

Unit Topic

GDP and Standard of Living

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This unit will be used to introduce my sixth graders to the economic concepts of standard of living and GDP. Yearly, the gross domestic product is used to compare and rank countries based on their “wealth.” I want the students to understand the reasons why we collect and use economic data and help them to use a critical eye when looking at statistics like GDP and standard of living. The theme of the unit is the standard of living of countries around the world. We will open the unit by studying the images and economic data presented on the companion posters to Peter Menzel’s book, *What the World Eats*. Next, we will look at data tables to determine what causes economic growth. The students will explore increases in productivity due to advances in technology and division of labor. Finally, the students will do a close read of Bobby Kennedy’s famous University of Kansas address where he explains that quality of life, education, happiness, and health cannot be measured using GDP. I want the students to gain an understanding of the caution that must be used when looking at economic data.