart Song (Three Branches Rap found in sources).

Students can discuss three key people who help them become strong students (student-teacher-parent) and build a learning triangle.

Students can further explore the idea of triangles being a strong shape by building a toothpick or popsicle bridge using triangles.

## Sources

School House Rock: Government – No More Kings  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oT7dMHAIcFs&feature=related>

The US Government: Kids Edition Video/PPT  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5EASiHAKpY>

Three Branches Rap: Smart Songs  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCB8EOY5d48&feature=related>