**Federalism Activity**

*Federalism* is a major principle of American government. In a federal system of government, there are three levels of government: national, state, and local. Government power is divided between the different levels.

The national government generally has power over issues of national concern. The states generally have power over issues of state concern. For example, the national government has power over the defense of the nation. Defense must be coordinated for the entire nation. The states have the power to issue drivers' licenses because driving rules and conditions differ from state to state.

The national powers are often called enumerated or delegated powers. This is because they were specifically listed for the national government when the Constitution was written. You can find these powers written in [Article I, Section 8, Clause 18](http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/data/constitution/article01/) of the U.S. Constitution.

The state powers are often called reserved powers. This is because they were powers kept by the states when the Constitution was written. These powers are not written down in the U.S. Constitution. If a power is not listed for the national government in the U.S. Constitution, it generally belongs to the states. There are some exceptions to this rule, as the case of *McCulloch* v. *Maryland* shows.

Some powers are shared by the national and the state levels of government. These are called concurrent powers. For example, both the national government and the state governments are allowed to tax. This allows both levels of government to have the money they need to provide services.

**Directions**

Based on these ideas, examine the list of government powers below and say whether you think each one is an enumerated (national) power, reserved (state) power, or concurrent (shared) power. Use the [Venn Diagram handout](http://www.streetlaw.org/en/Document.758.aspx) and place each power in the appropriate section of the diagram. Be prepared to explain your answer.

**List of powers:**

* defend the country
* issue drivers' licenses
* levy taxes
* create marriage laws
* impose tariffs
* declare war
* make agreements with other countries
* protect rights
* make laws for the environment
* coin money
* conduct elections
* punish law breakers
* create standards for schools

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Hour: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_