

Yoda, Smith, and the Division of Labor

Grade Levels: 9-12

Time Commitment: 30 Minutes

Subject(s): Economics, US Government, European History, World History

Overview: This lesson provides a specific example of division of labor from Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*.

Materials:

- Scissors
- Markers
- Paper
- Yoda How-To Handout (Page 3)

Opener (5 Minutes):

1. Start with a hypothetical: tell the students they have a challenge to make as many origami animals as possible in ten minutes. Ask the students if they would rather make the animals by themselves or work as a team, and why.

Activity (15 Minutes)

1. Divide the class into two teams; one representing skilled craftspeople, and the other representing factory workers.
2. Tell the teams they will be making origami Yodas. (Feel free to substitute any other product you wish. You could do this activity with almost any simple craft). Explain that teams will compete to see who can make the most origami.
3. Demonstrate how to make an original Yoda (See Page 3)
4. Tell the skilled craftspeople that each person will make the whole product from start to finish, beginning with cutting the paper, folding the paper, and then drawing Yoda's face and coloring his robes.
5. Tell the factory workers they will make the Yodas in whatever fashion they think will be the most efficient.
 - a. NOTE: If the factory workers haven't naturally started using the division of labor, give hints that this might be a more effective way to increase output.
6. Give both teams their supplies of paper, scissors, and markers, and start a timer for five minutes to brainstorm/work with their teams to come up with the best strategy.
7. After the five minutes are up, restart the timer to begin the process.
8. At the end of the second five minutes, tally each team's output.

Closer (10 Minutes)

1. Go over the results. Who created more Yodas?
2. Ask teams what was challenging about their approach, and what was successful. Make a T-Chart on the board (with characteristics of "Skilled Craftspeople" on one side and "Factory Workers" on the other).
3. Connect the students' feedback to Adam Smith's ideas on the division of labor (i.e., Smith argued that when people specialize in different tasks, they can collectively produce more than if everyone worked independently).
4. As an exit ticket, have students write down one benefit of the division of labor and one drawback.

Yoda, Smith, and the Division of Labor

Grade Levels: 10-12 (AP and Honors)

Time Commitment: 20 Minutes

Subject(s): Economics, AP US Government, AP. European History,
World History

Tips & Tricks for the Activity

- It may help to have a finished example of the origami for the students to reference.
- Assign students strategically. When creating groups, consider students' different participation styles and strengths. Aim to distribute students who are more likely to take the lead into different groups, as well as those who tend to be more reserved.

Extension Activity Ideas

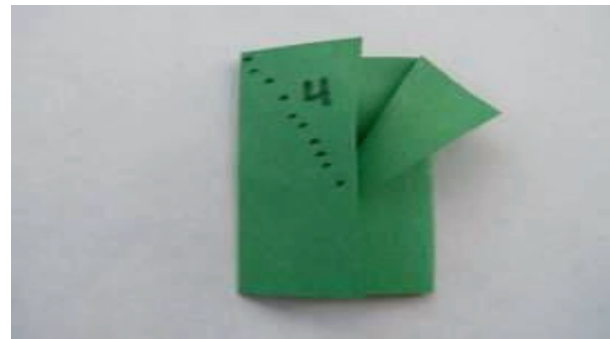
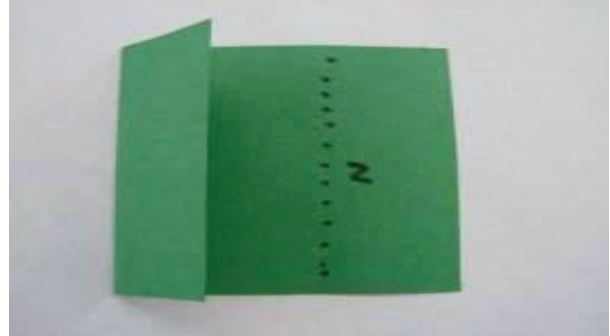
- This is a good segue into a lesson on Adam Smith as a whole - consider doing a Socratic Seminar on Adam Smith's readings afterward.
- Flip the script - tell the students they need to create the prettiest origami Yodas, and keep the teams the same (factory vs. craftspeople) to talk about specialization/quality vs. quantity.
- After completing the original lesson plan, ask the students to evaluate both sets of Yodas on neatness. Discuss how productivity may affect product quality.

Modified Activity Ideas

- Assign roles to the factory workers after you divide them into groups if you feel that they will not do so naturally.
- If a student has difficulty with fine motor skills, ensure they are assigned to the factory team and given a role that accommodates them (such as drawing on the face or quality control).
- Demonstrate how to fold and assemble the origami Yoda so students have an idea of the steps.

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Origami Yoda Demo



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