



Time
Required:
30 minutes

Grade Level:
6-8th grades

Skills for the 21st Century Marketplace Activity

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“Human Knot” Activity

Infusionomics Themes, Keystone Economic Principles, and Skills for the 21st Century Marketplace:

- **THEME: CHOICES**

- **Keystone Economic Principle™ #3:** All choices have consequences
- **Skills:** 7. Critical Thinking; d. Solve Problems; i. Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways
- **Skills:** 8. Contextual Learning; b. Flexibility; iii. Understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments

- **THEME: COSTS**

- **Keystone Economic Principle™ #2:** TANSTAAFL™ (There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch)

- **THEME: RESOURCES**

- **Keystone Economic Principle™ #8:** Quantity and quality of resources impact living standards
- **Skills:** 14. Creativity and Innovation; 14.a-c
- **Skills:** 17. Communication and Interpersonal Skills; b. Teamwork
- **Skills:** 17. Communication and Interpersonal Skills; d. Dealing with Conflict

** For additional standards and content references, please see the [end of document](#).

Overview:

In the Human Knot activity, students stand in a cluster close together and grab hands with other students. They must hold hands with two different people. Once everyone is holding hands, the students must attempt to detangle themselves without letting go until they are standing in a circle.

Objectives:

This activity will help teach the students teamwork, communication skills, and conflict management.

Materials and Handouts:

None required

Activity:

- Split students into groups of 7-10 students. Have each group stand in a cluster close together.
- Have students all put their hands in the middle and grab two other hands to hold hands with. No one should be holding two hands of the same person. Once all hands are holding another hand, tell the students to detangle themselves without ever letting go of hands. They are finished when the group is standing in a circle holding hands.

Writing Prompt or Class Discussion:

Here are some optional questions for writing prompts and/or class discussion.

- Questions on teamwork:
 - What strategy did you use to decide what the team should do next?
 - Was there a person that emerged as a leader?
 - Did your team have to make compromises?
 - What if one person had decided he/she didn't want to work with the team? Could you have accomplished the task?
- Questions on how this exercise applies to real life:
 - In what areas of your life do you act as a teammate or group member?
 - What can we learn from this activity that applies to working in groups?
 - What makes a good teammate?
 - When working in teams, how do we all decide what strategy we are going to use?
 - Is it important to work as a team, or can we all make our own decisions all the time?
 - How can you all be better teammates at home? At school? In your sports?

Additional Standards and Content References

Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics:

- Standard #2 : Decision Making
- Standard #14 : Entrepreneurship

Partnership for 21st Century Life Skills Concept:

- Learning and Innovation Skills > Communication and Collaboration
- Learning and Innovation Skills > Creativity and Innovation > Think Creatively, Work Creatively with Others
- Learning and Innovation Skills > Creativity and Innovation > Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Life and Career Skills > Flexibility and Adaptability

National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship Education:

- Ready Skills, D. Communication and Interpersonal Skills; Group Working Relationships (D.23-D.26)

Economics Vocabulary:

- Consequence** - A result or effect of an action or decision; may be positive or negative.
- Entrepreneur** - One who draws upon his or her skills and initiative to launch a new business venture with the aim of making a profit. Often a risk-taker, inclined to see opportunity when others do not.
- Globalization** - Although there is no one precise definition, the term usually refers to the increased flow of trade, people, investment, technology, culture and ideas among countries.
- Human Resources** - The health, education, experience, training, skills and values of people. Also known as human capital.
- Interdependence** - A situation in which decisions made by one person affect decisions made by other people, or events in one part of the world or sector of the economy affect other parts of the world or other sectors of the economy.
- Invisible Hand** - A figure of speech representing the idea that individuals making decisions in their own self-interest will at the same time create economic order and promote society's interests; coined by Adam Smith.
- Unintended Consequences** - The unexpected and unplanned results of a decision or action.
- Source: *EconEdLink.org* by the Council for Economic Education

Keystone Economic Principles™:

- For more information: http://infusionomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Keystone_Cheat.pdf