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Economic Freedom: How Important Is It?

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Lesson Title: Economic Freedom: How Important Is It?

Grade Level: 6

Purpose/Overview:
How much does economic freedom determine the extent of economic development in a country? In this lesson students examine geographic and economic data and form a hypothesis about what affects the standard of living in more developed and less developed countries.

National Geography Standards from *Geography for Life*

Essential Element I. THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS

Standard 1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

Essential Element VI. THE USES OF GEOGRAPHY

Standard 18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

Geographic Elements & Standards: Environment & Society, Human Systems

Oklahoma Academic Standards for the Social Studies:

OAS 2012	OAS 2019
Content Standard 4 The student will analyze the human systems of the Western Hemisphere in the context of the world's peoples and cultures.	**6.3** The student will identify the characteristics, distribution, and demographic patterns of human populations and systems of the Western Hemisphere.
4.1 Identify and describe ***cultural traits*** of language, ethnic heritage, social systems, religion, and traditions including ***how cultural diffusion impacts societies.***	**6.3.2** Identify and describe cultural traits of language, ethnic heritage, religion, and traditions practiced among peoples. **6.5.2** Explain how cultural diffusion, both voluntary and forced, impacts societies of a region.
4.2 Describe and compare examples of the ***market and command economic systems*** including how governments affect economic activities in such systems.	**6.3.9** Describe benefits and limitations of the traditional, market, and command economic systems, including how government policies affect economic activities and trade relationships.
4.5 Analyze ***the impact of geography on population location, growth, and change,*** applying geographic concepts of population density, the availability of resources, settlement patterns, and migrational push and pull factors including the twentieth century Asian and Caribbean refugee migration to	**6.3.3** Analyze the impact of geography on population distribution, growth, and change, applying geographic concepts of population density, and the availability of resources. **6.3.4** Describe how the push and pull factors of migration have affected settlement patterns

North America or the pattern of Hispanic workers migrating to the United States.	and the human characteristics of places over time.
Content Standard 5 The student will analyze the interactions of humans and their environment in the Western Hemisphere.	**6.4** The student will analyze the interactions of humans and their environment in the Western Hemisphere.
5.1 Integrate and compare visual information of the ***common characteristics of developed and developing countries*** including access to human and economic capital, the impact of education and technology; and analyze data used by geographers including literacy rate, life expectancy, and per capita income.	**6.3.10** Identify the common characteristics of developed and developing countries, including the impact of education and technology; analyze data used by geographers such as literacy rate, life expectancy, per capita income, and infant mortality.
5.2 Summarize the impact of the ***distribution of major renewable and nonrenewable resources*** and evaluate how ***the three levels of economic activities (primary, secondary, and tertiary)*** contribute to the development of a country or region including A. The United States' and Canada's access to fossil fuels, water, iron, and arable soil, B. Agricultural development dependent on the natural aquifers of the Great Plains, C. The nationalized oil production in Venezuela and Mexico, and D. North America's access to iron and coal enabling a productive steel industry.	**6.2.4** Describe the relationship and summarize the impact of the distribution of major renewable and nonrenewable resources on each region.

Geographic Themes:

Objectives:
1. Students will define economic freedom, economic growth, gross domestic product, standard of living, market and command economies, developed and developing countries, primary, secondary and tertiary economic activities.

Materials:
The teacher will need a projector set up for viewing the attached power point.

Copies of Activities 1, 2, 3 for students
1 copy of the set of "magnetic statements

Time Frame: 3 days

Procedures:

Prior to beginning the lesson the teacher should:

Tape signs with the following quotes a few feet apart on a wall or board in front of the classroom. Students will be standing in front of the quotes, so place them far enough apart for several students to stand in front of them. (The quotes can be found on the attachment titled "Magnetic Statements."

- Students may only work in a paid job from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., Sunday through Thursday.
- No one under the age of 21 may purchase cigarettes or alcohol.
- Everyone riding in a car must wear a seatbelt.
- Everyone riding a bike or motorcycle must wear a helmet.
- The government will determine the jobs you will have and what schools you will attend.
- A $ 0.50 tax will be added to each gallon of gasoline for cleaning the environment.
- Using a cell phone or handheld device while driving is forbidden.
- To discourage the consumption of sugary drinks, a $ .25 tax shall be added to all soft drinks, including fountain drinks and those in vending machines.

Day 1 – Activate Student Interest.

1. Activate student interest with magnetic statements: Explain to students that they will be participating in an activity using "magnetic statements" to help them understand the relationship between economic freedom and a country's standard of living.
2. Point out the statements hanging on the wall. Tell them to stand in front of the statement that most repels or attracts them.
3. Students discuss with the other students gathered around the statement. Then, students report to the whole class why they were attracted or repelled by the statement.

Student self-reflection:

Have students return to their seats and write a brief statement defending their reason for choosing the statement from the wall.

Build Content Knowledge:

1. Display the definition of economic freedom. Read it to the students.
2. Ask students how the government rules and laws from the "magnetic statement" activity would affect their economic freedom.

   (Possible answers could include
   - *Economic activity is limited by laws that determine when and where they can work or go to school*
   - *The tax reduces the amount of money available for spending on other things.*
   - *The rules limit individual freedom by restricting what they can buy.*
   - *The taxes may limit a person's ability to make a living if the individual can't afford to pay the higher cost of gasoline and has no alternative transportation.*
   - *They are required to spend their money purchasing a helmet).*

4. Explain that all nations have economic goals. Countries with **market economies** emphasize economic freedom, allowing consumers and producers to make their own economic choices.
5. Display the concept **"standard of living"** on a projector or on a chalkboard. Ask students what the concept means. Ask them what it would look like. Ask them to make a list of items that might be include in the standard of living in their community. (Typical responses include a smartphone, name brand clothing and shoes, computer, new car, large-screen television, nice house, gaming systems and games, etc.).
6. Ask students how laws that restrict economic freedom might affect the standard of living in a country.
7. Tell students they are going to test their theory in a scavenger hunt for economic and geographic data.
8. Display and read the definition for **gross domestic product (GDP)** and display the chart comparing country A and country B.

	Country A	Country B
GDP	$1,000	$2,000
Population	50	200

9. Ask students which country has a higher standard of living based on the GDP and why. *(B has a larger dollar amount of GDP).*
10. Display the **gross domestic product per capita.** Add the information about population to the chart and ask which has a higher GDP per capita. *(Country A because it has per capita- per person GDP of $20 while country B has $10).*
11. Ask students what must happen to a country's GDP if the country wants to increase or improve its GDP? *(The economy must grow faster than its population).*
12. What kind of a work force would be needed to improve GDP? *(Trained, educated, healthy).*
13. What impact would new capital goods (tools, equipment, and machines) have on GDP*? (It would increase GDP)*
14. GDP and GDP per capita measure factors such as health and education that affect the welfare of a country's citizens.
15. Display Visual A of Terms. Point out that one way a country's health is measured is by its infant mortality and its literacy rate.

<u>Developed vs. Developing Countries</u>

16. Explain that geographers are concerned with a country's development. **Development** is the process of improving people's material conditions through diffusion of knowledge and technology.
17. Explain that countries are grouped as developed and developing. Stress that a literate, educated workforce is absolutely necessary for a country to become fully developed.
18. When geographers rank countries as more developed or less developed they consider literacy rates and infant mortality rates, and the percentage of the population employed in **primary, secondary and tertiary industries. (**Primary industries collect and produce raw materials and agricultural products; secondary industries manufacture products, tertiary industries provide services).

19. Ask students to give examples of each type of industry.
20. Point out that a larger percentage of the population in developed countries are employed in services and manufacturing. In developing countries the higher percentage of the populations employed in producing raw materials and agricultural products.

Group Activity Day 2 and 3

1. Divide the class into groups of 3.
2. Give each group copies of a) the Group Scavenger Hunt; b) the chart of Geographical and Economic Indicators; and the Index of Economic Freedom
3. Display the map of "Economic Freedom Scores"
4. Explain that the GDP data for these countries have been converted to U.S. dollars.
5. Instruct the groups to complete the "Group Scavenger Hunt."
6. Assign each group to one of the countries on the chart. Assign Part B of the Scavenger Hunt Activity. Go over the instructions with them.
7. Give students time to work and then go over their answers.
8. Ask them how much economic freedom they think their countries have and why.
9. Distribute copies of the Index of Economic Freedom. The index uses several categories to determine its scores. The categories include wages, prices, banking and property rights.
10. Point out that the LOWER the score the HIGHER rate of economic freedom.
11. Compare the maps of economic freedom. Ask each group if their country is more developed or less developed.
12. Instruct the students to write their scores on the blank map for Economic Freedom Scores.

Whole Class Discussion

Discuss the following:

1. Where are the most-developed countries located?
2. Where are the less-developed countries located?
3. What conclusions can you make about a countries geography, economic freedom and economic development?
4. Which countries appear to have a higher standard of living, developed or developing?
5. What is the quality of life in developed countries compared to developing countries>
6. Why are most countries in the world moving toward market economies?

Closure and Review

Review the key points of the lesson. Ask the following questions:

1. What is economic freedom?
2. What is gross domestic product?
3. What is the standard of living?
4. What are primary industries?
5. What are secondary industries?
6. What are tertiary industries?
7. What are developed countries?

8. What are developing countries?
9. Why are countries moving toward market economies?

Assessment Options:
Use the United Nations Report for the assessment on this activity.

Resources:
Middle School World Geography Focus on Economics. National Council for Economic Education. New York, NY.
This lesson plan is based on the original plan published by NCEE.

http://www.forbes.com/sites/alejandrochafuen/2015/01/28/the-unequal-respect-for-the-human-right-to-economic-liberty/

http://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/gmaps.jsp
Interactive map

https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/
CIA World Factbook

http://www.heritage.org/index/heatmap

Extension and Enrichment/Simplification:
The CIA World Fact book https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ has an interactive map that allows students to explore the indicators for each country in the world. Students can easily click on a country learn the most recent information available.

Geography: Focus on Economics published by the Council for Economic Education, 1996. My lesson plan originated with this publication. The lesson was updated for 2015.