



Universal Basic Income: Lesson Plan

Topic	
A universal basic income, or UBI, is a program where every person receives a flat monthly income regardless of whether or not they are working. Most proposals do not suggest an amount that is enough to live on completely, but enough to cover most basic necessities. Several UBI programs have been tried in the US and around the world, but most of them are still in their pilot or research phases.	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
Economics, Political science, social studies, Civics	30-45 mins
Video link:	
https://academy4sc.org/video/universal-basic-income-free-money/	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
<p>Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how universal basic income programs work • Identify criticisms of UBI • Discuss research findings on the effectiveness of UBI 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Automation, income	
Materials Needed	
Worksheet, internet access	
Before you watch	
Think-pair-share: What are the “basic necessities” that every person needs to live? What’s your best guess of how much those basic necessities cost each month for the average person in your city?	
While you watch	



1. What is universal basic income?
2. Name 3 places that UBI has been tried.
3. What has research found about the relationship between UBI and employment?

After you watch/discussion questions

1. What do you think the effects of a Universal Basic Income program would be in your city or country?
2. Do you think UBI is the best option to protect workers whose jobs are eliminated due to automation? Why or why not?
3. What type of program do you think would be most effective for lifting people out of poverty, UBI or means-tested programs like food and housing assistance?

Activity Ideas

1. **UBI or Means-tested task force:** Students imagine that they work for the Department of the Treasury and must decide whether to implement a UBI or means-tested income for the country. They must think through the positives and negatives to each and defend their choice.
2. **Op-ed:** Students choose a stance on UBI and write a well-reasoned article defending their stance. Op-ed resources and assignment print outs are available [here](#). If you email student articles to team@united4sc.org we will publish them on students4sc.org.
3. Have students complete the research activity on the attached worksheet individually or in small groups. Source #3 below is a great article to get them started.

Sources/places to learn more

1. Sundlee, Robyn. Alaska's universal basic income problem. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/9/5/20849020/alaska-permanent-fund-universal-basic-income>
2. Peters, Katelyn. Universal Basic Income. Investopedia. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/basic-income.asp>
3. Samuel, Sigal. Everywhere basic income has been tried, in one map. Vox. <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2020/2/19/21112570/universal-basic-income-ubi-map>



4. Weller, Chris. Iran introduced a basic income scheme, and something strange happened. World Economic Forum.

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/05/iran-introduced-a-basic-income-scheme-and-something-strange-happened/>