

The Executive Branch

TOPIC SUMMARY

The president serves as the head of the executive branch of government. He or she is charged with executing the laws passed by Congress. The president and vice president are elected every four years through an indirect method called the Electoral College. The Twenty-fifth Amendment outlines which government officials will be called upon to take over presidential duties in those situations in which the president or vice president is unable to carry them out. Presidential powers, which include the power to approve or veto bills passed by Congress, are defined in Article II of the Constitution. The president heads 15 cabinet departments that carry out many government programs. The president is also the country's chief diplomat and directs U.S. foreign policy. The Executive Office of the President (EOP), which is the president's administration, helps the president manage the thousands of employees who work in many agencies of the executive branch.

FOLDABLES™
Study Organizer

Organizing Information Study Foldable *This Foldable will help students organize information about the U.S. president and the executive branch of government.*

Step 1 *Fold a sheet of paper in half from top to bottom with edges evenly together.*



Step 2 *Then fold the paper in half from side to side.*



Step 3 *Label the Foldable as shown.*



Reading and Writing
Record the different roles the president plays in government as he or she fulfills the requirements of this office.

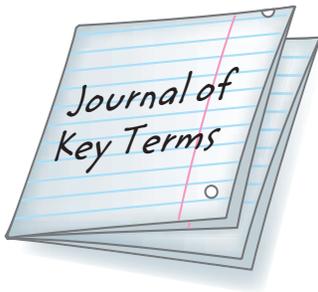
TOPIC ACTIVITY IDEAS

Organizing

Have students create the Study Foldable shown above. Have them cut along the top of the first fold to the center. Then have them label the pages of the book *Chief Executive*, *Chief Diplomat*, *Commander in Chief*, and *Legislative Leader*. Under each title students will record facts about each role. Then assign student groups one of the roles. Have each group think of a symbol that will represent its assigned role and draw this symbol on the board. Then have each group stand beneath the symbol and explain the work that the president performs in this particular role.

IDENTIFYING

Have students create an Organizing Information Study Foldable that analyzes the way in which foreign policy is created. Tell students to list in the Foldable booklet the government agencies and officials who work with the president to make decisions about, and carry out, relations with other countries. Students should also note in their lists the types of agreements that are made in foreign policy. Direct students to find a recent magazine or newspaper article about United States involvement in an international event. Students should note any of the individuals or agencies named in the list who are also mentioned in the article.



EXPLAINING

Have students use the Organizing Information Study Foldable to create a journal of key terms related to the president and the executive branch. Students should read the textbook and list in the Foldable important terms and definitions, such as *elector* or *treaty*. Students should also use each term in a sentence. For a review of key terms, have students read their definitions aloud and ask volunteers to identify the corresponding term.

Student Study Tip

Encourage students to analyze complicated charts by examining the way in which the information in the chart is presented. For example, some charts include information that is numbered and presented in sequential order. Others organize information according to related subjects. Remind students to examine the structure of the graphic organizer before they interpret the information.