CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS
This lesson fits in perfectly with units that address curriculum standards in economics, thinking and reasoning, business, math, civics, government, media studies, and finance.

SAMPLE STANDARDS ALIGNMENTS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5 Analyze how an author’s choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.5 Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.HSS.ID.C.9 Distinguish between correlation and causation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.11-12.9 Synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible.
LESSON PREPARATION

- Prepare a monitor with Internet access to screen “GDP Smackdown” at www.wetheeconomy.com/films (TRT 5:21)
- Prepare copies of Student Handout: GDP Smackdown for distribution

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), democracy, parity, smackdown, statistics, value, calculate, welfare

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Students will explore the question: how do we measure the economy?
- Students will examine different answers to that question through the metaphor of a wrestling smackdown.
- Students will develop their own understandings of whether human emotion should be considered when discussing the economy.

REQUIREMENTS

MATERIALS

- Monitor/projector, and computer with Internet access
- Blackboard, whiteboard, or chart paper
- Student Handout: GDP Smackdown

TIME:

- 1 class period

TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS

Vocabulary building, large group discussion, critical and analytical thinking, cinematic analysis, weighing pros and cons, listening skills, creating solutions, considering abstract consequences, reflective writing
PROCEDURES

1. Write the word “SUCCESS” on the chalkboard, whiteboard, or on chart paper in the front of the room. Ask the class what they think this word means. Allow a few minutes for students to volunteer definitions, associations, and connotations. As students volunteer responses, chart them as a word-web for the class to see.

2. Ask the class how they measure success. Use examples from real life such as, in sports, in families, in the community, in school, in business, etc. Chart these responses alongside the others in the word-web. Write answers so that the material responses are together (financial, acquisitions, monetary, etc.) and the intangible are together (happy, healthy, fulfillment, etc.).

3. Encourage a cross-debate about the differences and similarities between financial wellbeing and personal wellbeing. Ask the class what they think of the phrase “there are some things money can’t buy.” How does this relate to their dialogue about success?

4. Ask the class if they know what the GDP is. Explain that GDP stands for “Gross Domestic Product,” and it is a measure of all the goods and services bought and sold during a certain time period in a given country. Economists traditionally use the GDP as a measure of the health and wellbeing of a nation.

5. Ask the class to look at the word-web and consider: “Is a snapshot of all the goods and services bought and sold a good measure of the health or wellbeing of a society’s economy?” Allow a few minutes for cross-discussion and debate.


7. Direct students’ attention to the monitor or screen. Explain that they will be watching a short film that uses wrestling to depict the debate between two economic theories: on one side, that the GDP is the only way to measure whether a society is successful, and on the other, that there are additional factors that should be taken into consideration. Play “GDP Smackdown” (TRT 5:21). Remind the class that they should take notes on their handouts as they watch.
8. When the film concludes, conduct a whole group discussion to ensure comprehension, using some or all of the following questions as a guide:

   • What are the two battling economic theories that are represented in the smackdown?

   • What are some of the arguments given for Shad’s side – how do they argue that measuring money spent is the best way to gauge the success of a society?

   • What are some of the arguments given for JTG’s side – how do they argue that it is important to take into consideration other factors besides just money spent in order to measure the success of a society?

   • Which side do you agree with? Explain.

   • Why do you think this question of how to measure the economy is an important one?

   • How would you answer the question “how many dollars is a smile?”

9. For homework, students should answer the “Questions for Further Thinking” on the bottom of their handout. Note: Students may watch the film again at home by going to www.wetheeconomy/films/, and can incorporate data or information from other sources including films, books, articles, etc.
DIRECTIONS: While you’re watching “GDP Smackdown,” take notes in the chart below. When you hear an argument in favor of considering only the GDP when measuring societal success, write it in the “For Considering GDP Only” column. When you hear an argument in favor of considering other factors as well, write it in the “For Considering Other Factors” column. You will use these notes in subsequent activities in class and at home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR CONSIDERING GDP ONLY</th>
<th>FOR CONSIDERING OTHER FACTORS</th>
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QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER THINKING

1. One of the teams in the “GDP Smackdown” argues that measuring the economy is simple mathematical equation, while the other argues that it is more of a combination of math and psychology. In your own words, explain how this argument is presented in the film.

2. In what other ways might psychology – public opinion, morale, fear and confidence – be important factors when examining the economy?

3. Why do you think the filmmakers used a wrestling smackdown as a metaphor for this economic discussion?

4. Consider the lyrics from the song “The Best Things in Life Are Free.” In light of the debate represented in this film, write 2-3 paragraphs explaining your opinion of how this song relates to the economic debate in “GDP Smackdown.”

   THE MOON BELONGS TO EVERYONE
   BEST THINGS IN LIFE THEY’RE FREE
   STARS BELONG TO EVERYONE
   THEY CLING THERE FOR YOU AND FOR ME
   FLOWERS IN SPRING
   THE ROBINS THAT SING
   THE SUNBEAMS THAT SHINE
   THEY’RE YOURS AND THEY’RE MINE
   LOVE CAN COME TO EVERYONE
   BEST THINGS IN LIFE THEY’RE FREE….

   EXCERPTED FROM THE SONG THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE,
   BY BUDDY DESYLVIA AND LEW BROWN (LYRICS) AND RAY HENDERSON (MUSIC), 1927.