

Teaching Economic Disciplinary Understanding in Secondary Grades as Democratic Citizenship Preparation— Benefits, Challenges, and Best-Practices



JET SET

August 3, 2024

9:00-10:15

Introduction



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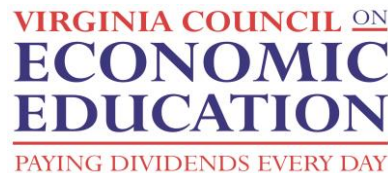
Virginia Tech Center for Economic Education

Virginia Council on Economic Education

Council on Economic Education

U.S. Economic Empowerment Project

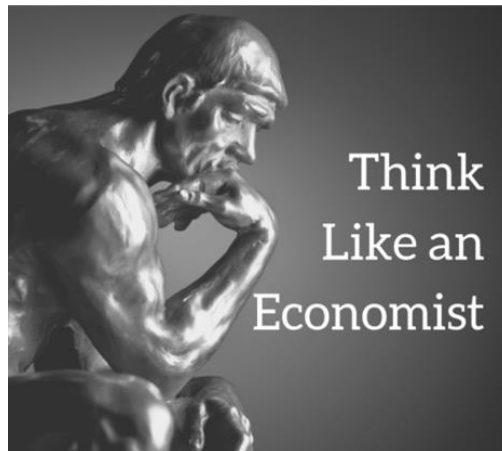
NAEE National Economics Pedagogy Scholar



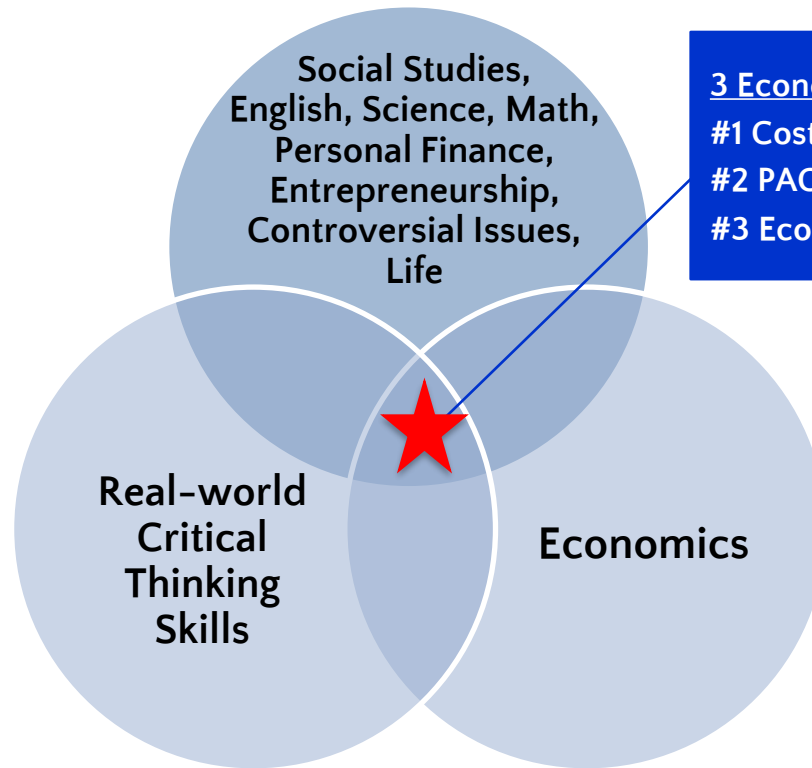
Session Objectives

Discuss key findings of a research-based article grounded in decades of economic education literature on how secondary teachers use economic concepts, principles and reasoning skills and tools to prepare students for democratic citizenship

- ❖ Including the instructional benefits, challenges, and best-practices for integrating greater disciplinary understanding in economics across secondary grades and subjects



3 Economic Reasoning Skills & Tools



3 Economic Reasoning Skills & Tools

#1 Cost-benefit analysis chart

#2 PACED decision making model

#3 Economic way of thinking 6 principles

Ayers, C. A. (2019). Teaching students to 'think like economists' as democratic citizenship preparation. *Journal of Social Studies Research*, 43(4), 405-419.

3 Economic Reasoning Skills (Ayers, 2019)

Student Learning Outcomes

- 1) sharpening critical thinking and critical literacy skills
- 2) entertaining multiple perspectives
- 3) gaining a deeper, nuanced understanding of subject-specific content
- 4) making students' thinking explicit for assessment purposes
- 5) achieving a inter/multidisciplinary understanding of current events
- 6) using evidence to draw conclusions and make generalizations
- 7) articulating and defending positions using content vocabulary
- 8) laying the groundwork for authentic discussions and civil debates
- 9) casting informed votes
- 10) analyzing and synthesizing primary and secondary sources
- 11) comparing and contrasting historical, cultural, and political perspectives
- 12) explaining cause-and-effect relationships
- 13) practicing citizenship skills such as collaborating, compromising, and reaching consensus
- 14) thinking like an economist for authentic disciplinary learning (like historical thinking)
- 15) making more productive and prosperous workplace and everyday life decisions

3 Economic Reasoning Tools



Teaching Controversial Issues & Civil Dialogue

(references in notes section)

Controversial Issues & Civil Dialogue

Challenges

US is Politically Polarized
Media Echo Chambers
Youth Impact

Best Practices

Carefully Align Difficult Topics with Subject Area Learning Goals
Co-Create and Post Clear Ground Rules
Prepare “Intervention” Activities In Advance



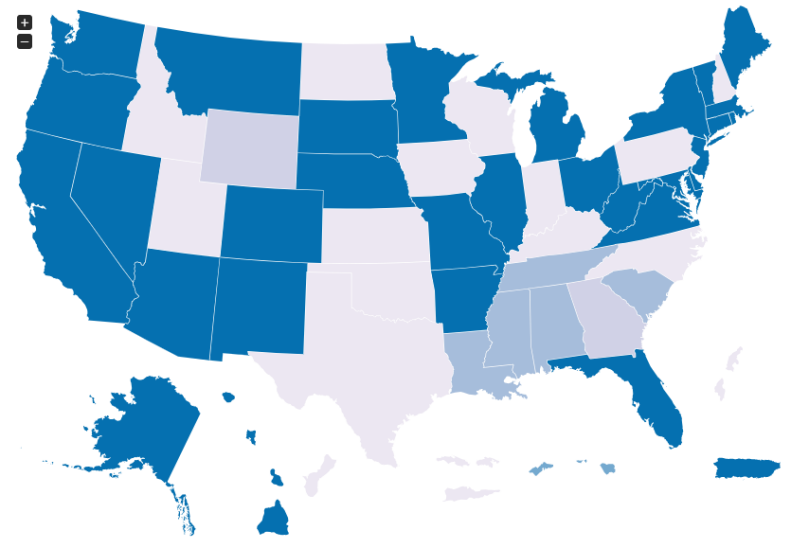
Minimum Wage

+

Scaffolded Economics
Instructional Strategy

CONTENT + PEDAGOGY

Critical Literacy & Background Knowledge



Legend

- States with Higher Minimum Wage than Federal
- States with the same Minimum Wage as Federal
- States with lower Minimum Wage rates - Federal Applies
- States with no Minimum Wage rates - Federal Applies
- States with special Minimum Wage

<https://www.usnews.com/cartoons>

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state>

Content Knowledge Research

\$15 Minimum Wage COSTS



Many people earning minimum wage are not a family's primary source of income

"Minimum wage in America: how many people are earning \$7.25 an hour?" *USA Facts* March 28, 2023

<https://usafacts.org/articles/minimum-wage-america-how-many-people-are-earning-725-hour/>



Increases costs for a company with no corresponding increase in productivity

"Should the Federal Minimum Wage Be Increased?" *ProCon.org*, January 12, 2023

<https://minimum-wage.procon.org/>



History shows that minimum wage increases result in reductions in hours and jobs

Stokes, "Fed researchers: \$15 minimum wage in Minneapolis and St. Paul boosted pay – but cost jobs"

MinnPost, May 9, 2023

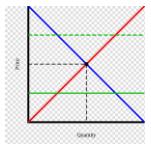
<https://www.minnpost.com/metro/2023/05/fed-researchers-15-minimum-wage-in-minneapolis-and-st-paul-boosted-pay-but-cost-jobs/>



Increases the price of consumer goods as businesses pass along additional costs

"Should the Federal Minimum Wage Be Increased?" *ProCon.org*, January 12, 2023

<https://minimum-wage.procon.org/>



Price floors disrupt markets (supply and demand), resulting in inefficiencies

Bourne, "The Case Against a \$15 Federal Minimum Wage: Q&A" *Cato Institute*, February 25, 2021

https://www.cato.org/commentary/case-against-15-federal-minimum-wage-qa?utm_campaign=Regulation%20Roundup%20Newsletter&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=1178...%201/19%20tnemyolpme%20ni%20eb%20lliw%20srekrow%20rewet%20noillim

Content Knowledge Research

\$15 Minimum Wage BENEFITS



Provides a “living wage” for families and reduces poverty

Leonhardt, “How raising minimum wage to \$15 per hour could affect workers and small businesses” *CNBC.com*, February 24, 2021

<https://www.cnbc.com/2021/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-brings-benefits-consequences.html>



Reduces government welfare spending

Buchwald, “A \$15 minimum wage could cut government spending on welfare programs by up to \$30 billion, study finds” *MarketWatch*, February 2, 2021

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/a-15-minimum-wage-could-cut-government-spending-on-welfare-programs-by-up-to-30-billion-study-finds-11612290567>



Increases consumer spending and grows the economy

“Should the Federal Minimum Wage Be Increased?” *ProCon.org*, January 12, 2023

<https://minimum-wage.procon.org/>



Incentivizes more people to enter the workforce

“A \$15 minimum wage changes more than just take-home pay U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics” *Monthly Labor Report* September 2021

<https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2021/beyond-bls/a-15-minimum-wage-changes-more-than-just-take-home-pay.htm>



Reduces income inequality

Maverick, “What Are the Pros and Cons of Raising the Minimum Wage” *Investopedia*, August 26, 2023

<https://www.investopedia.com/articles/markets-economy/090516/what-are-pros-and-cons-raising-minimum-wage.asp>

Tool #1 Cost-Benefit Analysis Chart

CHOICE: Raise the minimum wage to \$15

1=not at all important

3=average importance

5=very important

COSTS (disadvantages/given up)	1-5	BENEFITS (advantages/gained)	1-5
Totals			
DECISION:			
OPPORTUNITY COST:			

Content Knowledge Research

Minimum Wage



Many people earning minimum wage are not a family's primary source of income
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



Provides a "living wage" for families and reduces poverty
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



Increases costs for a company with no corresponding increase in productivity
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



Reduces government welfare spending
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



History shows that minimum wage increases result in reductions in hours and jobs
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



Increases consumer spending and grows the economy
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



Increases the price of consumer goods as businesses pass along additional costs
<https://www.fox.com/2023/02/24/minimum-wage-15-dollars-per-hour-https://benefits.consequences.html>



Incentivizes more people to enter the workforce
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Price floors disrupt markets (supply and demand), resulting in inefficiencies
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Reduces income inequality
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Tool #1: Cost-Benefit Analysis Applications

SUBJECTS	CONTENT EXAMPLES
Marketing	use Facebook to promote products
Agriculture	use hydroponic farming for fresh entrees
Business	use Microsoft Access to manage information
U.S. History	start the American Revolutionary War
Geography	move to Alaska for colder climate
Civics	vote for Trump in November
Government	advocate for 2nd amendment
English	decision made by novel's main character
Math	use a calculator to solve a word problem
Science	use windmills as renewable energy source

Tool #2 PACED Decision-Making Model

1. **Question/Problem:** What should be done with minimum wage (assume current wage is \$10)?

3. Criteria 2. Alternatives	Help Employees	Help Employers	Incentivize Higher Ed	Reduce Unemployment	Totals
Reduce to \$7.25	70	15	5	10	
Raise to \$15.00					
Raise to \$50.00					
\$2.50 + Tips					

4. **Evaluate** the Alternatives

3 = alternative meets criteria very well

2 = alternative meets criteria satisfactorily

1 = alternative does not meet criteria satisfactorily

5. **Decision** (highest scoring alternative): _____

PACED Decision-Making Applications


SUBJECTS	CONTENT EXAMPLES
Marketing	which social media platform to use for promoting products
Agriculture	how to obtain vegetable supply for fresh menu options
Business	which information management software to use
U.S. History	how to gain independence from Great Britain
Geography	where to move for cold weather climate
Civics	who to vote for in November
Government	changes to the 2nd amendment
English	other decisions the novel's main character could have made
Math	other ways to answer a word problem
Science	other types of renewable, clean energy

Tool #3 Economic Way of Thinking 6 Principles

- 1) People choose.
- 2) People's choices involve costs.
- 3) People respond to incentives in predictable ways.
- 4) People create rules and economic systems that influence individual choices and incentives.
- 5) People gain when they trade voluntarily.
- 6) People's choices have consequences that lie in the future.



Inquiry-based
Learning
101



Qualitative
framework for
cost-benefit
& PACED

Tool #3 Economic Way of Thinking 6 Principles

Developing Informed Economic Arguments Using the Economic Way of Thinking 6 Principles Activity Sheet

Debate/Essay Topic

Debate/Essay Position

FOR or AGAINST (circle one)

Economic Way of Thinking Principles	Talking Points + Evidence
1) Scarcity forces people to make choices. scarcity, limited resources, unlimited wants, choices available, benefits	
2) Every choice has an opportunity cost. things given up and disadvantages (costs) <i>most important</i> thing given up (opportunity cost)	
3) Incentives influence choices. positive incentives (rewards), negative incentives (penalties), behaviors, motivation	
4) Economic systems influence individual choices. written and unwritten rules/laws market, command, traditional, mixed economies <i>(market economy = economic freedom as producers and consumers, competition, private property rights, profit</i>	

Ayers, C. A. (2016). Developing preservice and in-service teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in economics. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 11(1), 73-92.

Tool #3 Economic Way of Thinking 6 Principles

Developing Informed Economic Opinions Using the Economic Way of Thinking 6 Principles Writing Prompts

Topic

Group 1

Group 2

Topic = Raise MW to \$15
Group 1 = Employees
Group 2 = Employers

1. People choose.

Group 1 willingly choose _____

Group 2 willingly choose _____

2. People's choices incur costs.

Group 1 forego the opportunity to _____

Group 2 forego the opportunity to _____

3. People respond to incentives in predictable ways.

Group 1's incentives include _____

Group 2's incentives include _____

4. Economic systems influence incentives and choices.

Group 1 is influenced by the market economy characteristic of _____ because _____

Group 2 is influenced by the market economy characteristic of _____ because _____

5. Voluntary trade creates wealth.

When Group 1 exchanges _____ for _____, they gain by _____.

When Group 2 exchanges _____ for _____, they gain by _____.

Essay & Debate Assessments

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Totals			

DECISION:

OPPORTUNITY COST:

Tool #2 PACED Decision-Making Model

1. Question/Problem: What should be done with minimum wage (assume current wage is \$10)?

3. Criteria	Help Employees	Help Employers	Incentivize Higher Ed	Reduce Unemployment	Totals
2. Alternatives					
Reduce to \$7.25					

4. Evaluate the Alternatives

3 = alternative meets criteria very well

2 = alternative meets criteria satisfactorily

1 = alternative does not meet criteria satisfactorily

Informed Voting

of Thinking 6 Principles

- 1) State FOR or AGAINST the minimum wage to \$15/hour.
- 2) Share arguments through the lens of Economic Reasoning Tools.

- costs.
- atives in predictable ways.
- 4) People create rules and economic systems that influence individual choices and incentives.
- 5) People gain when they trade voluntarily.
- 6) People's choices have consequences that lie in the future.

3 Economic Reasoning Skills (Ayers, 2019)

Student Learning Outcomes

- 1) sharpening critical thinking and critical literacy skills
- 2) entertaining multiple perspectives
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THANK YOU!

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