

Lesson Plan - Japan

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Purpose:

Big Concept:

- What constitutes a favorable balance of trade between the U.S. and Japan?

Essential Questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of trying to achieve a "level playing field" in the area of international trade?
- According to the Secretaries of the Treasury, in what ways does the United States currently violate the concept of the "level playing field" in its own trade policies?
- In what ways does Japan violate a "level playing field"?

Rationale:

- There has been a great deal of concern in the United States over trade imbalances with East Asian countries, and a great deal of talk about the need to structure trade policies to create a "level playing field" for American manufacturers who have to compete with imported goods. A "level playing field" does not necessarily lead to balanced trade; however, it does provide for fairer trade.

Materials:

- SCIS videotape, *East Asia in Transition*, Part 3, "The East Asian Economic Miracle"
- Worksheet 3.1, "A Level Playing Field"
- This lesson is Activity 2 in Lesson 3 on page 85 in *East Asia in Transition* produced by the Southern Center for International Studies.

Activities:

Begin this lesson by distributing Worksheet 3.1, "A Level Playing Field," to students. Explain that the worksheet contains a series of quotes from former Secretaries of the Treasury regarding U. S. trade policies with Japan. As they watch the SCIS videotape, *East Asia in Transition*, Part 3, "The East Asian Economic Miracle," students should identify the speaker and determine his position on the issue of the desirability of a "level playing field" for foreign trade.

Conclude this activity by leading a class discussion focused on the following questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of trying to achieve a "level playing field" in the area of international trade?
- According to the Secretaries of the Treasury, in what ways does the United States currently violate the concept of the "level playing field" in its own trade policies?
- In what ways does Japan violate a "level playing field"?

Assessment:

Assessment will be based on class discussion and answers to questions on 3.1 worksheet

Grade Adaptation:

This lesson is taught in the 11th grade Economics course within the unit of international trade. It could be taught in any class that examines modern relations between countries.

LESSON 3

THE EAST ASIAN ECONOMIC MIRACLE

Activity 2

What constitutes a favorable balance of trade between the United States and Japan?

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to evaluate the various perspectives on the desirability of working to develop a level playing field in international trade.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

SCIS videotape, *East Asia in Transition*, Part 3, "The East Asian Economic Miracle"
Worksheet 3.1, "A Level Playing Field"

STRATEGIES

With the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, some people argue that the future holds the possibility of economic warfare among the nations of the world. There has been a great deal of concern in the United States over trade imbalances with East Asian countries, and a great deal of talk about the need to structure trade policies to create a "level playing field" for American manufacturers who have to compete with imported goods. A "level playing field" does not necessarily lead to balanced trade; however, it does provide for fairer trade. This lesson is designed to give students the opportunity to explore the various issues related to a "level playing yield" as expressed by the former Secretaries of the Treasury. Begin this lesson by distributing Worksheet 3.1, "A Level Playing Field," to students. Explain that the worksheet contains a series of quotes from former Secretaries of the Treasury regarding U. S. trade policies with Japan. As they watch the SCIS videotape, *East Asia in Transition*, Part 3, "The East Asian Economic Miracle," students should identify the speaker and determine his position on the issue of the desirability of a "level playing field" for foreign trade.

Conclude this activity by leading a class discussion focused on the following questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of trying to achieve a "level playing field" in the area of international trade?
- According to the Secretaries of the Treasury, in what ways does the United States currently violate the concept of the "level playing field" in its own trade policies?
- In what ways does Japan violate a "level playing field"?

"A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD"

1. *"I don't think we are going to have economic warfare, but let's don't kid ourselves that we're not going to have fierce competition. "*

Speaker:

Position:

2. *"Our trade imbalance with the Japanese is really very serious for us. We have to get equal rules on trade. Once we have equal rules on trade, I think the United States can hold its own with anybody. "*

Speaker:

Position:

3. *"Yes, but it becomes political, too [B]ecause the State Department traditionally says, '...let's not criticize the Japanese; we need them to do these other things. '"*

Speaker:

Position:

4. *"We don't need them as badly as we used to. "*

Speaker:

Position:

5. *"So some of it is simply hard work and quality-emphasis on quality. "*

Speaker:

Position:

6. *"... [Y]ou, by that emphasis, get the American people to believe that all you have to do is to have the other guy make the big change while we won't be making the changes you, Secretary Connally, just referred to. Don't we but the wrong spin on it... ?"*

Speaker:

Position:

7. *"We know how to produce things a lot cheaper than they can do it. "*

Speaker:

Position:

8. *"... We are still keeping textiles out of the United States from countries who are more efficient than we are in making those, and (from which) our public could buy more cheaply. "*

Speaker:

Position: