Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

The Highest Court in the Land

The United States Constitution divides the American government into three branches, or parts. The legislative branch writes the country's laws. The executive branch, led by the president, carries out the laws.

The third branch settles disagreements about laws. That branch is called the judiciary. The judicial branch includes many courts. The U.S. Supreme Court is the most powerful of these courts. (Supreme means "the top.")

The Supreme Court is made up of nine judges. The chief justice is the head judge. The eight other judges are called associate justices. The Supreme Court meets in Washington, D.C. It can decide if a law Congress passed is allowed by the Constitution. The court also may decide if something the president did is allowed according to the Constitution.

Cases come to the Supreme Court only after they have been heard in other U.S. courtrooms. People who disagree with any court decision may ask, or appeal to, a "higher" court. A court is considered higher if it can change the decision that another court made.

The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. It is the last place an appeal can be heard. And after the Supreme Court decides a case, all other American courts must follow the rules it sets. In these ways, the Supreme Court really is supreme!

Complete the assignment

1. What is the U.S. Supreme Court?

2. The article starts by describing the three branches of the American government. Which branch is the U.S. Supreme Court part of?

3. The Supreme Court can decide if a law Congress passed is allowed by the Constitution. The court also may decide if something the president did is allowed according to the Constitution.

4. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. Based on this text, what is the highest LAW in the land?

liveworksheets.com

5. What is the main idea of this text?

6. Read these sentences from the text.

   "The judicial branch includes many courts. The U.S. Supreme Court is the most powerful of these courts. (Supreme means 'the top.')"
   Why might the author have included the definition of "supreme?"

7. Choose the answer that best completes this sentence.
   The Supreme Court can change other courts' decisions, _____ other courts cannot change the Supreme Court's decisions.

8. When do cases come to the Supreme Court?

9. What happens after the Supreme Court makes a decision on a case?

10. What makes the Supreme Court more powerful than other U.S. courts? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

liveworksheets.com