

Curriculum Comments

Economic troubles in Greece provide a great opportunity to introduce students to the economic concepts of GDP and deficit. To supplement the reading activities in this guide, visit the National Council for Economic Education EconEdLink lesson site at www.econedlink.org. The lesson entitled "What Does the Nation Consume?" focuses on understanding what is measured by the GDP.

Consider having students read Langston Hughes' poem "Dreams" before assigning this week's "Write About It."

This week's activity sheet asks students to assume the role of a reporter and find the key facts — answers to the 5 W's and an H — for three of this week's articles. This kind of analysis is a good method for taking notes on many topics.

– Charlene Kerwin Reyes, Teacher's Guide Editor

Crisis in Greece Shakes Europe

Page 1

STANDARD National Content Standards in Economics (National Council for Economic Education) Standard 18: Macroeconomy —Income/Employment, Prices. *A nation's overall levels of income, employment, and prices are determined by the interaction of spending and production decisions made by all households, firms, government agencies, and others in the economy. Benchmark 1: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a basic measure of a nation's economic output and income. It is the total market value, measured in dollars, of all final goods and services produced in the economy in one year.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this article, students will learn about:

- The threat of bankruptcy facing Greece.
- How Greece got into financial trouble.
- Actions that Greece is taking to bring its debt under control.
- The reaction of Greek citizens to the crisis.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: Why are national deficits a concern?

TALKING POINTS

- Why does Greece have a large deficit?
- How might Germany help Greece?
- What steps will Greece take to decrease its deficit?
- How has the Greek public responded to the crisis?

PRE-READING: Identify in the text the terms *GDP* and *deficit*. Prepare students for reading by giving them an overview of these concepts. Explain that *GDP* stands for "Gross Domestic Product," the value of all the goods and services produced in a country in one year. Explain that a *deficit* is a "shortage of money." A person, business, or country has a deficit when more money is spent than earned. Tell students that the 2009 GDP of the United States was more than \$14 trillion dollars — that is 14 followed by 12 zeros! What about the deficit? It is currently about \$1.4 trillion, or 10 percent of the GDP. Explain the relationship between the U.S. GDP and the deficit. Tell students that although the United States produces a lot of goods and services, our spending is \$1.4 trillion more than we are earning.

DURING READING: Have students underline facts in the article that relate to Greece's GDP, and circle facts related to its deficit.

AFTER READING: Discuss the measures Greece is taking to address its crisis. *What sacrifices will Greek citizens need to make? Is the United States also headed for trouble? What can Americans do to prevent what is happening in Greece from happening here?*

Answers To Analyze The Cartoon

1. Describe the image shown in the cartoon.

The image is of the Parthenon, an important symbol of ancient Greece. Its crumbling columns are forming the word euro.

2. How does the cartoonist use symbolism to make a point?

Ancient Greece was a superior civilization, the ruins of which still stand. The cartoonist's illustration of a crumbling Parthenon, which is a symbol of Greece, with columns that form the word "euro" suggests that the Greek economy may fall and bring the euro down with it.

Answers To Globe Gallopers

1. Examine the map. Explain how replacing its own currency with the euro helped Greece trade with other countries.

Possible answer: All the countries that use the euro are situated near each other, which makes it easy for them to trade with one another.

2. How does the map add to your understanding of the article?

Possible answer: It shows the region where the crisis is occurring and where the EU countries are located; these help me visualize what I am reading about.

Answers To Readers Respond

1. State why Greece's prime minister is meeting with Germany's chancellor.

The prime minister will likely ask for Germany's help in solving Greece's financial problems.

2. Analyze the concerns about Greece's ability to pay its debts. Explain whether you think they are legitimate.

Answers will vary. Possible answers: I think the concerns are legitimate because Greece's deficit greatly exceeds its GDP. I do not think the concerns are legitimate because Greece is taking steps to solve its financial problems.

3. Choose one effect of Greece's plan to reduce its deficit. Assess whether it is acceptable.

Answers will vary. Possible answers: Government will raise taxes. This

is not acceptable because Greek citizens are already suffering from the recession. Pension plans for workers will be less attractive than they are now. This is acceptable because everyone needs to sacrifice for the sake of the country.

4. Predict whether you would feel like Stefanos Dallas does if in his situation. Support your prediction.

Answers will vary. Possible answers: I think I would feel the same way because I would want to help make my country strong again; I do not think I would feel the same way, as the government's measures would be too costly for my family. Accept reasonable answers that students can support.

SDO Predicts the Sun's Activity

Page 4

STANDARD National Science Education Standards (Center for Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Education) Standard 4: Earth and Space Science. All students should develop an understanding of the structure of the earth system; Earth's history; and Earth in the solar system.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this article, students will learn about:

- How "space weather" can affect technology on Earth.
- How NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) will help scientists forecast "space weather."
- The technology used on, and with, SDO.
- The phases of the solar cycle.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How does "space weather" threaten technology?

TALKING POINTS

- What is the Solar Dynamics Observatory?
- What is "space weather"?
- How will SDO monitor solar activity?

PRE-READING: Have students preview the article, sidebar, and illustration. Give students a minute or two to look over the headlines, subheads, and vocabulary. Then tell the class to make predictions about what the article is about. List five of their predictions on the board. Have students copy the predictions in their notebooks.

DURING READING: Have students compare the predictions listed on the board with what they learn from reading the article. Tell them to revise the predictions as they read by writing brief summary statements of what the article actually says next to each prediction, or by writing a question that they have based on the article or prediction.

AFTER READING: Hold a class debate about the need for the SDO. Tell students to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the SDO program. Advise them to weigh the cost of the program against the cost to people, businesses, and the nation if solar activity knocks out our communications systems and other important technology.

Answers To Readers Respond

1. State the name of the NASA mission that will study the sun from 22,000 miles above Earth.

The mission is called the Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO).

2. Describe what happens in a solar storm.

Violent explosions on the sun shoot streams of particles into space, which can cause great damage when they encounter objects such as satellites or planets.

3. Write two sentences explaining why you would, or would not, like to follow the data sent back from the SDO mission.

Accept reasonable answers that students can support.

4. Compare and contrast the quiet and active phases of the solar cycle.

The phases are similar in that they each last about 11 years. The phases are different in that the sun can produce about 180 CMEs annually during its quiet phase, but ten times that amount during an active phase. Ten to fifteen CMEs are directed at Earth during a quiet phase, whereas up to 150 CMEs may hit Earth during an active phase.

Great Expectations

Page 6

National Science Education Standards (Center for Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Education) Standard 1: Science as Inquiry. All students should develop abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry and understandings about scientific inquiry.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this article, students will learn about:

- High school student Tony Hansberry's surgical innovation.
- The school Tony attends in Florida.
- Why Tony admires Dr. Ben Carson.
- Tony's advice to other teens.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How is one motivated to succeed?

TALKING POINTS

- How has Tony helped surgeons?
- How is Tony a typical teenager?
- What does Tony hope to do with his life?

PRE-READING: Ask students to write down five goals they would like to achieve by the time they graduate. Invite students to share at least one of their goals with the class. Discuss how students might go about achieving their goals.

DURING READING: Tell students to think about what they have in common with Tony Hansberry as they read. Do they share any similar goals and ideas?

AFTER READING: Give students some class time to create an outline in response to this week's **Write About It**. Have them use their outline to write a short essay.

Answers To Readers Respond

1. Discuss one similarity in Tony Hansberry's and Ben Carson's childhoods.

Answers will vary. Possible answers: Carson's mother recognized the importance of education, as does Tony's; Tony is an exceptional student, as was Carson.

2. Choose an activity that Tony enjoys outside of class. Do you think this helps him excel academically? Support your opinion.

Answers will vary. Possible answer: Boy Scouts — I think Tony's participation helps him excel academically by furthering his desire to study hard so he can help others. Accept reasonable answers that students can support.

3. Assess Tony's advice to his fellow teenagers. How might it encourage you to follow your dreams?

Answers will vary. Accept reasonable answers that students can support.

Changes Ahead for U.S. Mail?

Page 8

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: Is the post office obsolete?

TALKING POINTS

- Why is the U.S. Postal Service trying to cut costs?
- What changes is the U.S. Postal Service considering?
- How has the public responded to the proposed changes?

Answers To Readers Respond

1. Identify one way in which the U.S. Postal Service may soon change.

Mail may no longer be delivered on Saturdays; some post office locations may be closed.

2. Propose your own plan for addressing the USPS's financial problems.

Accept reasonable answers that students can support.

Answers To Review Sheet

Greece's Economy

1. Greece, Germany, other Eurozone nations
2. Greece may default on its debts; citizens are protesting cutbacks.
3. The crisis has deepened over the past year; protests and strikes are taking place now.
4. in Greece and possibly other Eurozone nations
5. Government spending in Greece was more than the country's GDP.
6. The Greek economy slowed, while unemployment rose.

SDO

7. NASA's "Living With a Star" program.
8. NASA's "Living With a Star" program is underway; SDO is its first mission.
9. SDO lifted off on February 11th, 2010; it will be operational within two months; the mission will last 5–10 years.
10. SDO launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida; it will orbit 22,000 miles above Earth.
11. to protect technology and learn more about the sun by monitoring and predicting solar activity
12. SDO carried telescopes, cameras, and other instruments to monitor and predict what the sun is up to.

Tony Hansberry II

13. Tony Hansberry, Darnell-Cookman School, the medical community, patients.
14. He invented a surgical technique.
15. It happened last year, when Tony was 14. He is now 15.
16. At the University of Florida, where Tony had an internship
17. A doctor at the university was looking for a better way to use a special clamping tool.
18. Lots of encouragement from family, friends, teachers, and mentors.

19. **USPS/recession:** The USPS (U.S. Postal Service) is the national, government-supported mail service. A recession is a general slowdown of business activity. Like many businesses affected by the recession, the USPS is not making as much money as it used to and must start cutting costs. The USPS is also losing money because people now communicate more through e-mail, or use private shipping services. In response to less business, the USPS is considering ending Saturday mail delivery, closing some branches, and reducing and delaying employee retirement benefits.

20. **Greece/deficit:** Greece is a country in southeastern Europe that is currently experiencing serious financial troubles due to an extremely high deficit. A deficit is a shortage of money compared to expenses. The deficit is so high that Greece may default on its debts to investors.

Review Sheet

Name _____

I. Be a Reporter

Fill in each column with answers to the questions.

Article Topic	Greece's Economy	SDO	Tony Hansberry II
Who is involved?	1.	7.	13.
What is happening?	2.	8.	14.
When did it happen?	3.	9.	15.
Where did it happen?	4.	10.	16.
Why did it happen?	5.	11.	17.
How did it happen?	6.	12.	18.

II. Use What You Know

For each pair of terms, write a brief paragraph that identifies the significance of each term and explains how the pair is connected. Be sure to include specific information from the articles in this week's issue.

19. USPS/recession

20. Greece/deficit