

# THE WEEK

The Week  
at a  
Glance



4	Trump fills out Cabinet with loyalists and billionaires	News	President-elect Donald Trump completed his top Cabinet nominations with a flurry of picks issued at record speed that veered from highly qualified institutionalists to outsider MAGA loyalists.	Government
5	Russia gains ground as U.S. rushes aid to Ukraine	News	Russian forces advanced in Ukraine at the fastest pace yet in the war, taking 90 square miles of territory, battering Kyiv with drones, and hitting central Dnipro with an experimental ballistic missile.	World Studies
6	Senate Republicans: A check on Trump's power?	News	"The first step of defiance is the hardest," said William Kristol in <i>The Bulwark</i> . And "Senate Republicans just took it" by rejecting Donald Trump's initial pick for attorney general, Matt Gaetz.	Government
11	The hillbilly VP	News	In under a decade, JD Vance went from never-Trumper to Trump's vice president-elect. What changed?	Politics Government
34	Tariff Man: Trump threatens a trade war	Business	Donald Trump signaled that he's serious about upending "a global trading system that he believes costs the U.S. dearly," said Jason Douglas in <i>The Wall Street Journal</i> —and he's happy to hurt adversaries and allies along the way.	Economics Government

**BRIEFLY: Quick Questions & Ideas To Engage Students**

McMahon: Will she dismantle the DOE? PAGE 16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. According to the article, why are teachers "flipping out" over Donald Trump's pick for education secretary?</li> <li>2. What does the Department of Education do? According to the article, why does Donald Trump want to shut it down?</li> <li>3. What does it mean to "send education back to the states?" What decisions or programs, if any, should happen at the federal level?</li> <li>4. What, if anything, do Donald Trump's cabinet picks reveal about his second term?</li> </ol>
Trump: Can he claim a 'mandate'? PAGE 17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What three words would you use to describe the 2024 presidential election?</li> <li>2. What is a mandate, and do you believe that the American public gave Donald Trump an "impressive and powerful mandate"?</li> <li>3. What are the benefits and risks of having all three branches of government controlled by one political party?</li> <li>4. Do you predict that Americans will be "better off" during a Trump presidency than they were during Biden's presidency? Explain your answer.</li> </ol>
Culture wars: Walmart cuts DEI, pride programs PAGE 32	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you think this article is about, based on its headline?</li> <li>2. What is a culture war?</li> <li>3. According to the article, why are Walmart and other companies cutting their programs for diversity and pride? What is the significance of this decision? What, if anything, does this decision reflect about our society?</li> </ol>

**FEATURE OF THE WEEK: Cover**

Invite students to look at this week's cover and answer the questions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the illustration on this week's cover.</li> <li>2. What news story is being illustrated here? What do you think the illustrator's point of view is on this story, based on the choices in the illustration?</li> <li>3. Sketch a different illustration that shows the same or a different point of view about this news story.</li> </ol>
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<b>MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #1:</b> Based on the article "Senate Republicans: A check on Trump's power?" (p. 6)	
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	defiance, scandal, distraction, rubber stamp, aftermath, astride, colossus, backroom resistance, conspiracy theorist, pressure test, upper chamber, summon, moderates, apologist, regimes, bastions, bipartisanship, aberrant
<b>DISCUSS</b>	1. Do you think the separation of powers is still relevant, as outlined in the U.S. Constitution? Why or why not? 2. What are the risks of one branch of government having too much power?
<b>DO</b>	1. Hang five signs around the room, each with one of the following words/phrases: judicial, executive, legislative, checks and balances, and separation of powers. Invite students to do a gallery walk around the room and list on each sign what they know and what questions they have about each term/phrase. Once students have finished, review the information and the remaining questions. Challenge students to predict answers to the questions and to determine how all of the words/phrases are related to one another. Direct students to take a <a href="#">"crash course"</a> to validate information and answer questions. 2. Explain that the Constitution divided the government into three branches, each with its own powers (separation of powers), and each with a certain amount of power over other branches. This is important because it prevents any one branch from becoming too powerful. This is called checks and balances. In addition to the separation of powers, there are additional principles of checks and balances outlined in the Constitution, including the dual consent process, pardon and clemency, ratification of treaties, the impeachment process, and guarding against excess and fraud. Invite students to learn more <a href="#">here</a> . 3. Challenge student groups to identify examples of how each branch has certain powers over the other branches and further challenge groups to identify modern examples that illustrate each one. 4. Invite student pairs to look through this week's issue to find one example of checks and balances working as the framers intended and one example of a threat to the checks and balances that the framers intended. Challenge students to explain their examples. 5. Challenge students to use information from the articles to support or refute this claim: Checks and balances, as outlined in the Constitution, are still relevant and necessary today.
<b>EXTEND</b>	Invite students to choose one branch of the federal government and present an argument for how the powers their choice exerts over the other two branches are of fundamental importance in safeguarding against tyranny.

<b>MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #2:</b> Based on the article "The hillbilly VP" (p. 11)	
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	memoir, venture capitalist, tumultuous, woes, social mobility, working-class, staunch, hostility, conservative, dysfunctional, stability, skeptical, ideology, underpinned, intellectually curious, immigrants, decay, cynical, combative
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	1. Describe the duties and responsibilities of the American Vice President. 2. What qualities do you think are most important for a Vice President to have?
<b>DO</b>	1. Write the following phrases from the article on the board and challenge students to identify who is being described: "most successful member of his generation in American politics," "outgoing, intellectually curious student," "never Trumper," "100% America first," and "Hillbilly VP." Explain that all of the phrases have been used to describe the Vice President-elect, JD Vance. Ask students what they know about JD Vance and what they may be curious about. Invite them to read the article to learn more. 2. Ask students what they know about the duties and responsibilities of the Vice President. Explain that when the Framers were writing the Constitution, they realized they needed a presidential line of succession (who would be president if s/he could no longer do the job). They created the role of a vice president to fill this position, but they needed a job for this person to do. They have two constitutional powers: preside over the Senate and replace the president in the event of death. In creating the Electoral College to choose a president, the founding fathers decided each elector should submit two names, with the runner-up becoming vice president. In the period before the creation of parties, no consideration was given to the possibility of the two winners reflecting rival views and policies, as happened in the third election with John Adams, a Federalist, as president and Thomas Jefferson, known as an anti-Federalist, as vice president, serving together. The problem was corrected in the 12th Amendment, providing for separate nomination and election of each office. 3. Ask students what, if anything, they know about how the role of the Vice President has evolved. Divide students into three groups. Challenge one group to research how the role of the Vice President has evolved. Challenge a second group to research how the impact of the Vice President has evolved, and challenge a third group to research how challenges for the Vice President have evolved. Students can learn more <a href="#">here</a> , <a href="#">here</a> , <a href="#">here</a> , and <a href="#">here</a> . 4. Once students have completed their research, direct students to form new groups, each with representation from the three research groups. Invite members of each new group to share information with members from the other original research groups. 5. Finally, challenge students to create a job description for the modern American Vice President that includes the position's educational and experience requirements, roles, responsibilities, important qualities, and expectations.
<b>EXTEND</b>	Invite students to learn about the <a href="#">10 most influential vice presidents in history</a> .

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