

Civics: A Christian Worldview. You Are the Central Planners (20-25 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Instructions

1. **Objective:** Students get practical experience learning that running an economy is completely outside of the ability of government planners.
2. Print Page 2, and hand out to students; give them 12-15 minutes to complete individually.
3. Students discuss in groups/pairs/tables when they're finished.
4. Discuss together as a class when finished. (Ask for volunteers!)
5. Quickly review the "Wrap-Up" points below.

Answer Key

SCENARIO 1 (Winter Goods) - What students should realize:

1. Different regions need different items.
2. Some people prefer heaters, others blankets.
3. Some already own coats.
4. Some are poor, some rich.
5. There is no way to **measure** demand.
6. **Key Point:** They are guessing without consumer feedback.

SCENARIO 2 (Grocery Distribution) - What students should realize:

1. Tastes change daily.
2. Cities have different diets.
3. There's no way to predict bread vs. apple demand.
4. Shortages and waste are inevitable.
5. **Key Point:** There's no way to track shifting preferences.

SCENARIO 3 (Shoes) - What students should realize:

1. Sizes vary wildly.
2. Fashion and seasons change.
3. Kids outgrow shoes constantly.
4. Wrong guesses = piles of unwanted shoes, shortages of needed ones.
5. **Key Point:** It's impossible to predict variety demand.

Wrap-Up

- Central planners cannot know what people want, how much they want, when they want it, what they'll pay for it, and so on, because there are no price signals (for buyers), profit/loss signals (for producers), and no choice.
- Business owners use prices, profit, loss, and customer choice to constantly adjust production. Central planners have none of this information, so they can only guess — and guessing causes shortages and waste.
- **Ask Students:** "How many of you felt like you were just guessing?" (ANSWER: ALL OF THEM! That's the whole point of this exercise.)
- **Closing Question to Ask Students:** "Does it make sense WHY the Bible says that the legit purpose of government is to threaten and punish harming and stealing from others, not running an economy?"

Civics: A Christian Worldview. You Are the Central Planners

Private businesses are illegal. Prices are illegal. Competition is illegal. You are the **National Economic Planning Committee**. You must decide:

- How many of each item to produce
- What price to charge
- Who receives how much

Scenario 1 — Winter Is Coming!

Your country has 5 million citizens, and you must decide how many of these items to produce:

- Coats
- Blankets
- Firewood bundles
- Space heaters

Questions

1. How many of each will you produce?
2. What price will you set?
3. How do you know this is the right amount?

Scenario 2 — The Grocery Problem

The government collects all food and distributes it. Foods available:

- Bread
- Milk
- Eggs
- Beef
- Apples

Questions

1. How much of each food should be sent to each city?
2. What if people want more bread and less apples?
3. How will you know before shortages happen?



Scenario 3 — The Shoe Factory

You run the national shoe factory. Citizens need:

- Work boots
- Dress shoes
- Children's shoes
- Winter boots
- Sandals

Questions

1. How many of each type will you make?
2. How do you know what styles and sizes people want?
3. What if you guessed wrong?