

Name _____

Date _____

The Judicial Branch - Answer Key

Use the text to answer each question below.

1. ****Excerpt from the Constitution: Article III, Section 1**** The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

How long do federal judges appointed under Article III, Section 1 serve?

A. For 10 years



B.

Until they resign or are removed from office

According to the text, "The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour," indicating that as long as they uphold their responsibilities, they can serve for life or until they resign.

C. Until the end of a presidential term

D. For 35 years

2. **Excerpt from Alexander Hamilton’s “Federalist No. 78”** If it be said that the legislative body are themselves the constitutional judges of their own powers, and that the construction they put upon them is conclusive upon the other departments, it may be answered, that this cannot be the natural presumption, where it is not to be collected from any particular provisions in the Constitution. It is not otherwise to be supposed, that the Constitution could intend to enable the representatives of the people to substitute their WILL to that of their constituents. It is far more rational to suppose, that the courts were designed to be an intermediate body between the people and the legislature, in order, among other things, to keep the latter within the limits assigned to their authority. The interpretation of the laws is the proper and peculiar province of the courts. A constitution is, in fact, and must be regarded by the judges, as a fundamental law. It therefore belongs to them to ascertain its meaning, as well as the meaning of any particular act proceeding from the legislative body. If there should happen to be an irreconcilable variance between the two, that which has the superior obligation and validity ought, of course, to be preferred; or, in other words, the Constitution ought to be preferred to the statute, the intention of the people to the intention of their agents. Nor does this conclusion by any means suppose a superiority of the judicial to the legislative power. It only supposes that the power of the people is superior to both; and that where the will of the legislature, declared in its statutes, stands in opposition to that of the people, declared in the Constitution, the judges ought to be governed by the latter rather than the former. They ought to regulate their decisions by the fundamental laws, rather than by those which are not fundamental.

This excerpt describes the foundation of { }.

- A. appointing Supreme Court justices
- C. presidential elections

B. jury selection



D.

judicial review

According to the excerpt, “A constitution is, in fact, and must be regarded by the judges, as a fundamental law” and “The interpretation of the law is the proper and peculiar province of the courts.”

3. ****Marbury v. Madison 1803**** Read the following excerpt by Chief Justice John Marshall about the Supreme Court case ***Marbury v. Madison***. It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is. Those who apply the rule to particular cases, must of necessity expound and interpret that rule. If two laws conflict with each other, the courts must decide on the operation of each. So if a law be in opposition to the constitution; if both the law and the constitution apply to a particular case, so that the court must either decide that case conformably to the law, disregarding the constitution; or conformably to the constitution, disregarding the law; the court must determine which of these conflicting rules governs the case. This is of the very essence of judicial duty. If, then, the courts are to regard the constitution, and the constitution is superior to any ordinary act of the legislature, the constitution, and not such ordinary act, must govern the case to which they both apply. ... It is also not entirely unworthy of observation that in declaring what shall be the supreme law of the land, the constitution itself is first mentioned; and not the laws of the United States generally, but those only which shall be made in pursuance of the constitution, have that rank. Thus, the particular phraseology of the constitution of the United States confirms and strengthens the principle, supposed to be essential to all written constitutions, that a law repugnant to the constitution is void; and that courts, as well as other departments, are bound by that instrument.

With which of the following statements would Chief Justice John Marshall most likely have disagreed?

- A. Laws that do not align with the Constitution should not be written.
- B. It's important for judges to make decisions that align with the Constitution.
- C. The Constitution should only be used as a supplemental resource when making case decisions.
- D. The Supreme Court should have the power to rule laws unconstitutional.



According to the excerpt, “a law repugnant to the constitution is void; and that courts, as well as other departments, are bound by that instrument” and “the constitution is superior to any ordinary act of the legislature.” Chief Justice John Marshall emphasizes the importance of the Constitution in decision making.