

PLANNING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM WITH VIRTUAL ECONOMICS

TIME FRAME: 60 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Computers (connected to the Internet, if possible) (1 per participant)
- *Virtual Economics* CD-ROM or USB Flash Drive (1 per participant)
- Problem Scenarios Worksheets (1 per participant)

STEP 1: 45 minutes

The participants have now seen a general overview of *Virtual Economics* in the context of a PowerPoint presentation and perused the tool via a general scavenger hunt. The purpose of this activity is to provide a specific context in the form of a problem scenario, and then have the participants apply what they've learned about the organization and features of *Virtual Economics* to solve that problem.

The *Problem Scenarios worksheet* lists 10 problems ranging from elementary school literature, to U.S. History, to debate team, to mathematics. The participants may be assigned all 10 scenarios or selected scenarios to solve working alone, or they may be placed into teams and asked to solve the problems together. Alternatively, you may create your own scenarios or adapt the existing ones. Give the participants 45 minutes to solve the problems.

STEP 2: 15 minutes

Go over the results of their research.

PROBLEM SCENARIOS - PAGE 1

PROBLEM 1: As an early-childhood (K-2) teacher, you are preparing a unit on the economics concept of producers. You want your students to understand that producers use different types of productive resources to make goods and services that people want.

TASK: Construct a glossary of key terms which you want your students to know, such as producers, consumers, natural resources, capital resources, human resources, entrepreneurship, goods and services. If a printer is available, print a copy of the definitions.

PROBLEM 2: You are a fourth-grade teacher in a school where there is an emphasis on integrating literature into all subjects. You are looking for lessons that you can use in your social studies class to teach about human capital and the world of work.

TASK: Locate and select an appropriate lesson from the publication *Choices and Changes in Life, School and Work*, and write the title here.

PROBLEM 3: Your tenth-grade Economics students are having trouble understanding how the Federal Reserve conducts open market operations. You would like to find a simulation to use with them.

TASK: Find a publication and lesson which will meet your requirement.

PROBLEM 4: One of your 11th grade Economics students defaced school property. You recognize this as a “teachable moment” on the concept of property rights.

TASK: Find a lesson which will explain why ownership of private property tends to encourage certain behavior, and write the title here.

PROBLEM 5: As a middle school social studies teacher, you are looking for a lesson to use as an introduction to a unit on world trade. You want to lay the foundation for your class by addressing the concepts of specialization, trade and exchange, and economic interdependence.

TASK: Find the publication *The Wide World of Trade*. Which lessons in the publication would be of most use to you?

PROBLEM 6: Your high school's debate team is preparing for a competition, the topic of which is “What is the appropriate role of government in the economy?” You are the team's coach.

TASK: Find the publication *Civics and Government: Focus on Economics*. Which lesson would be most useful to your students?

PROBLEM 7: Your middle school math students need practice in graphing data on a coordinate graph, and you want to review linear function. You are looking for a lesson to which they can relate, using the economic concepts of supply and demand.

TASK: Locate Lesson 10 in *Mathematics & Economics: Connections for Life-Grades 6-8*. What aspect of this lesson do you think will be most effective?

PROBLEM 8: Your high school U.S. History class is about to study the Great Depression. You want to include a discussion on the stock market crash of 1929 and the Federal Reserve's monetary policy at that time. Some of the students are quite advanced, others less so.

TASK: Make a list of six or seven possible lessons.

PROBLEM SCENARIOS - PAGE 2

PROBLEM 9

As a twelfth-grade World History teacher, you are preparing to introduce the course with a discussion on different types of economic systems. You would prefer a simulation, and you remember something about a parking-lot activity that a friend had acquired from attending an economics workshop.

***TASK:** Search by keyword **parking lot** for both middle and high school. What lesson in what publication was your friend talking about?*

PROBLEM 10

You teach a yearlong high school Economics course. You want your students to undertake an online project that tracks productivity and GDP during the course of the school year.

***TASK:** Select online lessons, and use the search engine. Which features of EconEdLink (<http://www.econedlink.org>) might be useful tools?*