

## Student Handout 4: Fishbowl Discussion Questions

1. Which branch is most bound to the will of the people? Which branch is least bound to the will of the people? Explain your answers. Why do you think the Framers made it this way? How does the constitution balance the principles of popular sovereignty and rule of law?
2. How does government under the Constitution work to protect “We the People” from tyranny?
3. What is limited government? How does the system of separation of powers ensure the principle of limited government? Discuss some specific examples.
4. The Preamble sets forth the purposes of the Constitution (more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity). How do the branches do this?
5. Wherever there is a “check,” there is not a separation of power. What does this mean? Are both separation of powers and checks and balances needed to ensure our constitutional principles of rule of law, limited government, or equality? Why or why not?
6. How did the Framers try to ensure that “We the People” would be the ultimate source of all power and authority in the United States?
7. Which branch is the most powerful? Why? Which branch is the least powerful? Why?
8. Which positions/offices are the most powerful in our government? Is the most powerful officeholder part of the most powerful branch? Why or why not might this be the case?
9. Which branch of government do you think people most respect? Why? Which branch of government do you think people least respect? Why?