

Power Play

a game guide for teachers

In *Power Play*, you'll coach a team of players competing to win power for state or federal government. Teammates will offer arguments that, if persuasive, will pull power statues toward the side you've chosen. But use your players wisely — the wrong argument will make a player fall or even move the power toward the other side!



Learning Objectives

- Distinguish between arguments that states or the federal government should have more power
- For specific government powers, identify arguments about where each power should lie (with the states or the federal government)
- Dismiss irrelevant arguments

Prerequisites

None. Students will learn just by playing the game successfully, but they will get more out of the game if they already know a little about the division of state and federal powers. The last page of this guide has pre and post game questions you can discuss with your class. We also suggest teaching the iCivics Influence Library mini-lesson *The Federalism Debate* the day before your class plays the game. You can find that and all of our lesson plans at www.iCivics.org/teachers.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

1. Choose a Side: State or Federal

Decide whether to argue that powers should belong to states or the federal government. (In real life many powers are shared, but in this game you'll argue all or nothing.)

TIP: Have students play the game once for each side to learn the arguments on both sides of the issue and gain a more complete perspective.



State: There are 50 states, each with its own government. State governments should be free to make their own rules and decisions because they are closest to the citizens. Powerful state governments means powerful citizens!

Federal: The United States is one nation, so a federal government should make rules and decisions for all citizens. A powerful federal government can make sure everyone is protected and treated the same. Keep it simple!

2. Read about the powers for Round 1

In *Power Play*, government powers are represented by statues. There are nine powers in the game. You will argue for three powers in each round. Before each round, you will see an explanation of the three powers for that round. During the round, you can access a statue's description at any time by clicking the "i" button on the statue.



3. Activate one of your players to start the game

You play the game by coaching a team of players who make arguments about each power. You must read the arguments your players are making and decide whether each player should act on his or her argument. Apply a player's argument to a power by clicking the statue. When you do, the player will try to pull the statue toward your end zone. Three results are possible:

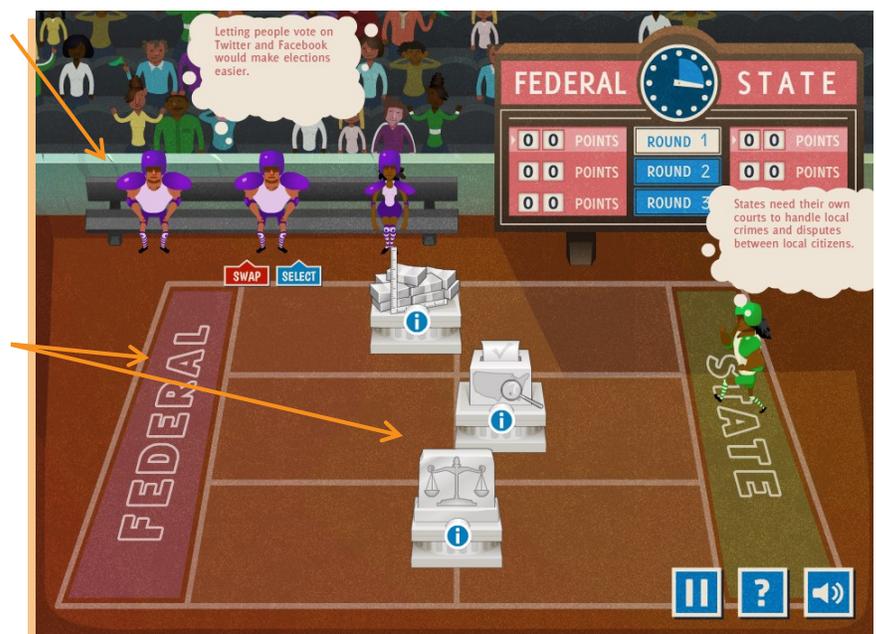
- The statue slides toward your end zone. If you've applied the correct argument to a power, your player will pull the statue toward your end zone.
- The statue slides toward the opposing end zone. If you've tried to apply an argument that supports the other side, your player will push the statue toward the opponent's end zone.
- The statue does not move. If you try to apply an irrelevant argument, or you apply an argument from a different power, your player will fall down and then leave the field.

The object of the game is to pull all three statues into your end zone in each round.

① These are your players. Hover over them to preview their arguments. Click the player or the "Select" button to activate the player, or click "Swap Player" to bring in a new player with a new argument.

② This is your side of the field. The statues are lined up in the center.

TIP: The statues start each round slightly off-center from the middle of the field, toward the side where the power lies in real life.



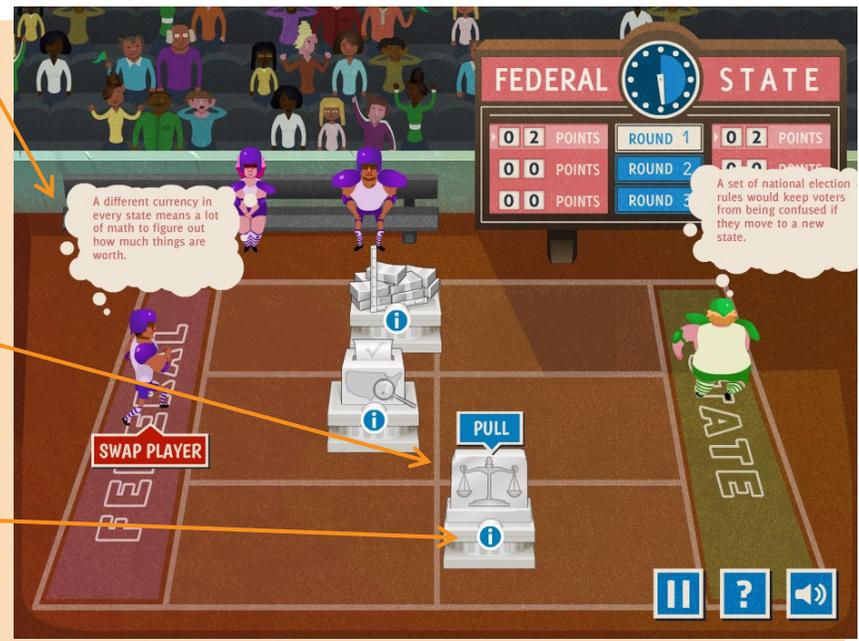
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3 When you select a player, the player runs onto the field.

TIP: You can swap a player from either the bench or the field.

4 A “Pull” tab appears when you hover over a statue. Pull the statue by clicking the pull tab or the statue itself.

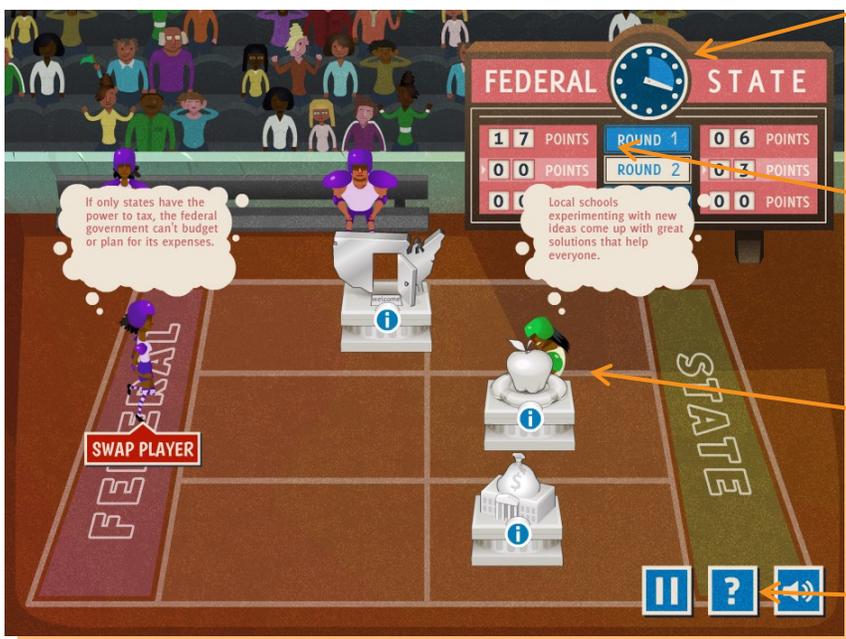
5 Click the “i” button on any statue to read a description of the power. This also pauses the game.



As you play, you will cycle through a variety of arguments for all three powers on the field. Continue applying or rejecting each argument as you work to pull the statues toward your end zone. The field may get crowded, so click carefully!



TIP: Clicking the pause button brings up a description of all three powers that blocks your view of the field. If students need help with a player’s argument, they should pause the game by clicking any “i” button.



6 Keep your eye on the timer. Each round lasts three minutes. The game ends after the third round.

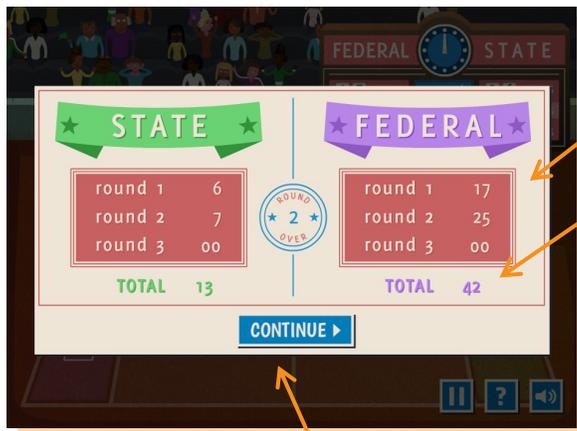
7 Your points for successful pulls will appear on the scoreboard. You’ll receive extra points for each statue you pull to your end zone.

8 On the other side of the field, the opposing players make arguments and actively work against you!

9 Click the help button to see the game instructions again.

END OF ROUND/END OF GAME

At the end of each round, you will see a screen that shows the score up to that point in the game. A similar screen appears at the end of the game.



The screen shows the score for each round.

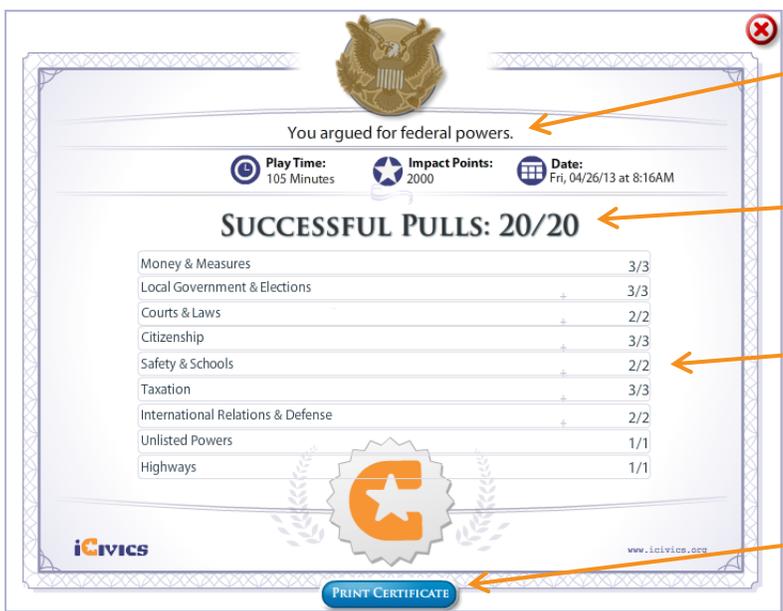
The total score appears at the bottom.

Click to move to the next round. When the game ends, click to see your certificate.



GAME CERTIFICATE

At the end of the game, the final score breakdown appears. From there, students can view and print a detailed certificate that will let you determine how students performed on each specific government power. You can use this printout to assign students a grade for playing the game.



The side the student argued for is shown at the top.

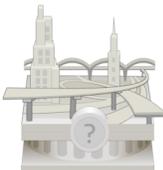
"Successful pulls" is the number of arguments correctly applied to statutes.

The certificate also shows the ratio of successful pulls for each individual power in the game.

Students can click here to print the certificate and turn it in.

GOVERNMENT POWERS AS DESCRIBED IN *POWER PLAY*

Here is a list of the nine government power groups used in Power Play. Because there are many government powers, not every power is covered in Power Play. For purposes of the game the powers have been grouped together as follows:

ROUND 1	<p>Money & Measures</p>  <p>There are 12 inches in a foot and 100 cents in a dollar. Who should set the standards for measurements? Who should print money and decide what it's worth? (Real Life: Federal)</p>	<p>Local Government & Elections</p>  <p>Local governments meet the needs of local communities, but should they answer to state or federal government? Who is best suited to oversee our elections? (Real Life: States)</p>	<p>Courts & Laws</p>  <p>Laws are the rules citizens live by. Should the federal government make one set of laws, or should each state make its own? Who should oversee the courts? (Real Life: Shared)</p>
ROUND 2	<p>Citizenship</p>  <p>Who is an American citizen? How do you become one? Should each state have its own immigration rules, or should there be one set of rules for the entire nation? (Real Life: Federal)</p>	<p>Safety & Schools</p>  <p>Communities need emergency response services like police and fire departments. They also need schools. Should states or the federal government oversee these? (Real Life: States)</p>	<p>Taxation</p>  <p>Governments need money to operate. Should both states and the federal government have the power to collect taxes from citizens? (Real Life: Shared)</p>
ROUND 3	<p>International Relations & Defense</p>  <p>America is part of a global community. Some countries are friendly, some not so much. Who should take the lead on how we interact in peace time and at war? (Real Life: Federal)</p>	<p>Unlisted Powers</p>  <p>The Constitution only lists some powers. Who should get all the unlisted ones--states or the federal government? (Real Life: States)</p>	<p>Highways</p>  <p>Should each state build and maintain its own highways and roads? Or should the federal government be America's road-builder? (Real Life: States)</p>

CLASSROOM CONVERSATION STARTERS

Pre-Game Questions

You can use these questions to lead into playing *Power Play* in the classroom.

- What are some powers that the government has?
 - ◊ *(See the government power guide for help with answers.)*
- What is the difference between the federal government and state governments?
 - ◊ *The federal government has authority over the entire nation; state governments have authority within state borders.*
- Do state governments and the federal government have different powers? Do they share any?
 - ◊ *The Constitution delegates some powers to the federal government. All the rest are reserved to the states. Some powers, like the power to tax, are shared.*

Post-Game Questions

Use these questions as a way to debrief the individual experiences of playing *Power Play*.

- What was your goal in this game? (Answer like this: "To find arguments that _____.")
 - ◊ *To find arguments that supported the side the student was playing for.*
- In this game you had to take a stand for state or federal government power. How was that different from the way state and federal power works in real life?
 - ◊ *In real life, many government powers are shared.*
- Did any of the arguments you saw in the game seem unreasonable to you?
- What might happen if all government power belonged to the federal government? To the states?
 - ◊ *Some things to consider include the nation's ability to protect itself; the need for certain rules to be uniform across the country (i.e., immigration); people's desire for as much individual freedom as possible; regional differences among states and populations*

Activity Ideas

- **Get Creative:** Ask students to create their own arguments for the nine powers in the game.
- **Primary Sources:** Provide students with the text from Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution and ask them to identify the powers that the constitution enumerates/delegates to the federal government. Which ones made it in the game? What additional powers are listed?

