
Minimum Wage: Revisited

Segment Length: 2:57 minutes; 3:53 minutes

Videos:

“The Big Picture: Fight For \$15 with Robert Reich”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXKLa2zfoTk>

“Minimum Wage”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PPec1VVyzgk>

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. Why does Robert Reich claim raising the minimum wage will create jobs?
2. Why does John Stossel argue, contra Robert Reich, that raising the minimum wage will actually reduce the number of entry level jobs available?
3. Could Reich’s and Stossel’s reasoning both be correct on the issue of jobs? That is, could a higher minimum wage shut beginners out of the market while also creating more jobs?
4. Robert Reich argues that a higher minimum wage would give employees more money to spend, which benefits the economy. Where does that additional money come from?
5. Why do you suppose John Stossel claims that an economy of free decisions leads to more people benefitting?
6. Both videos note that large corporations like Wal-Mart and Amazon have raised their wages above the minimum without any government compulsion. How might John Stossel cite this fact to argue that the minimum wage should not be raised? How might Robert Reich use the same fact to claim that the minimum wage is too low?
7. How does Robert Reich argue that a higher minimum wage will help business owners save on costs?
8. According to Robert Reich, a higher minimum wage leads to a larger pool of potential employees. How could John Stossel use this to argue against Reich’s point?

9. Why does Merv Crist tell John Stossel, as a result of higher minimum wage, that he no longer hires employees without skills who will need to be trained?