

# Roosevelt High School Under Fire For Communism v. Capitalism Worksheet

 [huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/05/roosevelt-high-school-und\\_n\\_1255842.html](http://huffingtonpost.com/2012/02/05/roosevelt-high-school-und_n_1255842.html)

## Theodore Roosevelt High School

Roosevelt High School in Des Moines, Iowa is receiving criticism for one class assignment on the Cold War. Based on a worksheet handed out in a social studies class last week, many are questioning whether the lesson is promoting communism over capitalism and calling it "[communist indoctrination](#)."

The assignment's first page features an editorial cartoon: One side depicts capitalism, with two poorly dressed factory workers with balls and chains on their ankles and a well dressed businessman smoking a cigar, reaping the profits. The other side depicts communism, with two decently dressed, smiling factory workers and the profits from work returning to them.



Critics are finding some of the lesson's assertions objectively questionable. In defining differences between communism and capitalism, part of the text reads:

*Communism stands for equal sharing of work, according to the benefits and ability. But in capitalism, an individual is responsible for his works and if he wants to raise the ladder, he has to work hard.*

*....While the profit of any enterprise is equally shared by all the people in communism, the profit in a capitalist structure belong to the private owner only.*

The school assignment first surfaced on WHO Radio, a Fox affiliate, [after Roosevelt High parent Jeff Travis showed WHO Radio the assignment his son received](#). WHO Radio's Simon Conway questions whether the lesson is translated from a Russian or Chinese text.

"I couldn't believe how slanted it was," Travis told Fox News Radio. "It wasn't given as an example of propaganda. It was given as an example of capitalism and communism. I can't believe they would hand out something like that."

Although Roosevelt High officials did not speak publicly on the issue, the school released a statement -- and the full assignment ([see below](#)).

Officials say the WHO Radio report misrepresents the assignment by [selectively editing the class handout to "give a false impression"](#) that students were being taught to support communism, noting that "it is unfortunate that a talk show host decided to mislead his listeners in order to generate false criticism of our schools and our teachers."

"The Class, 20th Century History, was studying the Cold War and propaganda, looking at some of the

arguments both sides made about why their system was best on a range of topics, including their economies," the statement reads. "The Handout simply highlights the differences between capitalism and communism, and some of the arguments made during the period of the Cold War."

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines communism and capitalism as follows:

- **Communism:** *a theory advocating elimination of private property; a system in which goods are owned in common and are available to all as needed*
- 1. **From its student dictionary:** *a social system in which property and goods are owned in common; also: a theory that favors such a system*
- **Capitalism:** *an economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market.*
- 1. **From its student dictionary:** *an economic system in which resources and means of production are privately owned and prices, production, and the distribution of goods are determined mainly by competition in a free market.*

Controversy over Roosevelt High's social studies assignment comes after a math problem set given at a Georgia elementary school last month sparked similar outrage. Parents of Beaver Ridge Elementary School students in Norcross, Ga. were infuriated by the school district's response to reports of slavery examples used in math word problems.

The word problems included questions like, "If Frederick got two beatings per day, how many beatings did he get in one week?"

The issue also led to public protests and demands that the school district fire teachers involved in handing out the 3rd grade math assignment. The teacher responsible for designing the assignment eventually resigned.

Quick Poll

**Is this lesson on Cold War appropriate?**

[Roosevelt High Cold War Lesson](#)