



Understanding Public Goods:

A Lesson Plan for High School Students using a Game of Thrones clip

Objectives:

Students will understand the concept of public goods and market failures.

Students will analyze the Night's Watch in Game of Thrones as an example of a public good.

Students will apply the concept of market failures to the Night's Watch and discuss potential solutions.

Materials:

Whiteboard and markers

Handout with definitions of public goods and market failures

Clip from Game of Thrones Season 1, Episode 3. [Link here.](#)

Procedures:

Introduction (10 minutes)

- Introduce the concept of public goods and market failures using the handout.
- Ask students to brainstorm examples of public goods (e.g. clean air, public parks, national defense) and discuss why they are considered public goods.
- Explain that in this lesson, we will be looking at the Night's Watch in Game of Thrones as an example of a public good and market failure.

Instruction (10 minutes)

- Show the clip from Game of Thrones Season 1, Episode 9 where Master Aemon talks to Tyrion about the Night's Watch.
- Ask students to identify the Night's Watch as a public good and explain why.
- Ask students to identify the market failure in the Night's Watch's situation (i.e. underfunding) and explain why it is a market failure.
- Discuss Master Aemon's appeal to Lord Tyrion and the potential solutions to the market failure.

Application (20 minutes)

- Divide students into small groups and ask them to discuss the following questions:
- What are some other examples of public goods that are underfunded or experiencing a market failure?
- What are some potential solutions to these market failures?
- After the group discussion, each group share their ideas with the class.
- Ask students to choose an example of a public good and write a brief paragraph about how it is underfunded or experiencing a market failure.
- Then, ask students to suggest potential solutions to the market failure.
- Allow students to share their ideas with the class.

Conclusion (10 minutes)

- Summarize the key points of the lesson, including the definition of public goods, the Night's Watch as an example of a public good and market failure, and potential solutions to market failures.
- Ask students to reflect on what they learned and how they can apply it to real-world situations.