

Question of the day: is it our collective job to answer...

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Yesterday [Simon Fowler](#) said on the blog:

I think we need a library of accurate but concise answers to each of these kinds of questions targeted at laypeople, with references to more detailed information from academic literature or academic blogs. Ideally something like a wiki that would allow it to be collectively improved, updated and expanded.

Do you know of a source of those kinds of explanations? Or do you think it'd need to be something starting from scratch? This is a project I'm seriously considering making a start on, though I'm not sure I'd have the spare capacity to do it justice.

I think that this was partly in response to a comment from Vinnie to which [I responded saying:](#)

I am musing on how to address all your questions

What I'd like you to do is frame them in a series

If you wanted a primer on MMT / economics in general, what are the headings for the chapters and main topics within it that you would want addressed?

Now [Nick H](#) has said:

In reply to Richard's question to Vinnie about an MMT/economics primer, I'd love to have a small book (or perhaps some online format) with the following chapters/questions, that I can give/send to people I know:

- Why everything you thought you knew about economics is wrong
- Why we don't need austerity
- Why the government does not need to balance the budget
- Why we can't afford the rich
- Why we save money by not destroying the planet
- Why the government can never be short of money
- Why most economists are wrong about economics
- Why most newspapers and news programmes are wrong about economics
- Why we need no fear of hyperinflation
- Why the rich and poor should have zero unemployment
- Why the left and right have got the way economics is presented today?
- Who stands to gain from the way economics is presented today?
- Why nobody tells you any of this
- Why privatization often puts prices up

Other things I'm not sure about:
~~Why we don't need the stock market~~
~~private banks~~

I had already begun to sketch out some ideas on similar themes last night, but was thinking about the practicalities of this. That sketch (on a mind map) was as follows:

There have been a number of questions on the blog of late seeking explanation of quite basic economics questions.

Other questions also address issues at the core of MMT.

And there is an ongoing narrative that what we really need to do to change the world is to create a compelling narrative of why change is required.

I admit I am trying to do some of these things, but a person is finite. And it has struck me that to try to do this by myself is, in any case, absurd when there is a wealth of talent on this blog. It would be crazy to ignore what is available. So I have wondered whether a collective effort is possible?

My thinking is quite straightforward. The process is in several stages. The first is to identify the questions that need answering.

The second is to get people to draft answers , and by this I mean potentially many answers.

The third is to edit those answers down to one per question.

Fourth, the remaining integrity of the whole has then to be checked.

And then, we have the guide.

Before I start let me also say that others have tried this. For example, there is the [GIMMS site](#) and I know Bill Mitchell helped on this. And others, have tried.

But there is something unusual about the community here. It is committed to MMT. It is informed. Many people can write coherently. And they seem to like doing it, and often. And collectively there is no lack of willing to answer questions. So what is the harm of trying again?

I would add four things. First, I can host this. But, second, I doubt I have the time to edit it all though, at least with current funding. Third, this will, therefore, require some volunteer time. Fourth, there has to be a willingness to compromise or things are not going to work.

Any thoughts at all before I progress any further. And please wait before suggesting your list of questions. I'll get to that next (although as noted Nick jumped the gun there).

The question of the day is, then, is there any merit in this?