

Meets all of NYS SS Framework 4.4b

The State Constitution & The Three Branches of New York State's Government

The Government of New York State: The State Constitution

A Plan for Government

The U.S. Constitution is the plan for our National, or Federal, government. It explains how our government is set up, how laws are made and more. Some responsibilities of governing belong to the Federal government, while others belong to the state governments.

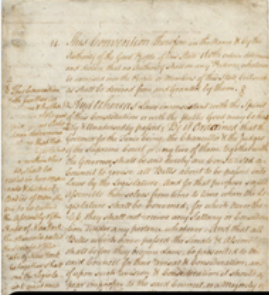
New York State has a state constitution that is the plan for the state level of government. The New York State (NYS) Constitution was adopted in 1777. Part of our constitution allows for it to be changed or rewritten. New York State has had three constitutions. The one in place now was adopted in 1894.

The NYS constitution establishes three branches of government, just like the Federal government. They are the:

- Executive Branch - enforces laws
- Legislative Branch - makes laws
- Judicial Branch - makes sure state laws are in agreement with the state constitution.

It also explains about taxes, voting, housing, education, the

1777 NYS Constitution Draft Cover Page



Informational Text

Why do you think Albany was picked to be the capital?

The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Collection, The New York Public Library
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150 members who are elected by the people of their Assembly District. They also serve a two year term.

The Executive Branch

The executive branch carries out the laws created by the legislative branch. The head of the executive branch in New York is called the governor.

The governor is elected by the people of New York State to serve for four years. The governor signs or vetoes bills that are sent by the legislature. The governor also appoints people to lead many departments in the state government, prepares a budget to plan for spending the state's money collected from the tax payers and can pardon criminals.

The executive branch includes the Lieutenant Governor, the Attorney General and the State Comptroller, as well as the police.

The Judicial Branch

The judicial branch makes sure that all the laws created by the legislature are in line with New York State's Constitution. It also interprets, or explains, the laws. The judicial branch decides when someone has broken the law and assigns consequences. This branch is made up of a court system. The highest court in New York State is the Court of Appeals. Judges are the leaders of this branch.



The Government of New York State: Three Branches



The Legislative Branch



The Executive Branch



The Judicial Branch



Note Catchers

New York State's Government		
Executive	Legislative	Judicial
Title of Leader	Name of Houses	Highest Court
		The names of two judges
		Responsibilities

From Idea to Law

The Government of New York State: From an Idea to a Law

How the Laws are Made

All laws start as an idea. The ideas for laws come from people. Sometimes a person sees a need in his community and asks his representative for help. Other times a group might have an issue they care very much about, and they bring their idea to a representative. Or the idea might come from a Senator or Assemblymen. She listens to the people she represents and tries to help.

The idea then must be written into a bill. The bill uses legal language to explain exactly what the law is about. Once the bill is written it is introduced in either the Senate or the Assembly. It is given a number and then sent to a committee works on the topic the bill is about.

Once the committee has the bill written just the way they want, the bill goes to the Senate and the Assembly to be voted on. If a majority vote yes (half the members plus 1), the bill goes to the governor to be signed. The governor can sign it, and then it is a law. Or the governor can veto the bill, then it is not a law. The bill is then sent back to committee to be reworked, then it must start over again. Or the legislators can decide to try to override the veto. They must vote to do this. If two-thirds of each chamber vote to override, the bill will become law. This is one way legislative and

From Idea to Law

Student Text & Note Catcher

From Idea to Law

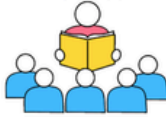
A citizen has an idea that will make the state a better place.



The idea is taken by a representative and written into a bill.



The bill is read to the Senate or Assembly to introduce it.



The bill goes to committee to be researched and worked on.



The bill goes to the Assembly to be voted on.



If the bill is passed in the Assembly it goes to the Senate to be voted on.



The bill goes to the governor to be signed.



Sequencing Cards

The Government of New York State: The Great Seal & the Flag



What is a Great Seal?

The great seal is a symbol of our state. It was created in 1777, to replace the seal of the Crown. It is used on official documents and papers to prove that they are authentic (real). The Great Seal has many symbols that show our states history and ideals. The symbol in the middle of the seal is called a coat of arms. It is also on the state flag.

Directions: Record your observations (just what you see) of the Great Seal in the chart below. Then record your inferences - what do you think the items you



The Government of New York State: The Great Seal



The Great Seal

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