All In a Day's Work

Play By the Rules
Now you have a sense of what kinds of things the President does. But where does the President get the power to do all those things? Here's a hint: Look in the rule book. Yes, that's right—The Constitution!

From Article 2 of the United States Constitution

Section 1
The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. . .
Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:
"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section 2
The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States . . .

Section 3
He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; . . . he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

From Article 1, Section 7 of the United States Constitution

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States. If he approves he shall sign it, but if not he shall return
I've Got the Power!

One column below has a list of the President’s responsibilities. The other column has a list of powers the Constitution gives to the President. Match each responsibility with the correct Constitutional power.

**The President's Responsibilities**

1) ___ Lead weekly meetings where I ask the leaders of the government offices (called “agencies”) for their advice on how to handle the country's most difficult problems.

2) ___ Give my yearly "State of the Union" speech on what's happening in the U.S.

3) ___ Decide whether to approve or reject a bill that I believe would help millions of people, but costs a lot of money.

4) ___ Follow the Constitution and the law even if I disagree with it.

5) ___ Decide whether to send more troops into war knowing that some will die, but it will keep the country safe.

6) ___ Make sure the IRS (the government agency that collects taxes) collects people's taxes correctly, so the government has money to do its job.

7) ___ Hold a press conference where I ask Congress to do more.

8) ___ Decide whether to let someone go from jail because there is new evidence the trial was unfair, even though I don't know if the person is guilty of the crime.

9) ___ Try to negotiate an agreement with another country that would reduce both countries' nuclear weapons.

10) ___ Choose a new Supreme Court justice because someone on the Court is retiring.

**Presidential Powers Listed in the Constitution:**

A. Power to carry out the laws

B. Must live by the Constitution

C. Commander in Chief of the military

D. Ask his advisors, who lead parts of the government, for their opinion on different issues

E. Can pardon someone for a crime, which gets them out of jail or stops the death penalty

F. Can make treaties with other countries (with Senate approval)

G. Can choose new Supreme Court justices (with Senate approval)

H. Make recommendations to Congress about what bills to work on

I. Update Congress on how things are going in the country

J. Sign (approve) or veto (reject) bills from Congress.