

SS.7.C.1.7

Describe how the Constitution limits the powers of government through separation of powers and checks and balances.

#1 Goal - don't feed the dinosaur! (a.k.a. prevent tyranny)

How the Constitution keeps government power under control:

Federalism

many powers are "reserved" for the states only

Separation of Powers

government power is split three ways (thank you, Mr. Montesquieu!)

Legislative branch - makes laws

Executive Branch - carries out (executes) the laws

Judicial Branch - interprets laws

Checks & Balances

each branch has the ability to pull back against the other two

a never-ending three-way tug of war

to keep any branch from getting too far off course