

### Should the U.S. Government subsidize specific energy initiatives?

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#### **Energy Literacy Essential Principle 5:** Energy decisions are influenced by economic, political, environmental, and social factors.

#### *C3 Framework for Social Studies* Focus Indicators

- D1:** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources. (D1.5.6-8)
- D2:** Describe the roles of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives. (D2.Civ.6.6-8)  
Describe the possible consequences, both intended and unintended, of government policies to improve market outcomes. (D2.Ec.9.9-12)
- D3:** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations. (D3.3.6-8)
- D4:** Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts. (D4.8.6-8)

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**Grade Level:** 9-12. **Time Required:** 3-4 class periods.

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#### Connection to Energy Literacy

Decisions concerning the use of energy resources are made at many levels. (Energy Literacy 5.1). In this activity, students evaluate evidence from multiple sources and develop arguments related to formal energy policies in the United States.

#### Activity Outline

- Present the essential question to students: Should the U.S. Government subsidize specific energy initiatives? Inform students that they will be engaging in a debate that considers different viewpoints related to this issue.
- Assign different perspectives on the issue to groups of students. For example, one group might be in favor of subsidies for all energy initiatives. Another group might be against all subsidies. A third group might be supportive of some subsidies, e.g. renewable energy. A fourth group might be in favor of only one energy type, e.g. wind energy.
- Allow time for students to research their perspectives on the issue. You may want to encourage them to develop visuals and infographics that will help support their points of view.

- Guide students with their research. Help each group to focus on identifying the most important evidence that will support its position, and how they can synthesize that evidence into a persuasive argument. Additionally, you may want to have students write an essay or a position paper which describes their perspectives.
- Hold a class debate in which groups present their ideas and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different perspectives.
- Have students engage in oral or written post-debate reflection regarding their performance in the debate and what they feel should be done about the issue.