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# Universal Basic Income

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## **Videos:**

“How Universal Basic Income Would Work, According to Andrew Yang”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sgcvtjoi8Bs> (3:16 minutes)

“COVID Proves Andrew Yang’s UBI Won’t Work”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxISIfL2fpY> (6:32 minutes)

## **Guide:**

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on both sides of a contentious topic. Because these questions often touch upon statements made briefly in the videos, we recommend reading the questions before watching each video.

Students are encouraged to take notes during the videos, and it may be helpful for students to break into groups, each taking responsibility for only a few questions, before coming together for discussion.

## **Analysis Questions:**

1. What would you say is the topic discussed in these two videos?
2. What are the opposing ideas presented in these videos?
3. Andrew Yang says that universal basic income is “not as radical as you might think,” citing people throughout American history who supported the concept. Were you aware that proposals for universal basic income have been around for that long? Why do you think it’s become more popular in recent years?
4. According to the Reason video, polls show the majority of Americans support universal basic income. Does this surprise you? Why/Why not?
5. Andrew Yang says that 44% of American jobs will be subject to automation in the next 20 to 30 years. What is automation? Is it a bad thing? Why/Why not?
6. Nick Gillespie says that “it’s more effective to put unrestricted cash directly in the hands of those who need it.” Why is this?
7. Nick Gillespie says he thinks “giving people money for nothing would make them less likely to show up for a hard day’s work.” Do you think this is true? If so, is it important for people to show up for “a hard day’s work”? Why/Why not?
8. Andrew Yang says “technology is the oil of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” What did he mean by this? Should we view technology as a natural resource? Do tech companies owe a percentage of their profits to citizens?

9. In the Reason video, Andrew Yang says that making basic income universal “reduces any stigma.” What did he mean by this?
10. While Andrew Yang argues that making the program universal has benefits, Nick Gillespie objects to billionaires receiving a monthly check from the government. Please explain the pros-and-cons of the “universal” aspect of universal basic income.
11. Andrew Yang says universal basic income would save the government money on incarceration. Why is this?
12. Nick Gillespie says that Andrew Yang’s universal basic income plan relies partly on phasing out some existing spending, something Gillespie says “virtually never happens.” Why is it so hard to cut existing government spending to pay for new programs?
13. Andrew Yang says universal basic income would make the population more productive. How could “money for nothing” increase someone’s productivity?
14. Nick Gillespie says that the productivity gains from automation “will one day enable entrepreneurs to create whole new industries with work opportunities not yet conceived.” What did he mean by this?
15. One of Nick Gillespie’s biggest concerns with universal basic income is that it would contribute to the national debt. Are you concerned about the national debt? Should we be concerned about it? Why/Why not?
16. How would universal basic income impact you? Would you be considering a different career path? Would you not work at all?
17. Before watching these videos, did you have an opinion on universal basic income? Have these videos changed your views?
18. What role do you think Andrew Yang’s and Nick Gillespie’s political views played in the positions they took in their videos?
19. What else would you like to learn about universal basic income?
20. Should one of the arguments we heard carry more weight than the other? If so, which one? Why?