

**Date Reviewed**

March 2021

**Course**

[Explorations in Social Studies 11](#)

**Topic**

Two Views of Justice

**Big Idea**

Examining questions in philosophy allows people to question their assumptions and better understand their own beliefs (from Philosophy 12).

**Essential Question**

What is justice?

**Learning Standards****Content:**

*Students are expected to know the following:*

- fundamental nature of knowledge, existence, and reality (adapted from Philosophy 12)

**Curricular Competencies**

*Students are expected to be able to do the following:*

- Make reasoned ethical judgments about people, places, events, phenomena, ideas, or developments and determine appropriate ways to respond (ethical judgment)

**Core Competencies**

[Communication](#) - I can discuss the major issues around fairness and justice in creating laws for a society.

[Thinking](#) - I can analyze the tensions between two visions of a society and their benefits and deficits.

[Personal and Social](#) – I can consider the criteria for the concepts of fair, equal, and just in the context of public life.

**First People's Principles of Learning**

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

## Introduction

- Show the Crash Course Philosophy video [What is Justice?](#). Stop at 6:40.
- Provide students with the handout “Viewing Guide: What is Justice” and show the video a second time while students fill in their responses.

## Pre-Assessment

- Write the following words on the board: Fairness, Equality, Equity, Entitlement, Justice.
- Ask: How are these concepts similar? How are they different?

## Interactive Learning Activities

### Part 1: Simulation

- In advance of the simulation, print out “Actual Grades” and “Boosted Grades”. Cut out the marks and place them in 10 white and 10 coloured envelopes.
- Begin by asking students if they have ever felt like a mark was unfair.
- Using a [Socratic Circle](#) strategy, have ten volunteers sit in an inner circle surrounded by their classmates.
- Use the slides “The Grading Game” to guide students through a simulation that will have them consider competing visions of society and their implications for laws and legislation.
- Lead the simulation using the visuals and instructions provided in the slides.

### Part 2: Two Views of Society

- Using the slides “Two Views of Society”, present and discuss two competing visions of the State.
- Have them work with a partner to critically analyze the benefits and deficits of these two views of society. Provide students with the handout “PMI Chart”. They should complete one “PMI Chart” for Rawles’s view and one for Nozick’s view.

## Post-Assessment

- Have students respond in writing to the reflection questions on the handout “Just Society”.

## Extension Activities

- Explore the concept of an unequal playing field by showing the video [Race, Equality, Equity](#) (3:29).
- Explore the concept of privilege by sharing the [Privilege Power Wheel](#).

## Additional References

“Comparison of John Rawls And Robert Nozick Politics Essay.” 2018. UKEssays.  
<https://www.ukessays.com/essays/politics/comparison-of-john-rawls-and-robert-nozick-politics-essay.php?vref=1>

“Essay: John Rawls and Robert Nozick: Liberalism vs. Libertarianism.” [ca.2011?] *Parallel Narratives*.  
<https://parallelnarratives.com/john-rawls-and-robert-nozick-liberalism-vs-libertarianism/>

Fraser, C. R. 2011. "John Rawls, Robert Nozick, and the Difference Principle: Finding Common Ground." *Inquiries Journal/Student Pulse*, 3(04). Retrieved from <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/a?id=510>

McCartney, S. and Parent, R. [n.d.] "Rawls' Theory of Justice". *Ethics in Law Enforcement. Chapter 2: Ethical Systems*. [Victoria, B.C.]: BCCampus. <https://opentextbc.ca/ethicsinlawenforcement/chapter/2-10-rawls-theory-of-justice/>

"Rawls vs Nozick." 2018. *YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49-hUPHXRbk>

"Rawls-v-Nozick: Liberty for All, or Just the Rich?" October 9, 2003. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/rawls-v-nozick-liberty-for-all-or-just-the-rich-20031009-gdhk4e.html>

## **Materials and Resources**

(see next pages)

## Viewing Guide: What is Justice?

1. What is justice as equality?
2. What is need-based justice?
3. What is merit-based justice?
4. Explain John Rawls' "justice as fairness" philosophy.
5. Explain what Robert Nozick means by "entitled".
6. How do negative rights differ from positive rights?

## Answer Key: What is Justice?

1. What is justice as equality?

Everyone should get the same kind and amount of stuff.

2. What is need-based justice?

Everyone shouldn't get the same because our needs aren't the same. (People who need more get more.)

3. What is merit-based justice?

Giving unequally based on what each person deserves (based on what they've done). Rewards hard work and punishes troublemakers.

4. Explain John Rawls' "justice as fairness" philosophy.

People should have a level playing field with the same basic rights and liberties. Any inequalities in social system should favour the least well off. This means taxes on the rich, and equality laws for the benefit of all. Everyone gets their basic needs met.

5. Explain what Robert Nozick means by "entitled".

Refers to things you are born with or earn. It's fair as long as you didn't steal it or get it unjustly.

6. How do negative rights differ from positive rights?

Negative rights means you are free from things, like violence or discrimination. You should not be interfered with or prevented from trying to fulfill your needs.

Positive rights means you are free to do things that you want to do. You are entitled to help getting your needs met if you can't do it yourself.

### Actual Grades

*Cut out the following grades from a typical bell-curved class. These add up to 750 points. Place the grades in ten white envelopes.*

97%	72%
87%	68%
83%	67%
77%	65%
75%	59%

## Boosted Grades

*Cut out the following boosted grades. These percentages are within a twenty-point spread and have an additional 100 points for a total of 850. Place the grades in ten coloured envelopes.*

94%	83%
90%	83%
88%	83%
85%	83%
84%	77%

## PMI Chart

**Topic:**

<b>Plus</b> <i>Positive consequences of this approach</i>	<b>Minus</b> <i>Negative consequences of this approach</i>

<b>Interesting</b> <i>Other aspects of this approach</i>



