



SAMPLE PAGES

PARENT GUIDE

The Tuttle Twins and the Road to Surfdom

Why Do These Ideas Matter?

When we first set out to create the *Tuttle Twins* series, a lot of people thought we were crazy. They just couldn't see how teaching kids about economics, civics, government, natural law, and individualism would be interesting to kids—heck, most adults don't even like to learn about this stuff!

But one can only watch so many late-night TV shows of hosts walking the streets asking young adults questions about their country and the world and seeing them respond totally and completely (and unashamedly) clueless before determining that *something* has to be done. Ignorance about these topics has been the norm for too long now—and government schools certainly aren't helping fix the problem.

So it's up to parents like you to teach their kids these important principles. The problem is, many (most?) parents didn't learn this stuff when they were younger. That's what led you to the *Tuttle Twins* books—a way to talk to your kids about these important ideas without you having to know everything yourself. Bingo!

But the last thing we want is for families not to get all they can out of our books because parents don't feel comfortable talking to their kids about them. So, we created this parent guide to help give some deeper understanding to the ideas presented in our book, and some additional resources to help moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas discuss these principles with the kids in their lives with confidence.

Let's do this!



Why It Matters Today

What do these principles and ideas look like today? While it is important to be able to teach the thoughts and ideas of great doers and thinkers of yesteryear and understand their historical significance, it's sometimes difficult for kids (and adults) to apply them to the world we live in now. There's a disconnect between when and how something happened and why it still matters today. By learning to take historical events, or the work of someone who lived a long time ago, and apply it to the things happening in the world today, we empower ourselves and others to not let history repeat itself and to recognize important signs of a rise in dangerous or potentially harmful ideologies. History, as they say, has a way of repeating itself.

While we might not be living through our second global war within 30 years, that doesn't mean Hayek's warnings about the dangers of collectivism and government control are any less important.

The government response all over the world to the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, was a dramatic instance of not only how willing our governments are to assume powers over our everyday lives and physical well-being, but also how willing some people are to let them do it. Declarations of states of emergency and the vocal clamoring of some of the members of the public gave our political leaders the ability to force others to do what they otherwise might not.

Schools, parks, businesses, and forms of entertainment were shut down with the stroke of a pen. Travel was restricted, interpersonal interactions were curtailed, and



certain types of economic activity were outright prevented. And all of these decisions were made by either single people or small groups of people, many of whom were, by and large, not particularly harmed by the sudden restrictions.

National economies contracted sharply while government spending increased, many people lost their jobs, personal relationships became strained, self-harmful actions and harmful actions against others increased, and people still contracted and sometimes died of the virus.

All of these actions on the part of our federal, state, and local governments were infringements, to one degree or another, of our natural rights as human beings. Maybe individuals would have chosen to do these very same things voluntarily, and maybe they wouldn't have. But most people were not given a choice in the matter, and it's hardly fair to say that people can't be trusted to make the "right" decision when they're not really offered the opportunity to do so.

What's more, when all of the attention of those making the decisions are focused on one, very small area—in this case, stopping or slowing the spread of a virus—the inevitable unintended consequences that happen as a result of government actions are even more impactful. This kind of government action and its results are exactly the kind of thing Hayek was warning about in *The Road to Serfdom*.

Who Was the Author?

Friedrich August von Hayek is usually referred to by his initials F. A. Hayek. He was an Austrian-British economist and philosopher who is best known for his defense of classical liberalism. He was awarded the 1974 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences which he shared with Gunnar Myrdal for his "pioneering work in the theory of money and economic fluctuations and [...] penetrating analysis of the interdependence of economic, social and institutional phenomena."

Hayek served in World War I during his teenage years where his experiences helped shape his desire to avoid the mistakes that led to war and drew him to study economics. He studied economics at the University of Vienna where, in 1921, he received his doctoral degrees in law and political science. Hayek lived and worked in Austria, Germany, the United States, and Great Britain.

Hayek spent most of his academic career at the London School of Economics, the University of Chicago, and the University of Freiburg. He is widely considered a leader of the Austrian School of Economics, but he had close connections with the Chicago School. His interest in economics led to an interest in philosophy, and his mixture of the two produced his most famous work, *The Road to Serfdom*, which has sold over 2 million copies.

F.A. Hayek received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1991 from President George H. W. Bush and in 2011, his article "The Use of Knowledge in Society" was named one of the top 20 articles published in *The American Economic Review* during its first 100 years.

He died March 23, 1992, at the age of 92.



Discussion Questions and Answers

Most of the questions in the backs of our books are meant to get kids talking about the ideas they've just encountered; there isn't a "right" or "wrong" answer. But we know that sometimes, at the end of a long day, the tired-parent-brain kicks in and seemingly simple conversations can get away from you. We've included some possible answers and conversation-movers to help guide the discussion and keep it moving in the right direction. We've got you!

1. Why shouldn't a few people make decisions for the many?

It's always fun to ask your children to imagine themselves in certain circumstances. Have them consider how they would enjoy playing with their friends if the same two friends always got to decide what the rest of the group would play. Would that be fun and happy, or would they feel like they weren't being represented very well? Ask them to imagine how they would feel if they got older and there with other adults who were in charge of the way that they lived their lives. Constructing hypothetical situations that make these lessons relevant to your children *personally* is a great way to help them to stick with them.

2. How can unintended consequences be avoided?

This is a tricky question! Your children may come up with some pretty elaborate scenarios in an effort to dodge those pesky unintended consequences. What makes answering this question so complicated is that pretty much everything anybody does is going to have some kind of consequence that they didn't necessarily foresee. What we *can* do is try our best to make sure those unintended consequences are as small and as harmless as possible. Brainstorm with your children about possible ways to *minimize* unintended consequences once you've gotten to the point of accepting that they're basically unavoidable.