

Understanding the Role of Constitutional Government in Promoting Economic Prosperity

Student Guide

Why is the principle of equality important for achieving prosperity?

How does the government create a stable and predictable environment for economic prosperity?

How can the government encourage widespread prosperity by supporting a constitutional rule of law?

In this activity, you will...

- ☐ define prosperity, equality, and rule of law.
- ☐ analyze examples of government approaches to providing equal opportunity to prosperity.
- ☐ explain the role of government and its relationship to economic prosperity and economic equality.

Anticipate:

Directions: Optional: As you watch the Prosperity video, think about what prosperity means or looks like to you or how it might be achieved.

Record your notes here

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Directions: Consider Lao Tzu's quote on government. What do you think he means that the government works best when people are not aware that it is helping them? Why would a government that people are constantly aware of be problematic?

Record your notes here

Directions: As you watch the Equality video, answer the following questions. What is the best way for governments to try to expand prosperity? How does this video either support or contradict the quote from Lao Tzu? Why?

Record your notes here

Engage:

Directions: As you watch The Government's Role video, consider what are some examples of negative externalities in your life. What, if anything, should the government do to address them?

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Directions: As you watch the Rule of Law video, consider why rules, or laws, matter to prosperity, and how a lack of rule of law might impact equal opportunity to achieving prosperity.

Record your notes here

Directions: As you read the Background of the Commerce Clause, answer the following questions.

To what does *interstate commerce* refer to?

Why might the national government have an interest in regulating interstate commerce?

What might be the effect of too much regulation on interstate commerce?

Which level of government should regulate commerce that is within a state?

Directions: As you read the story of *Wickard v. Filburn*, answer the following questions.

Why was Wickard penalized under the Agricultural Adjustment Act?
How did the Supreme Court rule in this case? What was its reasoning?
Do you agree with the Court's decision? Should the national government be able to regulate Wickard's production of wheat through the Commerce Clause?

Directions: After you have completed the “agree or disagree” activity, answer the following questions.

Does the <i>Wickard v. Filburn</i> decision feel like it was helping the lungs (economy) breathe, or restraining breathing (economic growth)?
Does the decision simply support the rule of law for private enterprise or does it expand the federal government's role in the economy?
Should the measure of government power be its effect on the economy or on the rights of the individual farmer?

Explore:

My Group	
What is the law?	
What is the purpose of their law?	
What do you think is its impact on prosperity?	

Round 1: Group ___ Sharing	
What is Group ___'s law?	
What is the purpose of their law?	
What do you think is its impact on prosperity?	
Round 2: Group ___ Sharing	
What is Group ___'s law?	
What is the purpose of their law?	

What do you think is its impact on prosperity?	
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Round 3: Group ___ Sharing	
What is Group ___'s law?	
What is the purpose of their law?	
What do you think is its impact on prosperity?	
Round 4: Group ___ Sharing	
What is Group ___'s law?	
What is the purpose of their law?	
What do you think is its impact on prosperity?	