

HOW TRADE WORKS

GRADE: 6

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TOPIC/THEME: The benefits of international trade, with an emphasis on the case study of the Republic of Korea

TIME REQUIRED: Two class periods

BACKGROUND:

South Korea has become one of the world's major trading nations. Estimates from 2010 put South Korea, the world's 25th largest country by population, as having the 8th largest volume of trade (exports plus imports) in the world. It is the seventh largest trading partner of the United States, and the People's Republic of China is its largest trading partner. Major Korean exports include ships, electronic products, clothing and automobiles.

CURRICULUM CONNECTION:

This lesson blends information from world geography, economics, and general social studies. It encourages a global outlook while concerning items and issues from close to students' lives. It is relevant to historical issues in both U.S. and world history, such as industrialization, interdependence, and consumerism.

CONNECTION TO STUDENTS' LIVES:

The benefits of international trade appear in the standard of living of people. The standard of living refers to life expectancy, health, access to goods and services, and generally the ease by which people are able to satisfy their needs and wants. Economic theory and historical evidence show that international trade enhances people's lives in these ways, primarily by making accessible goods and services from other locations that might not otherwise have been available if the radius of trade were more geographically limited. Students benefit from the expanded radius of international trade virtually every time they shop for or consume anything. The lesson also touches on career awareness, with the suggestion that educational attainment and skill-building is an important determinant of students' eventual career options and lifetime earnings.

OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS:

1. **NCEE Standard 5, Grades 5-8 Benchmark 4:** Students will be able to examine labels of products in their homes to compile a list of imported products and identify the countries from which they are imported. Specifically, they will be able to identify products exported from South Korea.
2. **NCEE Standard 5, Grades 5-8 Benchmark 6:** Students will be able to describe how

their daily lives would be different if people in the United States did not trade with people in other countries.

3. **NCEE Standard 6, Grades 5-8 Benchmark 2:** Students will be able to explain how international trade promotes specialization and division of labor and increases output and consumption.

Common Core Standards

SL 1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions

SL 2 Interpret information presented in diverse media

SL 4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Handout #1-5 (products: shoes, ships, automobiles, clothing, computers)
- Handout #6 (map of world)

PROCEDURE:

THE DELIVERY OF THE CONTENT:

1. Ask students to look at labels on their shirts or to have a partner do it. On the chalkboard, list all the countries and states mentioned.
2. Present a large world map—either a poster, a projection onto a wall or screen, or an outline drawing. (A projection of Handout #6 will suffice.) Have students mark with a self-adhesive dot the locations listed in #1 above. Also have students label the locations. Ask and discuss: Which continent has the most dots? Which countries have the most dots? How far did their T-shirts travel to get to this classroom?
3. Ask students if they know of any other items made in Korea. Tell them that their homework is to go home and find items that have been made in Korea. They can bring the items in or make a list of them.

[Day 2:]

4. Make a list on the board of all the Korean-made items from the home.
5. Show a T-shirt, preferably one made in Korea. Conduct a class discussion involving questions like these:
The label says “Made in Korea.” What does that mean?
Do you think all parts of the shirt, like the cotton, came from Korea?
Even if the rest of the shirt is cotton, the little tag with washing instructions is probably a synthetic fabric like polyester, so does the label mean that this tag was made in Korea, too?

What about the design on the front of the shirt, which might be for a European football/soccer team, or a Disney character, or a Japanese manga character? In what sense were these “made in Korea”?
In what way were they “made” somewhere else?

THE APPLICATION OF THE CONTENT:

1. Tell students that they are going to look at the production and distribution of five products. Write the following products on the board:

automobiles computers shoes ships clothing

2. Divide the class into five groups and assign one of the five products to each.
 - * Distribute one story template Handout (one of Handout #1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) and one copy of the map (Handout #6) to each group.
 - * In groups, students are to add made-up culturally appropriate names and other details to the story templates. Some of the details involve ‘correct’ answers and others involve imaginative answers.
 - * Tell the groups to number the statements, in the space to the left, 1 through 5, to indicate a logical order for the design, manufacture, transport, and consumption process.
 - * Tell students to also mark arrows on the map to trace the flow of the story from country to country.
3. Ask students to read the finished stories on the Handouts about their product, in the logical order that they have numbered. While one or more students read, another one or more students should display and narrate to other students the countries that their product traveled to on the map.

ASSESSMENT:

1. Discuss the difference between non-essential luxury and essential products. Have students make a list of products that have come from Korea. Ask them to list the products according to how essential they are, or how essential to luxury they are.
2. Have students research a packaged food product such as cereal, snacks or baking mix. Ask students to research and map where the ingredients for the food product came from.
3. Ask students what patterns they noticed in steps of the five products the groups considered: What different categories of jobs were involved in bringing the products to market? Which of those job categories involve the lowest level of skills? What level of income, high or low, do they think can be earned from those jobs?
 - * What kind of jobs probably earn the highest incomes? What kind of skills are necessary for those jobs?

* According to the five examples, what kinds of jobs are often performed in Korea? What might we conclude about the level of skills of the Korean workforce? And what might we conclude about the level of income in Korea compared to some of the other countries in the examples?

RESOURCES:

Rivoli, Pietra. *Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade*. Hoboken: Wiley, 2005

EXTENSIONS:

1. Have a global T-shirt day. Ask students to bring or wear a shirt with a geographic location or physical feature on it. Have the students sit in groups by states and countries, and physical features such as mountains and oceans. Make a graph of the places of origin.
2. Examine the labels on the shirts. Locate the places on the map (Handout #6) and color them in.
3. Have students make a T-shirt of their own (either reproducible cut-out or plain white T-shirts). Save these and use them for a bulletin board.

HANDOUT 1: AUTOMOBILES

In Minnesota, _____ went out and bought a new car, a Hyundai, so that the family can go to _____.

In Korea, _____ designs a new car that is shipped to _____ and then throughout North America.

In Brazil, _____ is gathering sap from a tree. Rubber will be made out of the sap.

In India, _____ is weaving material for the _____ of a car.

In China, _____ is part of team that actually assembles the Korean make of car, using parts from 36 countries.

HANDOUT 2: COMPUTERS

In Japan, _____ is planning a computer game to teach people about Asian _____.

In California, _____ perfects the next generation of silicon processor chip that does the 'thinking' in the latest _____-brand computer.

In Korea, _____ puts together a computer with the new software installed about Asia.

In South Africa, _____ opens up her new present from her _____. It is a computer.

In India, _____ writes the computer code that makes the software graphics work.

HANDOUT 3: SHOES

In Italy, _____ designs a picture of _____ to make shoeboxes attractive.

In Korea, _____ sews straps on shoes and puts them in a box.

In New York City, _____ prepares a marketing campaign using the music of _____ to sell shoes around the world.

In Argentina, _____ gets the cow hide ready to be transported to _____.

In Australia, _____ goes to the store to buy new shoes for school.

HANDOUT 4: SHIPS

In Houston, _____ gets up early to go to work making _____ at an oil refinery.

In Korea, _____ works at Hyundai shipworks designing and building big ocean freighters. He needs a raise so he can buy _____ for his family.

In Indonesia, _____ works with his chainsaw to cut down trees.

In Switzerland, _____ works in a high-tech lab making navigation equipment for ships.

In Saudi Arabia, _____ loads barrels of oil to send across the ocean to _____

HANDOUT 5: CLOTHING

In the Philippines, _____ cuts and sews the cloth into a shirt.

In Egypt, _____ works along the _____ River growing cotton.

In Korea, _____ manufactures an industrial-sized sewing machine.

In Indonesia, _____ takes the cotton and spins it into thread and then into cloth, while thinking about the _____ that her paycheck allow her to buy.

In England, _____ goes to the mall to buy a new shirt for wearing at _____.

