



POWELL CENTER FOR  
ECONOMIC LITERACY

*Lesson Plan*

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## Cinderella: A Global Fairy Tale

### Time Required

3-4 weeks

### Economic Concepts

**Exports** – goods and services produced domestically which are sold to or traded with other countries.

**Imports** – goods and services produced in other countries which are consumed domestically by consumers, businesses or governments.

**Interdependence** – (a) a relationship between participants in the marketplace that entails an exchange of benefits between producers and/or consumers. Also, a link between decisions and events in one part of the world or one sector of an economy to other parts of the world or other economies. (b) Needing one another; i.e., the manufacturer (producer) needs people (consumers) who will buy its toys (product).

**Scarcity** – the condition that results because people's wants are relatively unlimited and the resources available to satisfy those wants are relatively limited. This condition forces people to make choices. (Keystone Principle #1)

**Trade** – exchanging goods and services with people for other goods and services or for money. When people trade voluntarily, they expect to be better off as a result. (Keystone Principle #6)

### Overview

Several thousand years ago, the first Cinderella story was told in China. Yeh-Shen, the Chinese Cinderella, may have even been one of the many stories told by Marco Polo upon his return to Venice. Over the years Cinderella stories crept across countries with traders and merchants. Each traveler added a bit of his own culture to the tale.

The Cinderella fairy tale offers a wonderful opportunity to introduce students to the global market. Students study the resources, imports, and exports of different countries that relate to the Cinderella stories read in class. Then they participate in two simulation activities to demonstrate the necessity of [trade](#) on a global level.

## Objectives

- Students understand that imports are foreign goods and services purchased from sellers in other nations.
- Students understand that exports are domestic goods and services sold to buyers in other nations.
- Students understand that people voluntarily exchange goods and services because they expect to be better off after the exchange.

## Materials and Handouts

- Several Cinderella stories (Visit <http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/cinderella/index.html> for a list.)
- Computer with Internet access
- Four 10 X 13 inch envelopes (Contents Described on page 5)
- Task Sheets (1 copy of each)
- 4 sheets each of red, green, blue, brown, and yellow construction paper.
- 2 pencils
- 2 markers
- 3 rulers
- 2 pairs of scissors
- 1 glue stick
- 15 paper clips

# Teaching Activity

## Week One & Two

Read several Cinderella stories to the students—Cinderella stories from various countries. After reading the stories, have the small groups of students find the following information on the Internet about one of the countries: location, natural resources, industries, imports, and exports. During week three the students will share the information they have found.

## Week Three

After sharing the information they found, the students will participate in two simulations. The first simulation will demonstrate why trade between countries might be necessary; the second will demonstrate the benefits and costs of trade between countries.

### *Simulation 1*

1. Divide the class into four groups, giving each group a task sheet envelope which you have prepared (see materials). Explain that each group will need to complete the tasks listed on the task sheet, using only the resources provided in the envelope.
2. Give the students about 20 minutes to complete as many tasks as they can. Not every country will be able to complete the tasks.
3. Discuss what happened:
  - a. Was everyone able to complete the tasks? (No.)
  - b. What tasks were you unable to complete? Why were you unable to complete the tasks? (Answers will vary.)
  - c. If your country didn't finish the tasks, how did you feel? (Sad, angry that other countries had more than yours, frustrated.)
  - d. Did anything happen that made the tasks more difficult to complete? (Group not cooperating, no leadership, etc.)
  - e. Did anyone experience scarcity? (Yes.)
  - f. Is there anything that can be done to help each country complete all the tasks? (Trade, international assistance, war.)
  - g. What activity would make all the countries happy? (Trade.)
4. Have the students return the resource cards to the envelope.
5. Assessment. Assign the students to write an entry in their journals, responding to one of the following questions:
  - In the simulation, were any of the countries unable to complete their tasks? How did that make you feel?
  - Is there a good way to solve the problems the countries encountered?

Answers should mention that some of the countries had resource scarcities and that trade between the countries would be the best way to help each country complete the tasks.

### *Simulation 2*

1. Resume discussion of the point that international trade is the best way for all of the countries to benefit, but trade only occurs when both parties will benefit. Explain that exports are the domestic goods and services sold to buyers in other nations. Add that imports are the foreign goods purchased

- from sellers in other nations.
2. Have the students return to their same groups. Give each group back the same envelope.
  3. Explain that each country will have 30 minutes to complete the tasks on the task sheet.
  4. Give the signal to begin. Allow the students to trade freely with others from each country. They may still not be able to complete all the tasks; however they should be able to complete most of them.
  5. Discuss what happened.
    - a. Was everyone able to complete the tasks? (If no, what tasks were not completed? Why?)
    - b. Is it possible for countries to be self-sufficient? (It depends on the resources that country has available.)
    - c. What goods and services did your country import? Export? (Answers will vary.)
    - d. What are some reasons why countries wouldn't want to trade with others? (Cultural traditions, they don't have anything anyone wants, etc.)
    - e. Were there conflicts? If so, what caused them and how were they resolved? (Answers will vary.)

Assessment: After the final discussion, have the students write a summary of the simulation experience. (The summary should mention the following: voluntary trade benefits all parties, exports, imports, etc.)

## Keystone Economics

### Keystone Principle #6 – Do What You Do Best, Trade for the Rest

Trade is the exchange of goods and services. As long as trade is voluntary, people trade because they expect to become better off as a result; the value of what they gain is thought to be greater than what they give up. Both parties do not need to benefit equally in order for the trade to take place. If one or both parties believe they no longer benefit from the trade, these exchanges will cease. This idea applies to trade among individuals and businesses as well as to trade among nations. There are costs to free trade, but in general, economists agree that its benefits far outweigh its costs.

Although it is not the focus of this lesson, students should be aware that when groups or countries attempt to produce internally everything they want to consume, they are in fact limiting both their production and consumption possibilities. [Back](#)