

2.7 LET'S BUY



FOCUS QUESTION:

- How do countries exchange goods in the international marketplace?

STANDARD #7 PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION.

STANDARD #9 GLOBAL CONNECTIONS.

LESSON OVERVIEW:

This lesson focuses on Germany as a leading manufacturer of high quality toys and a country with strong international trade. The students will participate in a simulated Toy Fair like the one held in Nuremberg every February. International trade fairs provide an excellent opportunity for German companies to reach potential buyers in countries like the United States by displaying products manufactured and produced in Germany. Students will be divided into groups, research a German product, and create a tri-fold corrugated display board to present at the Toy Fair. Here they will share their knowledge of the product and attempt to interest prospective US buyers. After the experience, students will come to recognize German products in their world. Upon completion of the lesson, students will be able to recognize these and many other German products (e.g. autos) imported by the US and thereby understand the economic relationship between the countries.



After the experience, students will come to recognize German products in their world. Upon completion of the lesson, students will be able to recognize these and many other German products (e.g. autos) imported by the US and thereby understand the economic relationship between the countries.

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In the international arena, German companies have an excellent reputation. The label “Made in Germany” is known around the globe as a sign of quality. German manufactured products represent innovation, craftsmanship, and cutting-edge technology. For over 600 years, Nuremberg in Bavaria has been the city of toys. The manufacture and distribution of toys has been an integral part not only of the city’s industrial history, but also an important part of Europe’s cultural history. Prior to World War II, the German toy industry displayed their wares annually at the Leipzig Trade Fair, but after the division of Germany into the Federal Republic of Germany (West) and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Leipzig in the East was no longer a feasible location. Consequently, in 1949, four toy manufacturers decided to establish an independent toy fair and selected Nuremberg as the ideal location. Thus, the *Spielwarenmesse* (Toy Fair) was held, starting



Photos: AlexSchelbert.de / Spielwarenmesse eG

in 1950. It continues to attract manufacturers and vendors from across the world for six days every year in the beginning of February. It is the largest international trade fair for toys and games.

TIME:

4 (45-minute Class Periods)



INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:

- International Toy Fair Memorandum Handout (**Handout 2.7 A on Resource Disc**)
- International Toy Fair Prospective Buyer's Notes Handout (**Handout 2.7 B on Resource Disc**),
- Internet Access
- Poster board, white foam board or corrugated display board (tri-fold)

PROCEDURE:



DAY 1:

- **Anticipatory Set:** For homework the night before beginning this lesson, the teacher should ask the students to look at their toys and games and see if they can find out the name of the company that manufactures/produces them. [Note: the place of manufacture may not be the same as the country of the manufacturer since many companies actually outsource for production.] The teacher should begin the class discussion by asking the students to share the results of their investigation. A list could be made on the board. If any student has mentioned a German company, the teacher might note this. Then, the teacher should introduce that Germany has a reputation as a producer of high quality toys and that every year in the German city of Nuremberg, there is an international toy fair where manufacturers from many nations display their products to representatives of stores that sell toys, dolls, games, etc. The teacher should announce that to better understand this international exchange, the students will participate in a simulation of the Toy Fair.
- In pairs or triads (depending on the number of students in the class), students will choose one of the following German toy manufacturers: Haba, Holztiger, Käthe Kruse Dolls, Playmobil, Ravensburger, Schleich, Selecta Spielzeug, Steiff. The teacher should distribute the International Toy Fair Memorandum Handout (**Handout 2.7 A on Resource Disc**) and review the assignment with the students: Using a piece of poster board, white foam board or corrugated display board (tri-fold), students will create a display board in which they will introduce, describe, and sell their product to "American importers." The exhibit should both educate and inform the public (American importers) about the subject in an informative and attractive manner. The exhibit should have pictures/photos and text and possibly sample objects (if appropriate) and should also include an International Toy Fair portfolio. If students have actual toys from their manufacturer, they should include these.

DAYS 2-3:

The teacher should provide research time to allow students to complete the research online. [This can also be worked on at home if the students have access to the Internet.]

DAY 4:

Students will transform the classroom into an International Toy Fair with their completed displays set up around the room. Each group will present its German toy to the class, as if they are salespeople trying to convince their classmates who assume the roles of prospective buyers. The students/buyers will take notes on the presentations using the International Toy Fair Prospective Buyer's Notes Handout (**Handout 2.7 B on Resource Disc**), being prepared to ask questions of the presenters/salespeople.



WHOLE GROUP REFLECTION:

- What kinds of toys do the Germans manufacture and export to the United States and the rest of the world? Are there any generalizations that can be made regarding the quality of the workmanship of these products? How do these products illustrate Germany's role in international commerce?

MODIFICATIONS:

- Depending upon the age level and ability of the students, the teacher may wish to modify the portfolio component.
- Rather than an International Toy Fair, the teacher may change the project so that students create PowerPoint presentations of the products rather than physical displays. The rest of the procedures should remain the same.

EXTENSIONS:

- The students may develop an advertising campaign to promote their specific toy from the International Fair. This could be done as a video, newspaper/magazine advertisement, flyer, etc.
- The teacher may inquire of the students if they know of any other products that are made in Germany. To assist, the teacher may wish to refer to the following website:

http://brandirectory.com/league_tables/table/germany-30-2012

What areas of manufacturing are they? Does this information add to the students' understanding of Germany's role in international trade?



Source:

Schwartz, H. (2003). History of the Nuremberg Toy Trade and Industry. Retrieved 1.7.13 from <http://www.medievalists.net/2010/12/12/history-of-the-nuremberg-toy-trade-and-industry/>