

Lesson 1 - Learning Intentions (Pupils should be able to): Describe the powers of the US President.

- Explain the ways in which the **powers of the US President are limited** by both Congress and the Supreme Court.

The Powers of the President

According to the Constitution the US President is elected every four years. Presidents can **only** serve a maximum of two terms. Obama was in his second term as President in 2016. He could not stand again.

Article 11 of the US Constitution lists the powers of the US President. It states those powers the President can use without the approval of Congress and those where they must seek approval by Congress.

1. Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. Presidents have the responsibility for defending the USA (response to 'Twin Towers') including ordering troops overseas. *However, only Congress can declare war e.g. in Iraq or Afghanistan. Treaties must also be approved by the Senate.*

2. Power of appointment. The President appoints thousands of people to help run the country. These include members of the US Cabinet (e.g. Joe Biden has appointed Antony Blinken as Sec. of State, etc.). *However, nominations for overseas ambassadors and Supreme Court judges (Amy Coney Barrett) must have the approval of the Senate.*

3. Legislative powers

Every January the President speaks to Congress in the State of the Union Address. As well as reviewing the previous year, the President **outlines spending plans** and any **proposals for legislation**. *Note: Presidents cannot introduce legislation, only members of Congress have this right. Congress also controls the budget.*

4. Executive Orders (EOs). The President can bypass Congress on some occasions by issuing Executive Orders. Eos allow the President to make laws without Congressional approval.

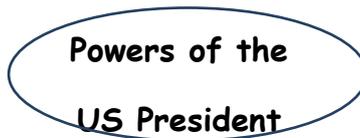
Note: *Congress can remove a President if they suspect any wrongdoing. Donald Trump was impeached twice !.*



Watch the following Youtube clip: [Powers of the US President](#) (Start 2.30 mins).

Heading: **The Powers of the President**

1. What is the maximum number of years someone can be the president in the USA?
2. Complete a spider diagram to show the **four** powers of the US President.



3. Match the different statements below. Copy into your jotter.

Presidential Powers	Limits to Presidential Power
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The President can bypass Congress with an Executive Order. • A President can suggest new laws. • The President appoints thousands of people to help them run the country. • The President can order troops overseas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only Congress can declare war. • Appointments by the President must be approved by Congress • The President can be removed by Congress if they are found to have done something wrong. • Congress decides which laws are passed in the USA.

4. Study the views below then answer the question which follows.

Presidents Are Too Powerful	Presidential Power Limited
<p>Presidents of the United States have too much power. They can issue Executive Orders or veto Bills passed by Congress. Presidential power should be limited.</p> <p>Ben Somerville</p>	<p>Congress has too much power. Congress can over-ride a presidential veto and block presidential appointments. The power of Congress should be limited.</p> <p>Kaysae Butler</p>

Ben and Kaysae have different views about presidential power. What are these differences? Make two points in your answer.

Extension - If you were President of the US which new laws would you suggest? Give **three** examples.

Further learning - Other Powers of the President

- **Power of veto.** Before legislation becomes law, Bills must be signed by the President. If, however, the President disagrees with a new law he can refuse to sign e.g. Trump vetoed a 10 Bills in 4 years . *Note: **Congress has power to override the Presidential veto** if a Bill is passed by two-thirds of the representatives of both Houses.*
- **Power of Pardon** The US President can pardon or excuse a person of wrongdoing after they have been convicted of a crime. The types of pardon a President may give are:



Full pardon - Release without punishment.

Partial pardon - Reduction in a punishment.

Quash fines - Let people off with paying their fine.

1. What is a presidential veto?

2. You are the President of the USA. Study the Factfile below then decide whether or not to pardon (or partial pardon) Joe Bloggs. Give **two** reasons for your decision.

Factfile: Frankie Bunt (50 years old)

- Admitted crime on arrest and is genuinely sorry for what he has done.
- Responsible for the deaths of two people through drink driving.
- Sentenced to 12 years in prison although not first time caught drunk driving. Previous offence when 17 years of age.
- Has a family and has worked all his life. Does a lot of charity work with older people in the community. Just over the drink driving limit.

Decide whether Joe should receive a pardon or partial pardon for his crime. Give **two** reasons for your decision.

Lesson 2 - Learning Intentions (Pupils should be able to):

- Better find and record information from the internet.

US Representation - The White House, the Senate and the House of Representatives

Activity 1: Go to 'The White House' website (Google: 'White House')

Click on Administration a) Who is the vice president? Write down **two** facts about the vice president.

b) What is the first name of Joe Biden's wife? Write down **two** facts about the First Lady.

c) Name **two** members of Biden's Cabinet (people who help him run the country) **and** say which government department they head. (If stuck Google 'US Cabinet')

d) Click on 'search'. What is i) Air Force One and ii) Camp David?

Activity 2: Go to the US Senate (Google: 'US Senate')

a) Name the **two** senators from Florida.

b) Name **two** committees of the US Senate.

c) How many women are US senators today? Name **two**.

d) Do women have equal representation in the US Senate? Explain .

Activity 3: Go to the 'House of Representatives' (Google: 'House of Representatives')

a) For how long are congressmen and women elected?

b) Click on California on the map. How many congressmen and women are there from California?

c) Who is the Speaker of the House and which political party do they represent?

Extension 1: US Supreme Court (Google: US Supreme Court)

1. How many Supreme Court judges are there in the US?

2. Name **two** US Supreme Court judges.

Extension 2: US Governors (Google: US Governors)

1. Name **two** states with women governors. Is there male/female equality

Lessons 3 - Learning Intentions (Pupils should be able to):

- Give reasons why some Americans have become wealthy.
- To describe the lifestyles of the richest people in the US.



Wealth in the USA

The American dream is the idea that if people get a good education and work hard they can become successful in life. For some Americans the dream has become a reality.

Bill Gates

Bill Gates is one of the world's wealthiest individuals. He was born in Seattle in 1955 and became interested in computing at age 13 before going to Harvard University. In 1975, he left Harvard to found Microsoft with his long-time friend Paul Allen. Very quickly, the company grew to become the makers of the world's leading computer operating system - Windows. In 2020, his personal fortune was estimated at over \$131bn.



Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey is one of the highest paid TV producers and chat show hosts in the world. In 2016, her personal fortune was estimated at around \$3bn. Born in Mississippi in 1954 to a poor family she was raised by her mother in Milwaukee. When still at school she became involved in local radio in Tennessee where she had moved to live. Very soon, her radio success landed her a full-time job as she switched from radio to TV. Within a few years, she had launched her own TV company and her show came to dominate the US chat show schedules.



The Walton Family

The Walton's are an American family who are among the richest families in the world. The majority of their wealth comes from founding the retail chain Walmart. Today, Jim, Rob and Alice Walton are each worth more than \$35bn each. In the UK, Asda is part of the Walmart group.



Mark Zuckerberg (Pictured top of page)

Founded social media website Facebook when at Harvard University. Estimated worth around \$55 billion. Aged 36 and seventh richest person in world in 2020.

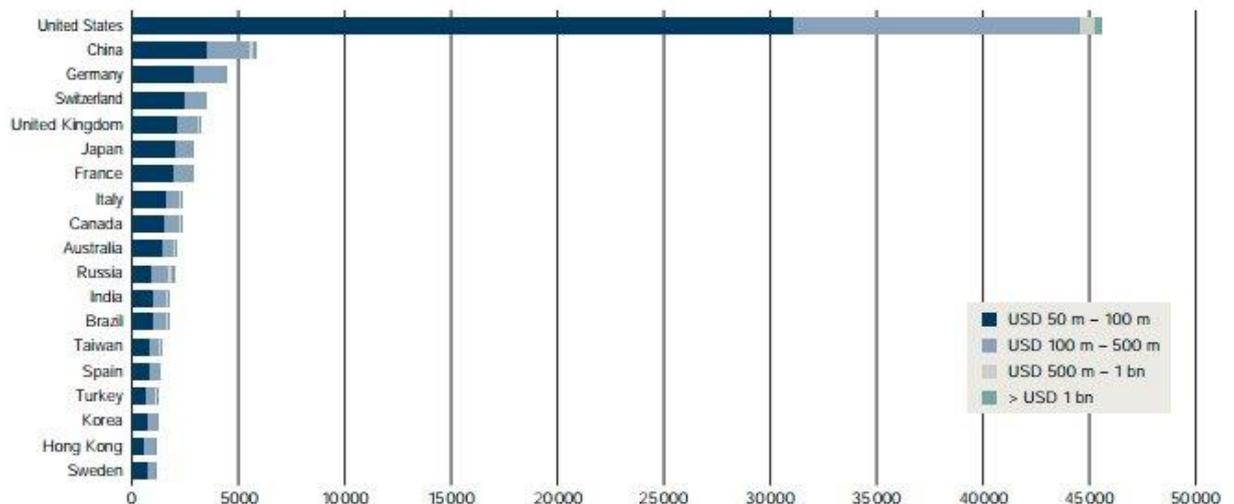
The lifestyles of America's rich

The United States is home to far more very rich people than anywhere else in the world. The graph below shows that in 2013 the US had more than 45,000 people with \$50m or more. It also shows that there were over 500 billionaires.

Figure 5

Ultra high net worth individuals 2013: selected countries

Source: James Davies, Rodrigo Lluberas and Anthony Sherrocks, Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databook 2013



Being rich or very rich in the US allows a very small number of people to experience the highest standard of living. A huge personal fortune can allow individuals to own fantastic homes, have the choice of almost any personal goods from cars to jewellery or from art works to yachts. It also allows for the best healthcare and education that money can buy.

The Giving Pledge

In 2010, Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffet got together and made a commitment to give away at least half their personal wealth to philanthropic (or good human) causes. This became known as the "Giving Pledge". Since 2010, all three have campaigned to encourage other billionaires to do the same either in their lifetime or within their wills. By

2016, more than 130 couples in 14 different countries have agreed to follow their example. [See Wikipedia link.](#)

Heading: **Wealth in the USA**

1. Copy and complete the table on the next page into your jotter.

Name	Estimated wealth	Reason why became wealthy	One interesting fact about wealthy individual

Can you think of any other wealthy Americans? Who are they and how have they achieved their wealth? (Clue: sport, TV/film industry, business and politics.)

2. Study the table What evidence is there that the USA is a country with many rich people? Make **two** points.

3. Describe the lifestyles of the wealthiest people in the US. Make at least **four** points in your answer. Things to think about: homes, personal possessions, travel, education and healthcare.

4. What is the "Giving Pledge"?

5. Name **four** people who have signed up to the Giving Pledge.

6. If you were a billionaire in the US, would you sign up for the Giving Pledge? Give a reason for your answer.