

WWP Lesson Plan -- Marxist Economics

This template was created to help people planning and teaching Workers World Party classes to make those interactive, interesting and consistent. Some of the classes are part of the curriculum for WWP candidates—and all are posted here online for personal and collective revolutionary communist development. Adapt and enhance the class as needed for your particular location and group!

*Teacher preparations and *Essential Understandings	<p>* Consider accessibility and accommodation needs: Everyone will not necessarily have access to a computer.</p> <p>Class leader should print out a few copies of any class materials being used to circulate for read-aloud. Also have some recent copies of WW newspaper on hand for the discussion on organizing.</p> <p>* Consider before class how to approach the most important lessons people should learn on this topic:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Labor theory of value2. Money and labor power3. Surplus value and exploitation4. Profit5. Declining rate of profit6. Value <p>This class could follow a study of Dialectical and Historical Materialism</p>
Overview of class	Power Point slide show outlining major concepts of Marxist Economics.
Motivating Question	Marxist economics is a difficult area of study for most people. Encourage people to voice <i>any</i> question they have, including the most basic questions—which will open up the discussion for everyone. At some point toward the end of the class ask: Now why do you think it is important for Marxists to study economics?
Readings, Materials, Links	<p>Deirdre Griswold “COVID-19 and basic facts of Marxist economics” https://www.workers.org/2020/04/47943/</p> <p><i>Supplemental readings:</i></p> <p>Karl Marx, “Value, Price and Profit” www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/value-price-profit.pdf</p>

<p>Readings, Materials, Links (contd.)</p>	<p>Sam Marcy, <i>High Tech, Low Pay: A Marxist Analysis of the Changing Character of the Working Class</i> https://www.workers.org/marcy/cd/samtech/index.htm</p> <p>“What Is Marxism All About?” https://www.workers.org/what-is-marxism-all-about/</p> <p>Fred Goldstein, “High-tech, low pay and capitalist crisis” https://www.workers.org/2019/01/40301/</p>
<p>Methods of learning:</p>	<p>Power Point slide show Discussion Book/article reports by participants</p>
<p>Discussion Questions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are commodities and how are they different from items that are produced to be shared? 2. Explain why exchange evolved and why it depends on differences in use values and a division of labor. 3. What is the common social substance in all commodities? 4. Why did Marx call money a special form of commodity? 5. Why did Marx call labor power a special form of commodity? 6. Why does Marx say labor is not a commodity but labor power is a commodity? 7. Explain Marx’s Labor Theory of Value. 8. Why don’t workers receive higher wages when their bosses make a profit? 9. Why are unions a most effective way for workers to counteract the laws of capitalist production?
<p>Organizing</p>	<p>Discuss what specific ways your local organizing could be strengthened by applying a knowledge of issues of Marxist economics in relation to actions against capitalism and for worker solidarity.</p>
<p>Skill Building</p>	<p>As a group, put together a leaflet on a local issue where you argue for a demand using some principle of Marxist economics.</p>
<p>Reflection</p>	<p>Save some time at the end for participants to answer questions about the class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What will you remember/be useful for you? 2. What would you change, spend less time on, or make less confusing?