

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 2 Lesson 5 – Economic Issues  
*What are different beliefs on economic issues?*

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TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

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ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.3

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MATERIALS

**Current Events Presentation** – Student Page  
**Economic Issues** – Student Page  
**Economic Issues Spectrum** – Teacher created (looks identical to the social issues spectrum poster, though the title, for now, is Economic Issues Spectrum)  
Newspaper headline (Teacher choice)

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LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To determine the difference between economic and social issues
  - To define *economic issues* and begin to make distinctions between economic liberals and conservatives
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded work and have students place in the appropriate section of their binders.
  - 2) **Agenda** – Have students copy the goal, agenda, and homework onto the next clean page in a notebook
  - 3) Current Events – Collect the overhead transparencies from the Current Events presenters for today. Below the goal/agenda, copy the titles for three current events stories that they have chosen. Have students copy these and prepare to take notes.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Current Events Presentations – Have students come to the front of the class one at a time to present their articles. At the end of each presentation, the students should turn in their **Current Events Presentation** sheet stapled to a copy of the news article. Grades and comments should be written on the back of the **Current Events Presentation** sheet and returned to the students the next lesson. Choose the presenters for the next day that current events are due (Lesson 8) immediately and give them a copy of the **Current Events Presentation** sheet to complete.
2. Current Events Discussion – As in Lesson 4, show students a recent headline about a social issue and hold a discussion to dissect how both liberals and conservatives would state their positions (“Can you predict what George Bush would say?” “Can you predict what Nader would say?”). This discussion should only last about 5 minutes maximum.
3. Economic Issues – Tell students that for the next couple of lessons they will be switching from studying social issues to studying economic issues. They will need to recall liberal and conservative beliefs on social issues later, but for now they need to push those ideas back. Show them the new **Economic Issues Spectrum** (teacher created poster) and explain that they will try to figure out if they are liberal or conservative on economic issues.

4. Determine Economic Issue Stance – Pass out the **Economic Issues** (handout (student page) and read through topic #1 carefully. Since students have done a similar sheet before, they should know what is expected of them and you can have them complete the rest on their own.
5. Economic Issues Activity – Like before, instruct students to stand in the corner that corresponds with the choice that they made for each topic. When students are standing in their correct places for the first topic (minimum wage), lead a discussion/debate like before trying to get students to maybe change or defend their choices (“so, even if it means that there will be fewer jobs and more unemployed, you still think that the minimum wage should be increased to \$10 an hour?”). Try to complete as many of the topics as possible before the end of class.

Note: The purpose of the social, and now economic, issues is to have students understand the underlying premises and foundations for these beliefs. That there are more or less consistent underlying beliefs that determine political positions on most issues. The fact that they are liberal or conservative on the death penalty serves to engage students in order to have them understand why liberals and conservatives believe what they believe. This way, for any issue, students can determine what the political positions would be, why, and then ponder their own beliefs in relation to them.

6. Homework – With about 5 minutes left in class tell students that their homework is vocabulary related. They need to create a definition for *economic issues*, *economic liberals*, and *economic conservatives* using the **Economic Issues** handout and the discussion they had in class about the positions of each.
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#### HOMEWORK

- 1) Create definitions for three vocabulary terms: *economic issues*, *economic liberals*, and *economic conservatives*.
  - 2) Continue with service requirement work.
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#### GROUP ROLES

None

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#### DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

##### Unit 1

Action Plan

Persuasive Essay or Flash Argument: Why should government care...?

American Government Unit 1 Final Exam

##### Unit 2

None