VCEE Lesson Plan Submission

The Penny Game: Economic Systems in Action

**I. See cover page**

**II. Abstract**

A. This entry is for use within a 90 minute, 9-12, World History II block class. It can be used as a stand-alone lesson or it can be divided-up into smaller lessons as part of each individual SOL. Students will examine content related to Communism, Capitalism, and Socialism. The skills students will practice include identifying political boundaries, analyzing primary and secondary sources, and analyzing the impact of economic forces. The student outcome will be demonstrating knowledge by describing and evaluating mercantilism and evaluating and identifying the similarities and differences among capitalism, socialism, and capitalism.

B. This entry is an effective approach to teaching economic concepts because it relies on student engagement and interaction.

**III. Economic Content and Key Concepts:**

A. Economic Terms: Capitalism, Socialism, Communism, Proletariat, Bourgeoisie, Entrepreneur, Profit, Incentive. Market, Lassaiz-faire, Private Property, and Competition.

B. N/A

C. Definitions

\*Capitalism- an economic system based on private ownership of resources and the means of production in order to make a profit.

\*Socialism-an economic system in which just the means of production are owned by the people as a whole. Private property exists

\*Communism- an economic system in which allmeans of production and private property are owned by the people, *private property does not exist*, and all *goods and services are shared equally*.

\*Proletariat- the working class

\*Bourgeoisie- the middle class

\*Private Property-right to own personal property as well as the means of production without undue interference from government.

\*Competition-a rivalry between producers of a good or service and usually results in lower prices and/or better quality.

\*Entrepreneur- someone who takes a risk in search of profit

\*Profit- earnings after expenses.

\*Incentive- things that motivate people to change economic behavior.

\*Market- referred as “free” meaning it is allowed to operate without undue government interference.

\*Laissez-faire- “Hands-off” approach meaning the government lets businesses set prices and conditions without interference.

Source: Definitions come from WHII SOL 5e, Civics and Economics SOL 11a-c, or from a district-approved textbook such as: Ellis, Elisabeth and Anthony Esler. Virginia World History: The Modern Era. Pearson Education. Boston, MA: 2011.

D. This unit will teach and reinforce the concepts by using Blooms Taxonomy, notes, direct instruction, maps, a manipulative/hands-on activity, and primary source readings.

**IV: Economic Standards and Student Learning Outcomes**

A. Learning outcomes:

\* WHII-1a: The student will improve skills in historical research and geographical analysis by identifying, analyzing, and interpreting primary and secondary source sources to make generalizations about events and life in world history.

analysis by analyzing trends in human migration and cultural interaction.

\*WHII-1f: The student will improve skills in historical research and geographical analysis by analyzing the impact of economic forces, including taxation, government spending, trade, resources, and monetary systems, on events from 1500 A.D. (C.E.)

\*WHII-9b: The student will demonstrate knowledge of the effects of the industrial revolution during the nineteenth century by explaining the emergence of capitalism as a dominant economic pattern, and the subsequent development of socialism and communism

**B. Teaching Strategy and activity standard alignment**

\*WHII-1a:

The student will read excerpts from the Communist Manifesto and the Wealth of Nations.

\*WHII-1f:

The student will define key terms in a chart and answer questions regarding key terms.

\*WHII-9b:

The student will participate in an economic systems learning activity.

**V. Instructional Process: WHII-9b.**

1. Materials List- 300 pennies and a notecard box to keep them in.

Materials note: I went to the bank and exchanged $3.00 for 300 pennies.

2. Time: This lesson is designed for 90-minutes block; however, this lesson plan can be used as a stand-alone activity on capitalism, communism, and socialism or part of a larger unit on the Industrial Revolution.

3. Prior knowledge: The student will have prior knowledge of WHII-9a.

4. Define key terms in a chart and answer questions about the terms.

**Student Key Term Chart Questions**

1. What do you think the difference is between Capitalism and Communism?

2. What is the difference between the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat?

3. Why is competition important?

4. What is the role of an entrepreneur?

5. Why is profit important?

6. Give an example of an incentive:

7. What do you think might happen if we allow a laissez-faire approach to our economy?

**Student Key Term Chart Answers**

1. In capitalism one can own private property in communism one cannot, the community or group does.

2. One is the worker/lower-class and one is the boss/rich person/middle class

3. Allows for better quality products at lower prices

4. To take risks and create new products

5. Allows for people to become wealthy or invest in new ideas

6. Money, or any other reasonable answer

7. Businesses’ might take advantage of consumers.

5. Students will copy down WHII 9b: Capitalism, Communism, and Socialism notes.

6. The Penny Game: Economic Systems in Action. See Answer sheet for answers to questions.

A. Distributed pennies (unevenly) throughout the class. Ensure that a handful of students become really rich and a handful become really poor. The rest are somewhere in the middle.

Note: I have found it easy to make the poorer students get 2 pennies, the rich students get 10 pennies with the rest somewhere in the middle. I also like to give one student 1 penny as if s/he is able to become wealthier it would bring-up good discussion points.

B. Pass out The Penny Game: Economic Systems in Action Game Chart and Debrief Questions. Follow the guidelines below for each type of economic system.

Capitalism: Instruct students to play for pennies using “Rock”, “Paper”, or “Scissors”. Tell students how many games they want to play for each penny is up to them. They can do best out 1 or 3. Tell students they can play for as many pennies as they want but the other person must agree.

Capitalism Rules

1. The other person must agree before you play.

2. No stealing.

3. No charity.

4. When finished sit-down.

Let students play for 5-10minutes. After enough time instruct students to go back to their desk and count-up the number of pennies and answer question 1 under the Capitalism section. Call on selective students to share answers for question 1. After enough time, go ahead and instruct students to complete questions 2-6. Alternatively, you could go over each question and discuss it. See answer sheet.

Socialism: Tell students they can keep their pennies. If students do not have pennies give them some.

Instruct students to play for pennies using “Rock”, “Paper”, or “Scissors”. Tell students how many games they want to play for each penny is up to them. They can do best out 1 or 3. Tell students they can play for as many pennies as they want but the other person must agree. Inform students that if you get too many pennies the teacher will take some from you and redistribute it to those who are poor.

Socialism Rules

1. The other person must agree before you play.

2. No stealing.

3. No charity.

4. When the teacher (government) asks for pennies to redistribute to poorer students you must give them-up.

Let students play for 5-10minutes. During play go around and ask to see pennies. Any student who has a lot must give-up some pennies to you. Find students who need pennies and redistribute them. After enough time instruct students to go back to their desk and count-up the number of pennies and answer question 1 under the Socialism section. Call on selective students to share answers for question 1. After enough time, go ahead and instruct students to complete questions 2-5. Alternatively, you could go over each question and discuss it. See answer sheet.

Communism: Collect all pennies from students.

Communism Rules

1. Give-up all pennies.

2. No hiding them

3. Students just sit at desks.

4. Everyone is equal

No game is player. The teacher goes around and collects all the pennies. After collecting the pennies, instruct students to answer question 1 under the Communism section. Call on selective students to share answers for question 1. After enough time, go ahead and instruct students to complete questions 2-7. Alternatively, you could go over each question and discuss it. See answer sheet.

Source of original game idea:

Oregon Teacher Blog. <http://oregonteacherblog.chalkboardproject.org/teaching-strategies/rock-paper-scissors-how-not-to-bore-your-students-with-a-lecture-on-communism-socialism-and-capitalism/> 20 Jan, 2013.

Communist theory of Karl Marx. [Lesson plan]. History Alive! The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union. (1995). Palo Alto, CA: Teachers’ Curriculum Institute.

Note: Any edits, modifications, and changes to game idea are mine.

C. Debrief: Answer the debrief questions below on The Penny Game: Economic Systems in Action. See Answer sheet.

D. Pass out copies of Excerpts from The Communist Manifesto and Wealth of Nations.

Instruct students to read and answer the questions. Source for original work comes from Victoria Walsh, a fellow co-worker. Any edits, modifications, and changes are mine.

**The Communist Manifesto and Wealth of Nations: Student Questions**

1. According to Marx and Engels, the history of society is what?

2. According to Marx and Engels, who are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?

3. Why is a clash between these two classes inevitable?

5. What must the proletariat acquire before they can be free?

6. How might the proletariat acquire that?

7. What did Marx and Engels see as the cause of class struggles? What did they want to do with it?

8. Take a look at the measures (#1-10) does the US have any of those? Which ones?

9. According to Adam Smith, what are two things individuals do?

10. What leads individuals in making economic decisions?

11. What does Adam Smith say is a result of individuals promoting their own interests?

12. What is one difference between Communism and Capitalism? (Hint: look at who owns resources/property)

13. Which economic system would you like to live under? Communism or Capitalism. Why?

**The Communist Manifesto and Wealth of Nations: Answers**

1. According to Marx and Engels, the history of society is what?

**Class Struggle**

2. According to Marx and Engels, who are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat?

**Proletariat is the labor-class and the bourgeoisie is the boss as a member of the middle or upper class.**

3. Why is a clash between these two classes inevitable?

**Capitalism is based on exploitation**

5. What must the proletariat acquire before they can be free?

**Political Supremacy**

6. How might the proletariat acquire that?

**Revolt; Fight**

7. What did Marx and Engels see as the cause of class struggles? What did they want to do with it?

**Private Property; abolish it**

8. Take a look at the measures (#1-10) does the US have any of those? Which ones?

Y**es: We have a progressive income tax, we had a national bank, we have free public education**

9. According to Adam Smith, what are two things individuals do?

**Works in an industry; produce things of the greatest possible value**

10. What leads individuals in making economic decisions?

**An invisible hand**

11. What does Adam Smith say is a result of individuals promoting their own interests?

**The betterment of society**

12. What is one difference between Communism and Capitalism? (Hint: look at who owns resources/property)

**In capitalism individuals and businesses own personal property. In communism it is owned by the community or the group; personal property is abolished.**

13. Which economic system would you like to live under? Communism or Capitalism. Why?

**Accept any reasonable answer.**

E. Homework: Assign a relevant section of the textbook.

**VI. Evaluation of Student Learning**

During the 2013-2014 academic year, 130 mixed-ability students on the second 9-weeks District Benchmark Test had a 69% pass-rate for questions related to WHII-9b: Capitalism, Socialism, and Communism.