

JUDICIAL BRANCH



Orestes Before the Areopagites (play written and performed in 458 BC) - A scene from Aeschylus' *Eumenides* documenting an event which created the institution of the jury and abolished the requirement of blood revenge.



The Establishment of the Tribune of the People (c. 442 BC) - An attempt by patrician judge, Appius Claudius, to use his tribunal power for personal gain caused the plebeians to revolt and ultimately win the right to a place on the tribunal.

These two relief carvings on the outside of the Nebraska State Capitol represent the foundations of our judicial system in events that occurred in past civilizations. Modern governments and citizens can learn from how people lived and governed themselves in the past.

1. How do the activities in these two drawings remind you of a scene from a modern courtroom? It appears like there is an attorney pleading for a client in front of a jury.
2. Why is it better for a government to hold trials to determine guilt or innocence than for citizens to respond to crimes themselves? A victim may want to take revenge before all the facts of the case are known. Trials decide guilt beyond a reasonable doubt and follow special rules of order.
3. Why is it important for members of a jury to be fair and unprejudiced before they begin a trial? So that people can get a fair trial.
4. Who can be members of a jury? How are they selected? Citizens are chosen from voter registration and motor vehicles registration records to form a jury pool. The attorneys from each side interview the jurors and choose 12 plus alternates to be on the jury.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH



Solon Giving A New Constitution to Athens (c. 570 BC) - Solon was of all men not implicated in the troubles of Athens, he was empowered to be an arbitrator and lawgiver; the rich consenting because he was wealthy, the poor because he was honest.



The Magna Carta (1210)- The Magna Carta is cited as the basis for Anglo-Saxon law, limiting the powers of the King and granting liberties to free men.

These two relief carvings on the outside of the Nebraska State Capitol represent the foundations of the executive branch in events that occurred in past civilizations. Modern governments and citizens can learn from how people lived and governed themselves in the past.

1. In these two drawings what are these people doing?

The leaders and the citizens are discussing and trying to make a binding legal document through which a government can function.

2. In a democracy, who determines who will be the president or governor? Citizens who vote. Why is it important for all people in a democracy to vote in the election? So that all people and all views can be represented, not just a particular group.

3. In a democracy, do citizens have a right to require their leaders act according to their wishes? How can we be sure they do?

Citizens can be sure that their leaders vote according to their wishes by communicating with their elected leaders, watching how they vote and not voting for them again if they do not vote as they wish.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH



The Publishing of the Twelve Tablets in Rome (c. 450 BC) - In the third century of Rome, the polity had changed, and when it appeared the Laws had been sufficiently amended, in light of opinions expressed, the Laws were adopted, and formed the basis of all public and private law.



The Signing of the Pilgrim Compact on the Mayflower (1620) - Before setting foot in a new land, the Pilgrims agree to establish a civic body politic to better order and preserve the good of the colony.

These two relief carvings on the outside of the Nebraska State Capitol represent the foundations of the legislative branch in events that occurred in past civilizations. Modern governments and citizens can learn from how people lived and governed themselves in the past.

- 1. What is happening in these two drawings?** Laws are being created and made available for the citizens to use as they govern themselves and live together.
- 2. Why is it important to have laws to govern how people live together?** Laws organize all interactions in the public arena so that everyone is treated fairly and the public does not get hurt by the actions of some.
- 3. How do citizens participate in making laws?** Write to elected leaders, testify at public meetings and hearings, discuss laws with others and encourage them to become involved.
- 4. How does a person become a lawmaker?** File and run for office.

CONSTITUTIONS



The Codification of Roman Law Under Justinian (c. 560) - Justinian's codification of all of Roman law is significant in its preservation of the idea that a law is regarded as an obligation assumed voluntarily by the people.



The Codification of Anglo-Saxon Law under Ethelbert (c. 600) - Following the example of Justinian, King Ethelbert organized existing customs and practices into the first code of law written in English.

MEN SHOULD NOT THINK IT SLAVERY TO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE RULE OF THE CONSTITUTION FOR IT IS THEIR SALVATION — Aristotle

LAWS AND CONSTITUTIONS SPRING FROM THE MORAL DISPOSITIONS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STATE — Plato

Both quotes from Rotunda Frieze

THE BASIS OF OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM IS THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO MAKE AND ALTER THEIR CONSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT : BUT THE CONSTITUTION WHICH AT ANY TIME EXISTS, TILL CHANGED BY AN EXPLICIT AND AUTHENTIC ACT OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE, IS SACREDLY OBLIGATORY UPON ALL: THE VERY IDEA OF THE POWER AND THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO ESTABLISH GOVERNMENT PRESUPPOSES THE DUTY OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL TO OBEY THE ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENT From Washington's Farewell Address *West Senator's*

1. What is the purpose of a constitution? Constitutions govern how the citizens and their leaders interact. Constitutions set limits on what government can do and indicate what the citizens want their governments to do for them.

2. Is it possible for citizens to make changes in the constitution?

How can Nebraskans change their constitution? Yes, citizens can amend their constitutions. At a national level citizens are asked to approve amendments created by their representatives. In Nebraska citizens have the right to petition and amend the constitution through an act of the citizens without their representatives.

Match the branch of government with the historic event on the exterior of the Capitol. Draw a line from the branch to the event



The Kansas-Nebraska Bill (1854) - The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 established the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and opened this part of the Louisiana Purchase to settlement and ten years later the Transcontinental railroad was begun.



The Judgement of Solomon (c. 970 BC) - Solomon resolved to settle the dispute by cutting the baby in half, knowing the true mother would give up the baby to save it, and Israel saw the wisdom of God was in him to do judgement.



Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation - January 1, 1863
Lincoln proclaims all persons held as slaves in the rebelling states shall be free.

JUDICIAL

EXECUTIVE

LEGISLATIVE

CITIZEN'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



These two paintings in the Governor's Reception Room of the Nebraska State Capitol represent the rights and responsibilities of the citizens in a democracy. Representative democracy relies on the involvement of citizens in the government. Study the actions of the people in the paintings closely.

1. What freedoms guaranteed by the first amendment are the citizens in the image on the left exercising? Freedom of speech and assembly.
2. What civic responsibility are the citizens on the right exercising? Rights of suffrage, right to vote in a free election.
3. How can citizens use the activities pictured above to involve themselves in the promotion of laws? Citizens can vote for their leaders, they can speak out about proposed laws, they can assemble and speak to their elected leaders.