

**Eugene International High School
I.B. Comparative Politics and Economics
2015-2016**

I.B. Internal Assessment Portfolio

**a.k.a. “Current Events Papers” or
“Commentaries”**



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I.B. Economics Internal Assessment Portfolio, a.k.a. “Current Events Papers”/“Commentaries”:

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the I.B. Economics Internal Assessment Portfolio? What are the required Economics “current events papers” or “commentaries”?

By early March, 2016, you will write **three (3) original, illustrated, two- to three-page “Current Events Papers” – I.B. calls them “commentaries”** – that adhere strictly to guidelines prescribed by I.B. These four commentaries will be based upon current news articles that you find, analyze and evaluate (details below). Your Economics teacher will evaluate these papers according to I.B. grading guidelines; together, they will count for a large portion of your total term grade. In addition, for those students taking the I.B. Economics exam, the commentaries may be assembled in a portfolio, shipped off and evaluated by trained Economics examiners in other countries. For I.B. test-takers, your scores for these commentaries will count, collectively, for 20% of your total I.B. Economics score.

2. Who must complete this portfolio of economics commentaries?

All students enrolled in Economics at I.H.S., whether or not they intend to take the I.B. Economics test.

3. Why should I care about these commentaries?

Economics does not happen in a vacuum; real people’s lives are changed every day by individual and collective economic decisions. These commentaries are an important way for you to demonstrate to your Economics teacher, and to I.B., your ability to apply economic theory to a variety of real-world situations. In addition, these commentaries will give you practice in critical writing, and may provide you with an excellent writing sample for college applications, scholarships, etc.

4. What kinds of articles will I use to write these commentaries?

You will select your own articles, or “extracts,” subject to these restrictions:

- (a) Each article must have as its main focus **a different section of the I.B. Syllabus**. There are four total sections in the I.B. Economics syllabus: (1) Microeconomics; (2) Macroeconomics; (3) International Economics; and (4) Development Economics.
- (b) Your three selected articles must be current. **Each article must have been published within a year of the commentary due date**. For example, if the first commentary is due on November 15, 2015, the oldest article you may use can be from November 15, 2014.
- (c) Your three selected articles must come from a variety of sources and media. **You may not use the same source twice**. For example, if you use the *New York Times* for your first commentary, you may not use it again for your second or third commentaries. You must choose your articles from the news media or news media web sites. These may include local, national and international magazines, newspapers, and journals. You may not use blogs, so take care to make sure your article comes from a recognized news organization.

5. Where will I find sources for the articles I’ll use in my commentaries?

Your school library is an excellent place to start. Don’t confine your search to online publications, the “business” press or even to “news” sources alone. A story from *Rolling Stone* about online movie distribution, for example, might yield an excellent Section 1 commentary on supply and demand. A story in the *Eugene Register-Guard* about job losses in Lane County might produce a strong Section 2 commentary on structural unemployment. Be alert to the economic implications of **everything** you read, regardless of the source.

6. Do you mean I have to read the newspaper, like, every day?

Ideally, yes. Certainly, on at least a weekly basis, we will expect that you have been reading news stories (online and in print) about what’s happening with the local, national and international economies. Your Economics teacher will require such readings frequently as part of your homework assignments. Even when not specifically mentioned as homework, keeping up with economic current events will be an important part of your ability to participate in your Economics class.

7. Can I see an example of a “good” commentary from last year?

Yes, your Economics teacher may show you examples of commentaries written in previous years. You may also see some commentaries online or ones that your friends may have done in previous years. However, the I.B. criteria changed somewhat a few years ago. It is important to pay attention to the instructions in this packet and not allow yourself to be confused by older commentary examples.

8. How will my commentaries be evaluated?

Your Economics teacher will grade each commentary separately on a scale of 0-14 points, or “marks,” according to I.B.’s five grading criteria:

Criterion A – Diagrams	(0-3 pts.)
Criterion B – Terminology	(0-2 pts.)
Criterion C – Application	(0-2 pts.)
Criterion D – Analysis	(0-3 pts.)
<u>Criterion E – Evaluation</u>	<u>(0-4 pts.)</u>
Total Score per Commentary	up to 14 pts.

Expectations for each of the above criteria will be discussed in depth in your Economics class. A more detailed grading rubric that expands on each criterion follows in this packet.

In addition to the criteria for individual commentaries above, there is a “rubric requirements” criterion that will apply to your entire portfolio of three commentaries taken as a whole. Your Economics teacher will explain how your scores in all of the I.B. criteria will translate into class grades for individual commentaries.

9. What counts in the word limit?

The word limit is 750 words. The I.B. moderator and your teacher will not read beyond 750 words for each commentary. There used to be a minimum word requirement of 650 words. Although this no longer applies, it is unlikely that a commentary shorter than 650 could contain enough of the necessary analysis and evaluation to earn a strong score. Indeed, a word count of less than 725 generally indicates that the author did not put in enough effort and left important points unsaid.

The following are not included in the word count.

- Diagrams
- Labels—of five words or fewer
- Headings on diagrams—of 10 words or fewer
- Tables of statistical data
- Equations, formulae and calculations
- Citations (which, if used, must be in the body of the commentary)
- References (which, if used, must be in the footnotes/endnotes)

Please note that footnotes/endnotes may be used for references only. Definitions of economic terms and quotations, if used, must be in the body of the work and are included in the word count. Please note that a citation is a shorthand method of making a reference in the body of the commentary, which is then linked to the full reference in the footnotes/endnotes.

A note on quotations: They weaken the message of the author of the commentary. As the student is being asked to share his/her own understanding, a quote usually indicates that a student is not able to explain the concept in question.

10. When are these commentaries due?

Commentary 1: _____
Commentary 2: _____
Commentary 3: _____

International Baccalaureate Internal Assessment Criteria for Economics

Criterion A: Diagrams

- This criterion assesses the extent to which the student is able to construct and use diagrams.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Relevant diagrams are included but not explained, or the explanations are incorrect.
2	Relevant, accurate and correctly labelled diagrams are included, with a limited explanation.
3	Relevant, accurate and correctly labelled diagrams are included, with a full explanation.

Criterion B: Terminology

- This criterion assesses the extent to which the student uses appropriate economic terminology.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Terminology relevant to the article is included in the commentary.
2	Terminology relevant to the article is used appropriately throughout the commentary.

Criterion C: Application

- This criterion assesses the extent to which the student recognizes, understands and applies economic information in the context of the article.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Relevant economic concepts and/or theories are applied to the article.
2	Relevant economic concepts and/or theories are applied to the article appropriately throughout the commentary.

Criterion D: Analysis

- This criterion assesses the extent to which the student can explain and develop appropriate economic theories and/or concepts in the context of the article.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	There is limited economic analysis relating to the article.
2	There is appropriate economic analysis relating to the article.
3	There is effective economic analysis relating to the article.

Criterion E: Evaluation

- This criterion assesses the extent to which the student synthesizes his or her analysis in order to make judgments that are supported by reasoned arguments.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Judgments are made that are unsupported, or supported, by incorrect reasoning.
2	Judgments are made that are supported by limited reasoning.
3	Judgments are made that are supported by appropriate reasoning.
4	Judgments are made that are supported by effective and balanced reasoning.

Criterion F: Rubric requirements

- This criterion assesses the extent to which the student meets the five rubric requirements for the complete portfolio.
 - Each commentary does not exceed 750 words.
 - Each article is based on a different section of the syllabus.
 - Each article is taken from a different and appropriate source.
 - Each article was published no earlier than one year before the writing of the commentary.
 - The summary portfolio coversheet, three commentary coversheets and the article for each commentary are included.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	Three rubric requirements are met.
2	Four rubric requirements are met.
3	All five rubric requirements are met.

I.B. Economics Current Events Commentaries: Formal Requirements

To earn full credit, all commentaries should:

- _____ 1. Be word-processed and uploaded to turnitin.com, accessible to you if requested by your Economics teacher.
- _____ 2. Be formatted as follows:
 - 1” margins on all sides, all text double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or similar font
 - printed neatly in black ink on one side of 8-1/2” x 11”, white bond or general use office paper
 - stapled neatly in the upper left-hand corner, in the following order:
 - your commentary cover sheet
 - body of commentary, followed by Work[s] Cited
 - photocopy of source article on single-sided 8-1/2” x 11” white paper only (no originals, no copies larger than 8-1/2” x 11” – you may need to reduce some articles).
- _____ 3. Start with a thoroughly completed coversheet. Your teacher will provide you with an electronic document in the proper format that you can fill in.
- _____ 4. Contain an MLA Work(s) Cited section, with a separate heading, immediately following the body of the commentary. Normally, you will be responding to only one source article, so this section will usually be a single entry. Include endnotes that reference all sources if you use more than one. See below for examples of MLA works cited entries.
- _____ 5. Include a copy of the source article after the Work(s) Cited list. Highlight any important information in the article that you discussed in your commentary.
- _____ 6. Contain one or more (usually 2) fully labeled, clearly presented graphs/charts. These graphs should be hand-drawn in black ink using a ruler. Graphs should be incorporated directly into the text of your commentary, and they should be actively discussed with reference to specific points in the diagrams. Don’t just “tack them on at the end.”
- _____ 7. Be 100% free from typographical, spelling, punctuation, grammatical and proofreading errors. It usually helps to have a parent, friend or other teacher read your “final draft” solely for the purpose of catching these errors.
- _____ 8. Be your own, individual, original work. Plagiarized work will earn a “0” from the assigning teacher, and will jeopardize your ability to complete the I.B. Economics test, earn an I.B. Diploma, or even receive your high school diploma. The District’s guidelines regarding academic honesty will be enforced strictly.

MLA works cited examples:

Begin your works cited section with a header, centered in the page:

Work[s] Cited

Double space all sources and include a hanging indent. In other words, indent all lines *after* the first line of each entry.

From an online newspaper

Begin with the name of the author, if known, followed by the title of the article in quotation marks. Next give the name of the newspaper, the publisher's name and the date of publication. Specify "Web" as the medium you used to access the article. End the citation with the date on which you accessed the article. Remember to use *n.p.* if no publisher name is available and *n.d.* if no publishing date is given.

Rubin, Joel. "Report Faults Charter School." *Los Angeles Times*. Los Angeles Times, 22 Jan. 2005.

Web. 24 Jan. 2009.

From an online magazine

Provide the author name, article name in quotation marks, title of the Web magazine in italics, publisher name, publication date, medium of publication, and the date of access.

Morgan, Fiona. "Banning the Bullies." *Salon.com*. Salon Media Group, 15 Mar. 2001. Web. 21 Sept.

2004.

From a print newspaper

Use the online format outlined above, but put a colon after the publication date and list the page numbers on which the article appeared (including the section letter). Use a plus sign (+) after the page number if the article does not appear on consecutive pages. Do not list a publisher as you would for an online publication. End with the "print" medium.

Krugman, Andrew. "Fear of Eating." *New York Times* 21 May 2007: A1+. Print.

Brummitt, Chris. "Indonesia's Food Needs Expected to Soar." *Boston Globe* 1 Feb.

2005: A7. Print.