The Executive Branch: Implementation, Expertise, and Limits

First & Last Name: _____ Date: _____

CENTRAL QUESTION

How should executive leadership combine effective action with legal accountability?

Learning objective

Analyze four source sets, evaluate evidence and limitations, and defend a civic judgment through interdisciplinary inquiry.

Demonstration of learning

Complete the daily evidence tasks, earn a score on 15 multiple choice items, and write a source based RACE response using the 19 point rubric.

Standards and task alignment

NJSLS Social Studies: 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3.b; 6.3.8.CivicsPD.2. Applied in daily analysis and the final civic judgment. NJSLS ELA (2023): RI.CR.6.1 (evidence), RI.CI.6.2 (central ideas), W.AW.6.1 (argument), SL.PE.6.1 (discussion). National CCSS: RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, RH.6-8.7; WHST.6-8.1 and WHST.6-8.9. NJSLS / CCSS Math: 6.RP.A.3 (ratios and percent); 6.SP.B.5 (data summaries). Science, technology, arts, history, and civic participation are integrated through the named tasks; no additional science or arts code is claimed.

Five lesson sequence

Days 1 to 4: read, annotate, analyze, collaborate, and write. Day 5: 15 question assessment and extended RACE response. Each lesson is designed for 40 minutes; teacher notes provide timing and supports.

Academic vocabulary

executive: branch that administers and enforces laws; cabinet: senior department leadership advising the president; regulation: rule issued under legal authority; executive order: presidential directive managing executive action; appropriation: legal authorization of spending; oversight: review of official conduct

Source integrity

Readings are original Ma’at instructional syntheses. Exact historical excerpts are marked. Classroom datasets and scenarios are labeled; they are not historical records or actual government budgets. Source references appear on page 13.

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DAY 1

Source A | Enforcing law is a distinct responsibility

Do Now

Why does enforcing a law require choices without giving unlimited power?

[1] Article II establishes the presidency. The president has a four year term and responsibilities that include carrying out federal law, serving as commander in chief, and participating in appointments and treaties under constitutional procedures. Primary excerpt: the president 'shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed'. This duty does not mean the president can replace Congress whenever disagreement occurs.

[2] Executive departments and agencies administer programs and carry out responsibilities assigned by law. They rely on people with scientific, technical, financial, and administrative expertise. The cabinet advises the president, but advice does not independently authorize a new tax or appropriation. Congress enacts statutes and controls appropriations through constitutional processes.

[3] A useful distinction is between deciding what a law requires, implementing a program within that law, and evaluating whether implementation is lawful. These tasks may involve several institutions. Effective government needs coordination, but coordination is not the same as allowing one official to perform every role without limits. The president and vice president are selected through the Electoral College under constitutional and state procedures, rather than a single national direct popular vote. The vice president also presides over the Senate and may cast a deciding vote when senators are equally divided.

Annotation task: underline a central claim; box one civic term; mark one detail as evidence; add a question where evidence or authority needs clarification.

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