

## The Three Branches of the Navajo Nation Government

The Navajo Nation is located in three different states: Arizona, New Mexico and Utah (see map). The Navajo Nation has three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The Navajo Tribal Council created these three branches.

The Navajo executive branch is similar to the national and state branches. The people of the Navajo Nation elects a President who executes or makes sure people follow the laws. There is also a Vice President to help the President and to also take over if the President can no longer serve. The President works in Window Rock, Arizona, the capital of the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo legislative branch is different from the Arizona and national legislative system. The Navajo legislative branch has only one part, and it is called the Navajo Nation Council. About 100 years ago, Navajo land was divided into different areas called Chapters. There are 110 chapters. These 110 chapters elect twenty-four people who become Council Delegates. Delegates have the power to write and pass bills that become Navajo Nation laws. Based on their traditional belief system, the Delegates need to all agree on the bill before it becomes a law. The Navajo Nation Council works in the Navajo Nation Council Chambers in Window Rock, Arizona.

The Navajo judicial branch has a Navajo Nation Supreme Court that handles appeal cases from the other courts on the Navajo Nation. It has three Supreme Court Justices or Judges. The Navajo Nation Supreme Court judges work in Window Rock, Arizona. The other courts are called District Courts of the Navajo Nation and decide many cases every year. The judicial branch has the job of making sure that all of the laws passed are lawful in respect to written law and to traditional customs for the Navajo Nation.

## The Three Branches of the Arizona State Government

The Arizona state government has three branches: the executive, the legislative, and the judicial.

The executive branch of the state of Arizona has the Governor as the leader. The Governor is elected to a four-year term and cannot serve for more than two terms of office. The Governor is in charge of the military forces of the state of Arizona, except when the military is called upon service to the United States. There is no Vice Governor. The Governor makes sure that all laws are executed or take place in Arizona. The Governor can sign into law bills that the legislature passes or can veto bills. The Governor works in the state's capital, Phoenix in the Capitol building area.

The state legislature has two houses: the Senate, and the House of Representatives in the Capitol building area. The state of Arizona is divided up into thirty districts, with one elected Senator and two elected Representatives per district. Their main job is to write, debate (talk about), and pass bills for the state of Arizona. The state Senators and Representatives also work in Phoenix, Arizona.

The judicial branch of the state of Arizona is made up of all of the different levels of courts in the state. There is an Arizona Supreme Court and there are seven Supreme Courts justices or judges. Their decisions are only about Arizona laws and their final rulings can be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court system. The Supreme Court judges work in Phoenix. Their job is to interpret laws so it is clear what is legal and not legal.

## The Three Branches of the U.S. Government

The United States of America's government has three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

The President is the head of the executive branch, and is the country's leader, which means he or she is the ultimate leader of both the states and tribes of this country. The President has the power to execute or carry out laws passed by the legislature and can send the armed forces into war against other countries. He also negotiates treaties around the world. The president is elected every four years. He lives and works in The White House in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C.

The legislative branch is called Congress. Congress is divided into two houses: the House of Representatives and the Senate. There are two Senators elected from each state, but the number of Representatives elected from each state depends on the population within the state. So, if a state has a smaller population, it will have fewer Representatives than a state with a larger population. The main duty of the Senate and House of Representatives is to write, debate (talk about), and pass bills. Both of houses of Congress work in the Capitol Building, also located in Washington, D.C.

The judicial branch has U.S. courts. The highest court is called the U.S. Supreme Court. It has nine justices or judges, who are selected by the President and remain judges until they retire or die. Once the Supreme Court decides if a law is constitutional or unconstitutional, their decision is final. No other U.S. court can overrule their decision. They also work in Washington, D.C.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Comparing Two Nations and One State Chart

	United States Government	Arizona Government	Navajo Government
Capital city			
Branches of government			
Name of leader of Executive Branch			
Who is next in line to be leader?			
Job of this branch			
Work place			
Name of Legislative Branch			
Name of houses in the Legislative Branch			
Name of the members of this branch			
Job of this branch			
Work place			
Name of the highest court of the Judicial Branch			
Number of judges			
Job of this branch			

# Comparing Two Nations and One State Chart-Answer Key

	United States Government	Arizona Government	Navajo Government
Capital city	Washington DC	Phoenix	Window Rock
Branches of government	Executive Legislative Judicial	Executive Legislative Judicial	Executive Legislative Judicial
Name of leader of Executive Branch	President	Governor	President
Who is next in line to be leader?	Vice President		Vice President
Job of this branch	Make sure the laws are followed	Make sure the laws are followed	Make sure the laws are followed
Work place	White House	Capitol	
Name of Legislative Branch	Congress	Legislature	Navajo Nation Council
Name of houses in the Legislative Branch	House of Representatives Senate	House of Representatives Senate	
Name of the members of this branch	Representatives Senators	Representatives Senators	Delegates
Job of this branch	Make laws	Make laws	Make laws
Work place	Capitol	Capitol	Navajo Nation Council Chambers
Name of the highest court of the Judicial Branch	US Supreme Court	Arizona Supreme Court	Navajo Nation Supreme Court
Number of judges	9	7	3
Job of this branch	Interpret the laws as to constitutional or not	Interpret the laws so everyone understands what is legal	Make sure that all of the laws passed are lawful in respect to written law and to traditional customs

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Self Assessment Checklist**

#### **Reading**

- I've read all 3 pages.
- I've underlined key words and phrases.
- I've used text clues to figure out the meaning of a new word.

#### **Chart**

- I have completed the chart.
- I spelled everything correctly.
- I wrote neatly.

#### **Comparing Governments**

- I've found at least 3 similarities in the 3 governments.
- I've found at least 1 difference between the 3 governments.
- My name and title is on my writing assignment.
- I colored Arizona orange, and the Navajo Nation green.
- I wrote at least 3 sentences telling how all of the 3 governments are similar.
- I wrote at least 1 sentence telling how the governments are different.
- My sentences are in (a) good paragraph(s) with an introduction and conclusion.

## Answer Key for Writing Assignment

**UNITED STATES NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ONLY:** U.S. President can send U.S. military into war against another country. President is ultimate authority over states and tribes of the U.S. President can negotiate treaties with other countries. There are nine Supreme Court justices. The Supreme Court decisions cannot be overturned by another U.S. court. Supreme Court decisions effect entire country. Each state sends two Senators to Congress in Washington, D.C. The number of State Representatives sent to Congress depends on the population of a state. All three branches of the federal government work in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. The President works in The White House. The House of Representatives and the Senate meet in the Capitol building.

**ARIZONA STATE GOVERNMENT ONLY:** The leader of the state is called Governor. The Governor is in charge of the state's military only. There are 30 districts in the state that send Senators and Representatives to work in the state's capital, Phoenix, Arizona. The House of Representatives and the Senate meet in the Capitol Building area. There are only five Supreme Court justices. The Supreme Court in Washington, D.C can overturn the decisions of the Arizona Supreme Court. Laws passed in the state effect only Arizona residents.

**NAVAJO NATION GOVERNMENT ONLY:** President executes the laws on Navajo Nation land only. There are only three Supreme Court justices. Their legislative branch has only one branch: Navajo Nation Tribal Council. Members are called Delegates. Capital is Window Rock, Arizona.

**ALL THREE GROUPS TOGETHER:** They all have three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. Each branch has overall similar functions: executive--execute the laws; legislative--write, debate, and pass bills into law; and judicial--interpret the laws. They all have capitol buildings where governmental meetings occur. They all have capitals.

**UNITED STATES AND ARIZONA GOVERNMENTS:** Both have a legislative branch with Senators and Representatives.

**UNITED STATES AND NAVAJO GOVERNMENTS:** Both have Presidents and Vice Presidents elected by the voters.

**ARIZONA AND NAVAJO GOVERNMENTS:** Both have capitals in Arizona.





