ACTIVITY 1 - A Survey: 4 Countries and You

Introduction:

In this activity, students participate in a survey answering questions about their feelings regarding various economic systems as well as methods for funding government. They then get to compare their results with those of a large research study across 4 countries, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. They'll discover trends among those who support socialism and those who don't, as well as who is willing to support the methods necessary to pay for socialism.

Materials:

Activity 1 Slide Deck - https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1govC1E32L8-mMI4t0cpDlC8TPGt5VCW7K5kdrJA430E/edit?usp=sharing

Key Terms:

Capitalism	An economic system characterized by private property, individual decision making, and open, competitive markets.
Communism	A society in which there is no private property. Everything is owned in common and available to everyone as needed.
Fascism	A society and economic system led by a dictator.
Socialism	A society in which the state controls resources and makes decisions about production and equitable distribution.
Tax/Taxation	A mandatory financial charge imposed on citizens by the government.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define Socialism using both traditional and modern definitions.
- Describe the relationship between age and support for socialism.
- Explain how support for socialism falls when linked to tax policies necessary to pay for it.

Time Required

45 minutes

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Voluntary National Content Standards

CONTENT STANDARD 16: Role of Government and Market Failure

There is an economic role for government in a market economy whenever the benefits of a government policy outweigh its costs. Governments often provide for national defense, address environmental concerns, define and protect property rights, and attempt to make markets more competitive. Most government policies also have direct or indirect effects on people's incomes.

- Benchmark 8: Government laws establish the rules and institutions in which markets operate. These include such things as property rights, collective bargaining rules, laws about discrimination, and laws regulating marriage and family life.
- Benchmark 9: Governments often redistribute income directly when individuals or interest groups are not satisfied with the income distribution resulting from markets; governments also redistribute income indirectly as side-effects of other government actions that affect prices or output levels for various goods and services.
- Benchmark 10: Different tax structures affect consumers and producers differently.
- Benchmark 11: Governments provide an alternative to private markets for supplying goods and services when it appears that the benefits to society of doing so outweigh the costs to society. Not all individuals will bear the same costs or share the same benefits of those policies.

Procedures:

1. Use slides 1-3 to explain that students will be answering survey questions that were part of a research study done by Leger, A Canadian Market Research and Analytics Company, across 4 countries: Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
    - NOTE: The google slides are prepared with Pear Deck so you can reveal students' answers, you can also do this with nearpod, poll anywhere, or other similar teacher polling tools.
2. Ask questions 1 through 4 and have students answer in PearDeck (or other polling tool) their feelings about **Facism, Communism, Socialism** and **Capitalism**. Go through all 4 questions without revealing answers or showing student results (slides 4-7).
3. Return to slide 4 and show student results for each question, drawing attention to trends, majorities, etc.
4. Use slides 8-12 to show the results of the survey participants at large. As you move from slide to slide, ask students to identify trends or conclusions they can draw from the charts.
    - NOTE: These results focus on socialism as that was the focus of the study.
5. On slide 13, have students give their best definition of socialism on PearDeck (or other polling tool). After they've had a couple minutes to generate an answer, reveal their answers anonymously and read several or many of them, focusing on those that reference equity, equality, fair, collectively, etc.

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6. Use slides 14 and 15 to provide a more traditional and then more modern definition of socialism. Make comparisons to some of the definitions students wrote.
7. Use slides 16-19 to illustrate how many survey participants believe socialism means more government services, a guaranteed annual income, or both.
8. Use slides 21-24 to ask survey questions 6-9, regarding different **taxation** methods to pay for socialism. Have students provide their answers in PearDeck (or other polling tool).
9. Use slides 25 - 28 to reveal survey participants results for support of different **taxation** methods to pay for students. As you show charts, ask students to identify trends they notice.

Conclusion

There is strong support for **socialism** amongst 18-34 year olds, while the majority of older individuals don't support socialism. Today, younger individuals define socialism as more government spending, meaning more services and/or guaranteed annual income. While people generally want someone else to pay for socialism, there is weak support for the broad-based **tax** increases that would be necessary to support it.

Younger adults want what they perceive Sweden and Denmark to have, but in Denmark and Sweden even the middle class pay 55% of their income for services. They perceive themselves as market economies that pay for education and health care.

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