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# The Cost of Health Care

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## Videos:

“The real reason American health care is so expensive”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNla9nyRMmQ>

(5:41 minutes)

“How to Make Health Care Better and More Affordable”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCf7XACkDyU>

(4:27 minutes)

## Guide:

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on either side 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 are the opposing ideas in these two videos?
2. Should one of the arguments we heard carry more weight than the other? If so, which one? Why?
3. The FEE video described “price signals.” What are price signals?
4. In the Vox video, Ezra Klein showed that the United States government spends about as much on health care as nations with fully socialized medicine. Did you know that before watching this video? Does it surprise you? Why/Why not?
5. The FEE video said that most consumers don’t know the prices of health care services. Is this a problem? Why/Why not?
6. What were the reasons Ezra Klein gave for publicly insured, privately insured, and uninsured people paying different rates for health care?
7. The FEE video said that some patients “hog up” health care resources even when they don’t need them. What reason does the FEE video give for this?
8. Ezra Klein described the “master price list” some countries use. What is the master price list?
9. The FEE video said: “In the end, what ends up being paid has no real connection to the value of the service [consumers are] actually getting.” What did they mean by this?
10. Ezra Klein said that “because the government controls access to all of the customers, it’s an offer that [health care providers] can’t refuse.” What did he mean by this?
11. The FEE video used the term “opportunity cost.” What is opportunity cost?

12. Ezra Klein said that purchasing health care is different from purchasing other products and services, because people buying health care are in more desperate situations, and might even be incapacitated. Do you agree with this argument? Why/Why not?
13. The FEE video said: “The only solution here is to connect people to costs.” What did they mean by this?
14. Ezra Klein said: “This is the irony of American health care: it’s so expensive that it’s become hard to make it cheaper.” What did he mean by this?
15. The FEE video said that in areas of health care that use something closer to a free market system, technology improves and prices decrease over time. Why is this?
16. When talking about the possibility of some hospitals closing under a single payer system, Ezra Klein said: “One person’s waste is another person’s essential service or local hospital, or their income.” What did he mean by this?
17. The FEE video argued that health care vouchers would be better than a single payer system. What is the difference between the government paying directly for health care and giving consumers vouchers that can be used for health care?
18. Both videos show a desire to lower the cost of health care. Is there any common ground between the problems and potential solutions the two videos have identified?
19. Did you have an opinion of health care costs before watching these videos? If so, what was it? Has your opinion changed? If so, how? What did you learn from either video that affects your views of the debate over health care costs?
20. What could you learn about health care costs that might affect your view of this debate?
21. What else would you like to learn about health care?