

2.4 Roles and Powers of the President



**ESSENTIALS**

Presidents use powers and functions of the office to accomplish a policy agenda.

Formal and informal powers of the president are represented by:

- Vetoes and pocket vetoes—Formal powers that enable the president to check Congress
- Treaties and executive agreements—
- Bargaining and persuasion—Informal power that enables the president to secure congressional action
- Executive orders—Implied from the president’s vested “executive power”
- Signing statements—Informal power that informs Congress and the public of the president’s interpretation of laws passed by Congress and signed by the president

1. What is the underlying idea of this cartoon?

2. Investigate the etymology of the term BULLY PULPIT? How has the original meaning changed over time?

DEFINE **policy agenda**. How does a bully pulpit give presidents the advantage when setting agendas?

CLASSIC TEXT: *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*, Richard E. Neustadt  
Google this classic work of political science and find three (3) critical observations about the power of modern presidents made by Neustadt.

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Apply these critical observations to our current president. List examples.

REVIEW: What is the difference between **FORMAL** (expressed) and **INFORMAL** powers?

Define each of the following. Include a critical piece of data for each. Find a contemporary example:

Executive Agreement	Executive Order	Signing Statement
Examples	Examples	Examples

Why do Presidents resort to using informal power with greater frequency?

**DEBATE:** Is the president of the United States the most powerful person in the world or a pitiful helpless giant. *Write a claim statement followed by three substantiating facts.*

### 1. PRACTICE: ARGUMENTATION ESSAY

Presidents use powers and functions of the office to accomplish a policy agenda. Assess the informal powers of the president and present an argument for why they are more effective to accomplish a policy agenda.

In your essay, you must:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information. At least ONE piece of evidence must be from one of the following foundational documents – Federalist 51, Federalist 70, U.S. Constitution
- Use a second piece of evidence from another foundational document from the list or from your study of the electoral process
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal

### 2. PRACTICE: ARGUMENTATION ESSAY

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