

1. Which of the following activities does the House Rules Committee control?
  - a. Scheduling what bills to debate and when they are debated
  - b. Selecting who will speak during floor debate
  - c. Appointing members for standing committees
  - d. Selecting the Speaker of the House
2. A power that the House of Representatives has that the Senate does NOT is the power to
  - a. try impeached government officials.
  - b. approve proposed treaties.
  - c. introduce bills about revenue.
  - d. confirm presidential appointments.
3. A power that the Senate possesses that the House of Representatives does NOT is the power to
  - a. impeach government officials.
  - b. approve proposed treaties.
  - c. declare war on another nation.
  - d. provide oversight of the executive branch.
4. How does the president exercise a pocket veto?
  - a. By accepting some lines in a bill and rejecting others
  - b. By attaching a signing statement to a bill
  - c. By failing to sign a bill when Congress has finished its term
  - d. By refusing to read the text of a proposed bill
5. Which BEST describes the relation between the president and the Congress regarding legislation?
  - a. The president generally leads Congress regarding national policy issues.
  - b. Congress drafts legislation within the limits of the president's proposed budget.
  - c. Key congressional committees report to the president about new bills.
  - d. Presidential officials serve as honorary advisers on congressional committees.
6. Executive privilege is the power of
  - a. the executive branch to carry out laws.
  - b. the president to appoint officials to federal posts.
  - c. executive officials to keep information from Congress.
  - d. the president to lead the U.S. armed forces.
7. In what way can the president act as a legislator?
  - a. By serving as head of state
  - b. By serving as commander-in-chief
  - c. By appointing diplomats
  - d. By issuing executive orders
8. The president has the authority to do all of the following EXCEPT
  - a. recognize foreign governments.
  - b. keep troops in military action for an indefinite amount of time.
  - c. negotiate treaties with other nations.
  - d. command the military to use nuclear weapons.

9. The president's official cabinet typically includes which of the following officials?
- a. National Security Council and White House Office officials
  - b. The Senate majority leader, Chief Justice, and Secretary of State
  - c. Leaders of the fifteen executive departments
  - d. Un-appointed friends and advisers to the president
10. Which of the following is the BEST description of a signing statement?
- a. A statement a president makes upon signing legislation into law
  - b. A statement of a president detailing his/her reasons for a veto
  - c. A statement a president makes expressing disappointment in a failed bill
  - d. A statement of a president's desires for new legislation

## Answers

1. The correct answer is A. The House Rules Committee decides what bills to debate and when to debate them. This power is important because it gives the House Rules Committee the power to choose to schedule debate on a bill when the bill is likely to pass (or when the bill is likely not to pass, if the House Rules Committee chooses). Because the Speaker of the House appoints members to the House Rules Committee, the Committee is inclined to act in accordance with the Speaker's wishes. The House Rules Committee does not make appointments to standing committees. Nor does the House Rules Committee select the Speaker of the House (the Speaker is elected by the House of Representatives) or select who will speak during floor debate (a power that falls to the Speaker of the House).
2. The correct answer is C. The House of Representatives has the power to introduce bills that are about revenue (such as tax bills). This is the only option that correctly identifies a power the House of Representatives has that the Senate does not. The House of Representatives has the power to impeach, but it does not have the power to try officials who have been impeached (that power belongs to the Senate). So, option A can be eliminated. The Senate, not the House of Representatives, approves treaties and confirms (or chooses not to confirm) presidential appointments; so option D can be eliminated.
3. The correct answer is B. The Senate, not the House of Representatives, has the power to approve proposed treaties. The Senate tries government officials who have been impeached, but it does not itself impeach government officials (that is a power the House of Representatives has). This eliminates option A. Options C and D each describes a power the Senate has, but a power it shares with the House of Representatives (as opposed to a power the Senate alone has). Congress as a whole provides oversight over the executive branch and has the power to declare war. Because these are shared responsibilities, options C and D can be eliminated.
4. The correct answer is C. In order for a bill to become law, the president must either sign the bill or fail to sign the bill while Congress is in session; if ten days pass without the president signing the bill and Congress remains in session during this time, the bill becomes law. However, if the president fails to sign the bill and Congress has finished its term, then the bill fails to become law. (If Congress wishes the bill to become law, it must start the legislative process again when Congress returns.) Option A is known as the line-item veto, not a pocket veto. A pocket veto does not concern signing statements or refusing to read the text of a proposed bill; therefore, options B and D can be rejected.

5. The correct answer is A. The president generally takes a leadership role over Congress in regard to national policy issues. In part this is because the powers and interests of Congress are somewhat decentralized: congresspersons serve constituents and might focus more on local interests rather than national interests. In addition, the committee system in Congress serves to help decentralize power (individual committees exercise considerable power over whether new bills even have the chance to become law). This places the president in a better position to focus on national policy. This does not mean that Congress always follows the wishes of the president on national policy; however, when the majority party is of the same party as the president, its agenda often broadly follows the policy of the president. All other options are false.

6. The correct answer is C. Executive privilege is the power of officials in the executive branch to keep information from Congress, even when appearing in official congressional hearings. It is also the power of such officials to refrain from appearing before congressional hearings in the first place. This power is not expressly given by the Constitution. Rather, it is thought to be an inherent power of the executive branch, and its limits and nature have been controversial. Options A, B, and D each describe powers of the executive branch (or of the president in particular), but do not describe executive privilege.

7. The correct answer is D. The president can issue executive orders about various matters. Often executive orders are regulations regarding carrying out law or abiding by the Constitution. Executive orders have the authority of law, although they are not passed by Congress, the legislative branch. For example, the Peace Corps was created through an executive order. The president does serve as head of state, representing the nation as a whole; the president does not act as a legislator in this role. So option A can be eliminated. Similarly, the president also appoints diplomats and serves as commander-in-chief, but neither of these functions is specifically legislative (the former regards foreign relations, the latter military operations).

8. The correct answer is B. The president's ability to commit troops to action is limited by the War Powers Act, which requires Congress to approve the continued use of such troops after sixty days (that is, the president can keep troops in action for only 60 days before requiring the approval of Congress). Each other option enumerates a power the president possesses. Because the president has the power to recognize foreign governments as legitimate and negotiate treaties with other nations (though these treaties must be ratified by Congress), the president has authority over the nation's foreign policy.

9. The correct answer is C. The cabinet consists of government officials who are charged with leading the fifteen executive departments (such as the Department of Commerce, Department of Education, and Department of Defense). Sometimes a president will have an unofficial "kitchen cabinet" consisting of trusted advisers. The formal Cabinet no longer meets regularly with the president to provide advice on major policy issues facing the president, as its present size makes this impractical. Cabinet members are appointed by the president and then confirmed (or not) by the Senate. Although option B correctly suggests that the Secretary of State and the Secretary of

Defense are Cabinet members, the Senate majority leader is not officially a Cabinet member; so this option can be rejected.

10. The correct answer is A. Signing statements are statements presidents make when signing new legislation into law. Sometimes they are statements of how the president intends to carry out the law, directing executive agencies to specific ends. However, more recently, as with President George W. Bush, signing statements have more often been used to indicate that a president believes that the legislation (or aspects of the legislation) runs counter to national security or violates the Constitution. Because the Constitution directs the president to “faithfully execute” law, signing statements have been controversial. Only option A correctly describes signing statements.