

RESEARCH  
PROJECTS

# ECONOMICS

TEACHER AND STUDENT  
RESOURCE MATERIAL

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## ECONOMICS ○ Contains

- Business Interview Project
- Stock Market Simulation
- Essay or Mini-Report Topics
- Corporate Investment Analysis Project
- Economic Dialogue and Role-Play Projects



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# **Economics Research Projects: Research & Critical Thinking Skills Every Student Needs to Know**

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## **Teacher's Guide**

### **Objectives;**

These Economics Research Projects are designed to teach the student library and research skills necessary to be a successful student in both high school and college. The material contained in this publication stresses critical thinking skills in addition to research skills. These projects may be adapted for students of different learning abilities .

**\*\*Note\*\*** These projects may be utilized in any order.

### **Business Interview Project**

1. Duplicate and distribute pages 1 & 2.
2. It may be advisable not to allow students to interview a business owner who is a relative.
3. Discussion follow up questions;
  - A. What elements make for a successful business?
  - B. Why do some businesses struggle or fail?
  - C. What effects do government regulations have on business?

### **Economic Dialogue and Role Play Project**

1. Duplicate and distribute pages 3 & 4.
2. Students need 2-3 days in the library to research the personalities in the role-play.
3. Some groups have successfully videotaped their presentation for class use.
4. Groups have shown diversity in their performances. Some groups have used the format of successful television shows such as "Crossfire," "Geraldo," "Meet the Press," etc.
5. The figures in this role play may be modified by the instructor. You may choose to change Lafler to Milton Friedman, Reagan to George Bush, Galbraith to John Maynard Keynes, Carter to Lyndon Johnson, etc.

## **Essay or Mini-Report Topics**

1. Duplicate and distribute the Essay Writing Format on page 6. This form can be adapted and customized to meet your individual needs.
2. The questions found on page 5 which may be used for reports, essays, exams or class discussion.
3. These questions are at the top end of Bloom's Taxonomy and stress critical thinking skills.

## **Stock Market Simulation and Report**

1. Duplicate and distribute pages 7-9.
2. Students need to understand how the stock market operates. The video, "The Joy of Stocks" is an excellent introduction for this unit.
3. The instructor may wish to Invite a local stock broker as a guest speaker. Many are willing to come out to the high schools.
4. So students do not manipulate prices, the instructor should initial the chart each time a student buys or sells.
5. It is a good class opener to discuss the market's activity of the previous day.
6. Instructor can set length of time to meet constraints of the class.

## **Corporate Investment Analysis Project**

1. Duplicate and distribute pages 10-12.
2. Instructor may assign or student may choose a corporation on the New York Stock Exchange.
3. Annual reports and 10k reports are public documents. They may be obtained from the company, a brokerage firm, a good local library, or college library.
4. This paper stresses both critical thinking and research skills.
5. Instructor should cover both annual reports and 10k reports with students at the onset of the project.
6. Project requires approximately one quarter to complete.

# **Business Interview Project**

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Here is your opportunity to learn everything you always wanted to know about running your own business. Each of you will interview the owner of a business in your community and develop a report based on that interview. The following questions for the business owner are provided as a guide; you may add or subtract questions as necessary.

1. What is the name of the business?
2. Describe the nature of your business.
3. How did you get involved in this type of business?
4. What made you go into business for yourself?
5. How long has your business been operating?
6. How long did it take for your business to show a profit or when do you expect it to do so?
7. What is the organization of your business? (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)
8. What are the characteristics of your customers or market? (age, sex, income, area, etc.)
9. How many hours per day did you work in the business during its initial operation?
10. How many hours per day do you spend in the business now?
11. Have you expanded your business?
  - A. If so, did it happen before you expected?
  - B. If not, do you have plans to expand?
12. What are the major problems you have experienced in your business?
13. How many employees do you have?
  - A. What qualifications are necessary for an employee?
  - B. What problems have the employees caused?
14. How did you acquire the capital to start your business?
  - A. Were your financial estimates to start the business accurate?
  - B. Was your capitalization enough, too little or too much? Why?
15. If you could change anything pertaining to your business, what would it be and why?
16. What type of education is necessary to undertake this type of business?

17. How have governmental regulations (national, state or local) affected your business?
18. What advice would you give someone who is considering going into business for the first time?

## **Report Setup**

1. All reports must be in a folder.
2. Only neat papers will be accepted.

### **PART 1**

This section of the paper will be presented as a dialogue between the student and the owner. Each question will be numbered and set up in the following fashion:

1. Q—What is the name of your business?

A—The Spaghetti House Restaurant .

**\*\*Note\*\*** Students may wish to tape the interview and transcribe it at a later date rather than attempt to take notes during the interview.

### **PART 2**

The second part of the paper will present your reaction to the Interview. What did you learn? How have your perceptions of the business changed? What changes would you make if the business were yours? This section of the paper should be in essay form.

Due Date \_\_\_\_\_

Points Possible \_\_\_\_\_