

What is Economics? An Economic Board Game

Summary

Enduring Understanding

:

Students will learn the fundamental concepts of economics as it relates to government.

Essential Questions

:

What is economics as it relates to government?

What are the factors of production as they relate to government?

Why does scarcity exist?

Time Frame

5 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication

Materials

Students will need:

heavy cardboard

scissors

art supplies

old board games

other appropriate materials to create a board game.

Background for Teachers

This project will be implemented in four stages.

First, students will participate in a discussion of the nature of economics as it relates to government.

Next, students will work in groups to design board games that will teach the basic concepts of economics to junior high students. Games must be played and completed in 20 minutes.

Students will then take their board games to a junior high social studies class and have the younger students play the games. If this is not possible, a class can be invited to the high school.

Finally, students will write an evaluation/reflection of the effectiveness of their games as teaching tools.

Student Prior Knowledge

Students should understand the following:

basic concepts of economics and the factors that affect production.

Intended Learning Outcomes

In the course of this project, individual students will:

participate in a discussion about the basic economic concepts;

design a board game that will teach the basic concepts of economics to junior high students;
teach junior high students how to play the game;
write and critically evaluate the effectiveness of the game.

Instructional Procedures

Scale of the Project

: To ensure that groups have enough room to work during the game planning and develop sessions, you may wish to reserve an area larger than the classroom, such as the commons, cafeteria, or media center. The demonstration of the games at the junior high school should be done in a small group setting.

Resources: Have students use their textbooks, the Internet if possible, the library, and any other appropriate resources to gather information that would be useful in developing a board game.

Preparation: Some weeks before this project, contact a junior high teacher in your district and arrange to have your classes work together. Make sure you give students the Planning Guidelines and the rubric for students to use in designing and creating their games.

Implementation of the lesson:

Give students an overview of the activity explaining the four stages. Tell them that they will participate in a discussion about the nature of economics. Next, they will work in small cooperative groups to design a board game to teach the basic concepts to junior high students. Their game must be played and competed in 20 minutes. Students should be able to play the game and establish a winner in 20 minutes. They will then visit the junior high and teach the students to play their game. Finally, they will write a reflection of the effectiveness of their games as teaching tools.

Using the corresponding chapter in the textbook as a guide, lead students in a discussion of the nature of economics, stressing basic terms and concepts.

Ensure that students understand the following terms: economics, economies, microeconomics, macroeconomics, consumer, producers, good, service, resources, factors of production, natural resources, human resources, capital resources, capital good, consumer good, entrepreneurship, scarcity, allocate, productivity, efficiency, division of labor, trade-off, opportunity costs, exchange, barter, money, credit, value, interdependence. If necessary students may use the glossary to help with these terms.

Organize the students into groups of four and give each group a copy of the Planning Guidelines. Stress to the groups that they should keep their audience in mind while planning the board game. Remind them to keep the vocabulary on the appropriate level. Players should learn about economics from the game; therefore, the game should introduce the definitions of basic terms and teach the basic concepts of economics.

Encourage groups to create original games, but allow them to base their games-at least in part-on existing board games of which they are familiar. You may want to display some related economics board games in the classroom-such as *Budget City and Charge It!*

When groups have designed and created working models, have other different group members play through their games at least once to check for flaws. Games must be played and completed in 20 minutes. Have students offer constructive review of the game to its designers.

Have each group create the final version of their game with written instructions. All necessary components to play the game must be present before going to the junior high.

Arrange a visit to the junior high, or have a class come to the high school. Have your class teach members of the junior high class how to play their games; then have your students observe the younger students playing their games.

To test the effectiveness of the games, have your students spend the last five minutes or so quizzing the players about basic economic concepts. Have each of your students write an

evaluation/reflection of the game based on the junior high students' responses and their behavior during play.

Strategies for Diverse Learners

Enrichment: This game project can be an enrichment assignment for advanced students rather than a required project.

Inclusion students: Inclusion students may be given a vocabulary list of terms to define using the glossary of the book to aid in reinforcing terminology.

Assessment Plan

1. Use the Standards for Evaluation form to help you evaluate student's games.
2. Additional grades may be based on student's evaluations of other games.

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