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The following lesson plan is the result of the joined effort of an international team of trainers. Their focus is to improve quality of debate training. Therefore, an important part of this endeavour is the feedback users provide.

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Lesson plan – Content – Economics – Intermediate/Advanced

A. Goal of the lesson

- This lesson aims to give students a working familiarity with basic reasoning in economics;
- This lesson aims to give students the ability to find solutions to gaps in their knowledge, including research and critical thinking skills.

B. Activities

1. Lecture (15 min)

Explain some basic concepts and its application of debates. See the **provided theory** for an overview you could use for your presentation. See if the class has questions about economic dilemma's. If they do, try to reason with your class what the answer could be. If that does not work, use Exercise 1 to come up with an answer. If the class has no questions, use Exercise 2 to apply the material.

2. Exercise 1: Class Research (40 min)

If the students come up with questions that you don't find a quick answer to in class, write the question on the board. After the Lecture is over, divide the class in groups equivalent to the number of questions on the board. Each group gets 5 minutes to brainstorm their answers, then 15 minutes to look up additional information on the internet (if possible in your classroom setting), and then 5 minutes to formulate an answer to the question. The students give a short 2-minute presentation per group on their findings.

3. Exercise 2: Class Debate (40 min)

Provide the class with a motion on the topic. Discuss the knowledge needed with the class as a whole (10 minutes). Then divide the class in 2 groups (or more if the class size is over 16, as long as the number is divisible by 2). Give the groups a side to prepare. The groups need to come up with a case in favour or against a motion, and have one member prepare a 3-minute Prime Minister or Leader of Opposition speech (5 minutes if the students can fill 5 minutes during practice debates) (15 minutes). The Prime Minister and Leader of Opposition deliver their speeches. If multiple group exists, you can either select at random the Prime Minister and Leader of Opposition, or split up the group in two if you have a second trainer present to



evaluate the other group. [10 minutes]
The whole class offers feedback on the delivered speeches. [5 minutes].

C. Preparation

- Read the **provided theory** if you feel you don't have an handle on this topic. An additional entry into economics can be found here: https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Introduction_to_Economics. If you have more time on your hands, or prefer an audiovisual learning form, you can watch CrashCourse Economics on Youtube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ez10ADR_gM&list=PL8dPuuaLjXtPNZwz5_o_5uirJ8gQXnhEO
- Prepare three motions on economics. See www.hellomotions.com and check out their spreadsheet to have a good overview of economics motions. Pick motions that were used for preliminary rounds, as they are often more accessible.
- You can ask students to provide you with questions they have in advance on economics in order to help structure your lecture.

D. Hints

- Lectures can be dry and take a while. Make sure to apply the principles of Action-Based-Learning in your lectures. Have students identify which questions are most relevant to them, and test the students during your explanations, so that students create ownership over their learning process. This also avoids the pitfall of overestimating or lowballing your students' prior knowledge on the subject.
- You as a teacher may not know everything about this content lecture. The lecture is written such that students themselves explore these topics. Feel free to guide them towards finding their own answers.
- You as a teacher may know a lot about this topic. Be sure that you tailor your knowledge to your students' knowledge level and needs. Be sure to explain difficult jargon or concepts.

E. Verification

- Ask students what questions they have on the topic at the start of the class. Ask students at the end of the class if they feel their questions have answered.
- As a teacher, assess after the class what the problems were when students' questions were not answered. How could you have facilitated their search for answers better? Did the choice in elective exercise make sense for the level of your students?

F. Theory

Economics is the study on how **scarce goods** are **distributed** in the world. It looks at relationships on the **macro level** (the economies of countries or the world) and on the **micro level** (the economies of individuals). An **economy** is a place where economic activities take place.

The central concept that is important to understand economy is that of **supply and demand**. These two are ideally balancing forces. That means that supply

reacts to demand, and demand reacts to supply. **Demand** is the desire to have a certain good or service X. **Supply** is the amount of good or service X which (currently) exists. A **good** is a material or product (for instance steel or an iPhone). A **service** is an activity (such as teaching, building, or accounting).

Demand is determined both by the benefit (or **utility**) that users can gain from the product, the users' desire and capacity (money!) to afford this product.

Supply is determined by the ability to produce this product (capital, labour, and resources all factor in to this). Both also determine each other. If supply goes up and demand stays the same, more **competition** amongst suppliers for comparatively little demand means that prices go down. Prices also go down if demand goes down and supply stays the same (or increases). If demand rises but supplies stays the same, prices go up; if demand stays the same but supply goes down the same thing happens.

Lets take the following set of examples.

The Netherlands produces a lot of bikes. Due to a lot of accidents with bikes, more and more consumers are switching to taking the bus. Does the price of bikes in The Netherlands increase or decrease? [A: decrease, as supply has remained stable, but demand has decreased]

The baker Chris Sant makes truffle pastries and sells them online. He can only find truffles through his faithful swine, who finds a few truffles each day. A online food blog has discovered his pastries and wrote a glowing review. More and more people want to buy Shris' pastries. What will happen to the price of pastries? [A: increase, as supply has remained stable, but demand has increased].

Vanilla pudding is the most-eaten dessert in Germany. Due to climate change the vanilla plant grows slower and has lower vanilla yields. What will happen to the price of vanilla pudding in Germany? [A: increase, as supply has diminished but demand has stayed the same].

As a harder example:

Many investors bought Turkish lira as the Turkish economy is booming. Recently president Erdogan of Turkey has threatened to cut trade with the European Union if they don't take more refugees. Investors are spooked now and are selling their lira, fearing a trade war. What will happen to the price of the lira?

[A: it can differ! Both the supply of lira goes up, but demand also goes down. This question's answers need to be assessed based on the students' rationale for their answer]

What does this theory of demand and supply learn us?

Of course, economic theory is much more vast, and there is more than supply and demand to discuss. The reasoning behind all these other topics, from trade policy to currency inflation to political economy remains the same, however:

1. Economics studies incentives. People adapt their behaviour to an incentive if the incentive is good enough. Prices change based on incentives.
2. There is scarcity. There are both limited goods in the world, limited time, and limited choice options. Economics looks at the choices made within these limitations.

Based on these principles you can start reasoning your way through economic debates. If you know nothing about economy, ask yourself these elementary questions and use your reasoning skills to find the answers!