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UBI (Universal Basic Income): Yay! We Don't Have to Work Anymore?

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UBI, or Universal Basic Income, is an economic policy where individuals are given tax-free money from the government to help pay for basic needs such as food, housing, and utilities. There are no work or financial requirement imposed on the recipients and no governmental oversight on how the money is spent. UBI has recently gained traction due to a global pandemic and fears that automation will continue to eliminate jobs, leaving a sizable portion of the population unemployed. Though UBI has support across the political spectrum, it is not a universally popular idea and there are many political and economic hurdles to address before a comprehensive UBI program can be implemented. This curriculum will provide a broad overview of issues associated with UBI, including what is UBI, why people feel it is necessary, why people dislike it, overviews of various UBI pilot programs, and lessons we can learn from them. This course was made for a high school English class, but with minor adjustments, this course can be adapted for other classes, notably US Government/Economics, Speech and Debate, and other ELA classes that can utilize the topic of UBI as a vehicle to practice reading, research, writing, and oration skills.

(Developed for ERWC, grade 12; recommended for ERWC, U. S. Government/Economics, Speech and Debate)

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