

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.
Crazy Commerce Clause Conclusions (15–20 Minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Goal

Students see how a broad interpretation of the Commerce Clause can be used to connect almost any activity to federal regulation.

Instructions

1. Put students in pairs/small groups.
2. Allow 10–12 minutes for groups to complete the activity.
3. Discuss as a class via volunteers.

Suggested Key (AWV)

Scenario #1

- Home-grown apples reduce purchases from growers.
- Growers sell across state lines.
- Therefore apple production affects interstate commerce.
- Therefore government may require vegetables.

Scenario #2

- Education affects future workers.
- Workers affect the national economy.
- The national economy affects interstate commerce.

Scenario #3

- Time spent at a private cabin affects travel spending decisions.
- Travel spending affects tourism businesses.
- Tourism businesses operate across state lines.
- Therefore vacation decisions affect interstate commerce.

Scenario #4

- Lawn-care work competes with other lawn-care businesses.
- Those businesses purchase equipment and hire workers.
- Those activities affect interstate commerce.
- Therefore the teenager's work may be regulated.

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Crazy Commerce Clause Conclusions

For each scenario, fill in 3–5 steps showing how someone with a very broad view of the “commerce clause” in the U.S. Constitution might start with the listed U.S. power and follow some distorted, twisted steps to make the conclusion at the end of each scenario. Have fun!

Scenario #1: The Apple Orchard

Congress may regulate commerce among the several states.

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The U.S. government may limit how many apple trees a person grows on his own property.



Scenario #2: The Christian School Classroom

Congress may regulate commerce among the several states.

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The U.S. government may establish curriculum requirements for every Christian school in America.

Scenario #3: The Family Vacation

Congress may regulate commerce among the several states.

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The U.S. government may decide how many days a family may stay at a vacation cabin they own.

Scenario #4: The High School Job

Congress may regulate commerce among the several states.

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The U.S. government may determine the work schedule of a teenager mowing lawns in his hometown.