

Name _____

The Puzzle of Power: Why We Separate It

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. In this scenario, the other two branches can step in to address the situation. The Legislative Branch can pass laws to limit the powers of the branch that has become too powerful. The Judicial Branch can review and potentially declare any actions or laws of the overpowered branch as unconstitutional, ensuring they align with the principles of the Constitution.
2. Yes, the concept of checks and balances and the separation of powers are essential in a democracy. They help ensure that no single branch of government becomes too powerful and that the rights and freedoms of citizens are protected. This system also promotes accountability and transparency in government.
3. One historical event where the separation of powers and checks and balances played a crucial role is the Watergate scandal in the 1970s. The Executive Branch, under President Richard Nixon, was involved in illegal activities. The Legislative Branch, through investigations and the impeachment process, held the Executive Branch accountable. The Judicial Branch also played a role in determining the legality of certain actions.
4. The efficiency of government operations benefits citizens by ensuring that tasks are carried out promptly and effectively. For example, timely responses to national emergencies, such as natural disasters or public health crises, can save lives and resources. Additionally, efficient government operations can lead to cost savings, which can benefit citizens through lower taxes or improved public services.

