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Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

What Is Congress?

Directions: Read the information below and answer the questions that follow.

The Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of the U.S. government is called Congress. It has two houses—the House of Representatives and the Senate. The primary job of Congress is to make the country’s laws. Congress writes, discusses, and votes on bills. To become a law, a bill must receive a majority vote from both houses, as well as a signature of approval by the President. If the President decides not to sign a bill—or to *veto* it—Congress may override the veto by a two-thirds vote in both the House and Senate.

House of Representatives	Senate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the House of Representatives are called Representatives or Congressmen and Congresswomen. • Representatives are elected to two-year terms. • The number of Representatives from each state is based on the population of that state. Currently, there are 435 U.S. Representatives. • A Representative represents the people of a district in a state. • To run for a seat in the House of Representatives, candidates must be at least 25 years old, have been a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and live in the state in which they are running. • The House can impeach or accuse U.S. officials of misdemeanor crimes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the Senate are called Senators. • Senators are elected to six-year terms. • Every state has two Senators. Currently, there are 100 U.S. Senators. • A Senator represents the people of an entire state. • To run for a seat in the Senate, candidates must be 30 years old, have been a U.S. citizen for at least 9 years, and live in the state in which they are running. • The Senate approves presidential appointments and treaties. • The Senate puts U.S. officials on trial who have been impeached by the House of Representatives.

1. What parts make up the legislative branch? _____
2. Which house of Congress has 435 members? _____
3. How many years older do you have to be to run for the Senate than for the House of Representatives?

4. Which house of Congress has the power to impeach a U.S. President? _____

5. What is the primary job of Congress? _____
