

Economics: A Christian Worldview – Tuition Freeze Plan

(TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY)

Purpose

This activity reinforces the idea of looking beyond the short term (as Henry Hazlitt says that good economists should do).

Time

10-12 minutes

Instructions

- Print this instructions/key page (no handout!).
- Explain the below scenario and allow students to respond.
- If needed, write student responses on the board.

The Scenario

Some families at a Christian school are struggling to afford tuition. The school board decides to help by passing a rule: Tuition cannot increase for the next five years. The goal is to make Christian education more affordable.

Part 1: Setup

Say:

You are now members of the school board at a Christian school. You care about families who are struggling, so you pass a rule: tuition will not go up for five years.

Pause.

That sounds compassionate. Let's think carefully.

Part 2: Immediate Effect

Ask:

1. **Who is this rule trying to help?**
(Expected: families currently enrolled or applying.)
2. **What is the immediate benefit?**
(Expected: predictable costs / financial relief.)

Say:

So far, that seems kind and helpful.

Part 3: Wider Effects

Now expand the lens.

Ask: Who else is affected besides current families?

Guide toward:

- Teachers
- Future students
- School staff
- Donors
- The school itself

Ask: If costs rise (utilities, curriculum, insurance), but tuition cannot increase, what must happen?

Push toward:

- Lower teacher raises
- Larger class sizes
- Fewer programs
- Reduced resources
- Increased fundraising

3. If this continues for several years, what might happen to these groups (ask one at a time)?

- Teachers (Answer: They might leave for better pay.)
- Academic Quality (Answer: It might decline.)
- School's Finances (It has a good chance of struggling.)
- Families (Fewer families can be served long-term.)

Ask:

- Did this policy focus mainly on one group at first?
- Did it emphasize the immediate relief more than long-term sustainability?

Students should see both clearly.

Part 4: Christian Reflection

Ask:

- How might wisdom require thinking about long-term stewardship?
- What does this scenario have to do with our economics study so far?

Close with this:

Compassion is beneficial, but compassion must also be wise.