

# GREAT DECISIONS

1918 • FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION

HIGH SCHOOL



**Topic:** Economic and Diplomatic Relationship Between the United States and China

**Student Objectives:**

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the economic and diplomatic relationship between the United States and China, including its historical context, current challenges, and potential future implications.
- Students will be able to analyze the economic relationship between the US and China, and evaluate the implications of their trade relations on both nations and the global economy.

**Materials:**

- [US China GD High School Article](#)
- Worksheets for the class

**Time:**

Two 50-to-55-minute lessons

## LESSON 1

**Engage** (10 minutes):

- Begin the lesson by showing students this [Great Decisions video clip on U.S. China relations](#).
- Ask students to share their initial thoughts and reactions to the video.

**Explore** (15 minutes):

- Provide students the FPA's [United States and China LINK](#) article to provide them with historical context of the U.S.-China relationship, including key events and developments.
- Have students read and annotate the article.

**Explain** (10 minutes):

- Facilitate a class discussion based on the question: what sanctions or changes must each country make to build better relations with the other while supporting their own economic developments? Students should be able to pull quotes from the article to support their answers.
  - Guide students to identify the economic and diplomatic factors that have shaped the U.S.-China relationship over time.
  - Ask students to support their opinions with evidence from the article?

**Elaborate** (20 minutes):

- Hand out the worksheet, in groups assign students a perspective and answer the prompts for that group (U.S., China, or world). Students should use their assigned column of the worksheet to help clarify positions and perspectives.
- In new small groups of three (jigsaw activity allows students to share the work they did with one group with another without asking the whole class to generate all the answers), have students engage in a role-playing activity where they represent U.S. or Chinese diplomats or a UN official negotiating trade agreements and addressing diplomatic challenges. Encourage students to apply their understanding of the historical context and current challenges in their negotiations.

## LESSON 2

### Engage (10 minutes):

Would you rather questions:

1. Would you rather negotiate a trade deal between the U.S. and China or mediate a diplomatic dispute between the two countries?
2. Would you rather live in a world where the U.S. and China are strong allies or in a world where they are fierce competitors?
3. Would you rather China manufacture all goods sold in the U.S. or none of them?

### Evaluate (10 minutes):

- Have each group present a summary of their negotiations from the previous lesson to the class, highlighting the economic and diplomatic considerations discussed.
- Conclude the lesson by leading a class discussion to synthesize the key takeaways and insights gained from the role-playing activity, emphasizing the potential future implications of the U.S.-China relationship.

### Further Exploration (15 minutes):

Based on their new understanding of these two superpowers ask students to predict a future based on the U.S. and China completely severing economic ties, what do they think would be the immediate and long-term consequences for both countries and the rest of the world?

### Assessment (15 minutes):

Based on the new information they learned and their analysis of it, ask students to write a paragraph answering the question: what role does economic interdependence play in shaping the diplomatic relationship between the United States and China, and how does it impact global geopolitics?

#### KEY WORDS & TERMS

export controls	supply chains
globalized	tariff
gross domestic product	Trans-Pacific Partnership
resilience	World Trade Organization
sanctions	

Read other [Great Decisions High School Articles](#).



**NEXT ISSUE:**  
**The Pros and Cons of AI**

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## THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA WORKSHEET

Read the GDHS article [The United States and China](#)

	U.S. Perspective	China Perspective	Effect on the World
What is the current state of US-China relations?			
How did China's entry into the World Trade Organization impact its relationship with the United States?			
What are some of the positive and negative effects of increased U.S.-China trade?			
What are some of the concerns and challenges posed by the U.S.-China trade war?			