When Work Slows

Weigh evidence about two responses to recession

AWH.P.2.4.B "Construct arguments using a combination of evidence regarding solutions used by nations to address historical or contemporary economic issues."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details about what each country did, then circle one limit of each approach. Use your marks to help you make claims supported by evidence.

Two Ways to Protect Jobs

1. In 2008, a financial crisis helped push the United States and Germany into a severe recession. Factories cut production, and families worried about lost paychecks. In 2009, the United States passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It funded road projects, helped states pay for services such as schools, extended unemployment benefits, and cut some taxes. These measures aimed to support spending and jobs across the economy, including people already out of work. The government borrowed money to help pay for them. Yet the U.S. unemployment rate reached 10 percent in October 2009, showing that recovery was not immediate.

2. Germany relied heavily on a program called Kurzarbeit, or short-time work, which had existed before the crisis. When a company's orders fell, it could reduce employees' hours instead of dismissing them. The government replaced part of the pay workers lost from shorter hours. At its 2009 peak, more than one million workers were using the program. This kept many employees connected to their jobs, so firms could increase hours when orders returned. But Kurzarbeit mainly helped people who already had jobs. It did not directly create work for someone whose employer had closed.

3. The two policies addressed different parts of the same problem. U.S. aid to states and construction projects could support jobs beyond a single company; unemployment benefits reached people after a layoff. Germany's wage support gave firms a reason to keep experienced workers through a temporary drop in orders. Neither approach guaranteed a quick recovery. U.S. joblessness remained high in 2009, while Germany still had to pay for wage support, which could not save every job. To judge either solution fairly, weigh whom it reached, what it cost, and whether the problem was temporary or long lasting.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Make a claim about how the two countries helped different groups of workers. Support it with one detail about each country.

2. Someone claims that the U.S. response did nothing because unemployment reached 10 percent. Use two details from the passage to explain why that conclusion goes too far.

3. Would Kurzarbeit be a strong solution for workers whose employer had already closed? Make a claim and support it with two details.

4. A country wants to help both workers with reduced hours and workers who have been laid off. Argue why using parts of both countries' approaches could reach more people than using only one.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A coastal country faces a sudden drop in tourism: hotels cut hours, restaurants close, and the government can fund only one program at first. In four or five sentences, choose which policy to fund first, support your choice with evidence from both countries in the passage, and address one drawback.

ANSWER KEY

When Work Slows

HIGH SCHOOL · AWH.P.2.4.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details about what each country did, then circle one limit of each approach. Use your marks to help you make claims supported by evidence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Make a claim about how the two countries helped different groups of workers. Support it with one detail about each country.	**The U.S. response reached people already out of work by extending unemployment benefits. Germany's Kurzarbeit helped employed people keep their jobs when companies reduced their hours.**
2	Someone claims that the U.S. response did nothing because unemployment reached 10 percent. Use two details from the passage to explain why that conclusion goes too far.	**The law extended benefits to unemployed people and funded projects and state services that could support jobs. The 10 percent rate shows recovery was not immediate, but it does not show that the measures did nothing.**
3	Would Kurzarbeit be a strong solution for workers whose employer had already closed? Make a claim and support it with two details.	**No. Kurzarbeit let companies reduce current employees' hours instead of dismissing them, and it did not directly create work for people whose employers had closed.**
4	A country wants to help both workers with reduced hours and workers who have been laid off. Argue why using parts of both countries' approaches could reach more people than using only one.	**Germany's wage support could help workers whose hours were cut stay employed. U.S.-style unemployment benefits could help people after a layoff, whom Kurzarbeit did not directly help.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would fund U.S.-style unemployment benefits first because workers at closed restaurants already have no jobs. In the United States, extended benefits reached people after layoffs, while Germany's Kurzarbeit mainly helped workers who were still employed. Hotel staff with reduced hours could benefit from Germany's approach, but short-time work would not directly help the restaurant workers. My choice leaves hotels without wage support, so I would reconsider it if most affected workers were still employed.

Accept other supported claims that accurately distinguish help for employed workers from help for laid-off workers. For Your Turn, either policy is defensible if the response uses evidence from both countries and addresses a relevant drawback.