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Auszug aus:

Stationenlernen The USA at the beginning of the 21st century

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Titel:

Stationenarbeit für den Englischunterricht

**The USA at the beginning of the 21st century –
Global effects and social conflicts**

Bestellnummer:

66786

Kurzvorstellung:

- Dieses komplett englischsprachige Stationenlernen beschäftigt sich mit verschiedenen kulturwissenschaftlichen und historischen Entwicklungen in den Vereinigten Staaten im ersten Jahrzehnt dieses Jahrtausends. Es ist unterrichtsfertig aufgearbeitet und für den direkten und differenzierten Unterrichtseinsatz bestimmt.
- Die Schüler/innen werden befähigt, die USA in den Kontexten der Globalisierung, in Bezug auf Identitätsfragen, sowie „typisch“ amerikanische Werte hin kritisch zu hinterfragen.
- Die einzelnen Aufgabenblätter eignen sich als Einstieg, sowie als vertiefte Auseinandersetzung mit einzelnen Aspekten des Themas „*The role of the United States in international politics at the beginning of the 21st century*“.

Inhaltsübersicht:

- Didaktisch-methodische Hinweise zum Einsatz dieses Materials
- Einführender Informationszettel für die Schüler
- Stationspass
- 10 Stationen mit Informationsmaterialien und Aufgaben
- Lösungen

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Station Pass: The USA at the beginning of the 21st century

Name: _____

Station	Priority	Name of station	Finished	Any questions?
1	obligatory	Changing tides – the US at the turn of the century		
2	obligatory	Economic struggles – the crisis of 2008		
3	optional	Detroit – poverty in former economic strongholds		
4	optional	Ferguson – Ethnic tensions		
5	optional	Massachusetts – same sex marriages: a cultural debate		
6	obligatory	The war on drugs – criminalization versus legalization		
7	obligatory	The war on terror – Postcolonial warfare		
8	optional	City upon a hill – The US: The Promised Land or a Problem State?		
9	optional	Social Media in Politics – The 2016 Presidential Election		
10	optional	„Alternative Facts“ – (Mis)Information in 2017		

Station 1: Changing tides - The USA at the turn of the century

(commons.wikimedia.org / gemeinfrei)



(commons.wikimedia.org / gemeinfrei)

1. Use the pictures above to explain what the term “new economy” could mean.
2. Read the article below and analyze the problems regarding the new economy.
3. Form a group of four and fill in the place mat with the company that you think shaped our present world the most.

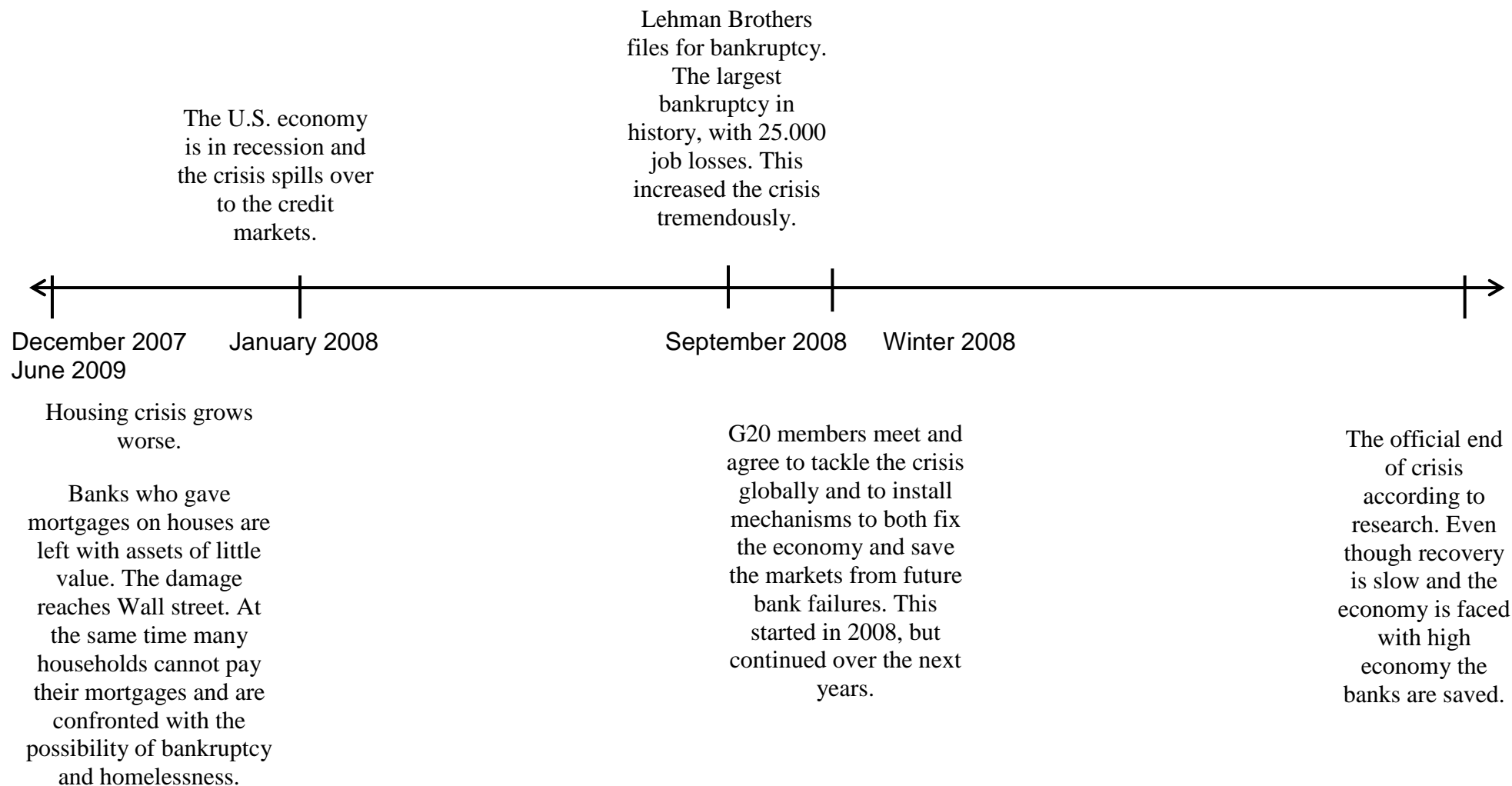
Today, computers have a large influence on everyday life. Whether it is by means of communication, in the economy, or for industrial uses, the world relies on them. This development began in the 1980s. Before that time, industry relied on human workers and heavy industry, but over time new technologies began to reign over large parts of the industry. While this cost jobs almost everywhere in the world, the United States managed to improve their economic growth. The productivity growth, indicating how fast goods can be created, was at an all-time high. This caused an increase in employment. How big the influence of computers on the economic growth in the US actually was is being debated. While some scholars believe that the new technology was one of the major reasons why US economy skyrocketed in the 90s, others believe that the contrary is the case.

Regardless on their actual influence in the increase in businesses in the 90s, computers and new technologies have had a remarkable influence on the development of technology. Parts of the inventions of the New Economy are the Internet, nanotechnologies, and bionics. The Internet was without a doubt *the* invention of the 1990s. When it went online for commercial use in 1995 it had about 18 million users worldwide. Today, more than 3 billion people use the Internet.

When the Internet first went online people soon started to realize the enormous potential that it had as a market. Even at present times, the Internet is being described as a new frontier. This alludes to the few restrictions that there are on the Internet. In the beginning there were even fewer. In the first years of the Internet it was uncharted terrain that allowed nearly every possible use. This caused a big boom on the financial markets that hungered for new, innovative ideas for the Internet. In the mid-90s, hundreds of companies were funded in the hopes that they would make their creators millionaires overnight. This craze was fueled by investment companies that gave credit to people with outrageous ideas, but without coherent business plans.

One of the most prominent dotcom failures was that of pets.com. The company that sold pet food over the internet lost \$147 million within less than a year and went bankrupt in the year 2000. It existed for less than two years. Another idea from that time that now is becoming popular again is grocery deliveries. Webvan.com was the first company to offer grocery deliveries to the customers' door and in 2001, the company was valued \$1.2 billion. However, the company had too few customers for the huge amount of money that they were handling. The company failed in 2001 and had to lay off 2000 workers. These two companies are only two representatives of the burst dotcom bubble that caused the US economy to decline. The recession that followed the burst was only short-lived. Even though many of the companies at the time failed because they were simply over financed, their ideas are today being put into practice. Examples of this are: online retailers, social media, car sharing, online media companies, online advertising and online dating.

3. Research task: Form groups of two. Find out what the five most decisive economic events of the financial crisis were and draw them onto the timeline. Write short explanations about what they are.



Station 3: Detroit- poverty in a former economic stronghold

A STORY OF DECLINE – RIDING THE BUS IN DETROIT

Yesterday I sat at a bus stop near Trinity Cemetery, next to 57-year-old Ben Chandler and he told me his story. The last time he had a job was in 1997. He said, “I was one day short of making permanent. One more day and I would’ve earned \$11 instead of \$5.” \$5 was the minimal wage in that year. Ben belongs to those who suffer from the work laws in Michigan. People who are in jobs without labor unions can be laid off without reason. Also, in order to become a permanent employee in Michigan, you have to be at the company for 90 consecutive days.



Figure 1 Lafayette building, former seat of Michigan Supreme Court
(commons.wikimedia.org / gemeinfrei)

Ben was laid off on day 89. Since then, he is part of the many people struggling in Detroit, the city in the United States with the highest unemployment record and one of the cities with the highest crime rate. Poverty is at close to 40%. Even though Detroit is one of the largest cities in the US, it cannot nearly provide enough jobs for its residents. The city had exploded in the pre-war era, when automobile companies such as Ford set up huge plants. After the war, however, this would change when fewer workers were needed for the manufacturing process.



Figure 2 Detroit's skyline
(commons.wikipedia.org / Shawn Wilson)

The real struggle for the people of Detroit began when the educated white middle class started to leave the city. Racial segregation and reckless politics left African-Americans and White-Americans deeply skeptical of each other. The alienation left behind those with low income and caused the cities' financial system to go bankrupt. Ever since these days, Detroit has tried to get back on track. While the city put serious efforts into creating a more attractive downtown area, most of its residents can't even afford the parking in the area. The people

working in the service industry of Detroit mostly come from out of town.

Aside from the fancy downtown area, many districts of the city are deserted. They are in fact so empty that they are being described as urban prairie. In 2010 Mayor Bing even suggested bulldozing parts of the city, so that the remainders would cause Detroit's shaken population to live closer together. The idea was put forth because the city is virtually unable to maintain its services, such as public transfer, the police, and the firefighters. However, all this means little for citizens such as Ben.

3. The below table shows how the average income was distributed in 2014. Find a partner and discuss the problems arising from a wealth distribution like the one below.

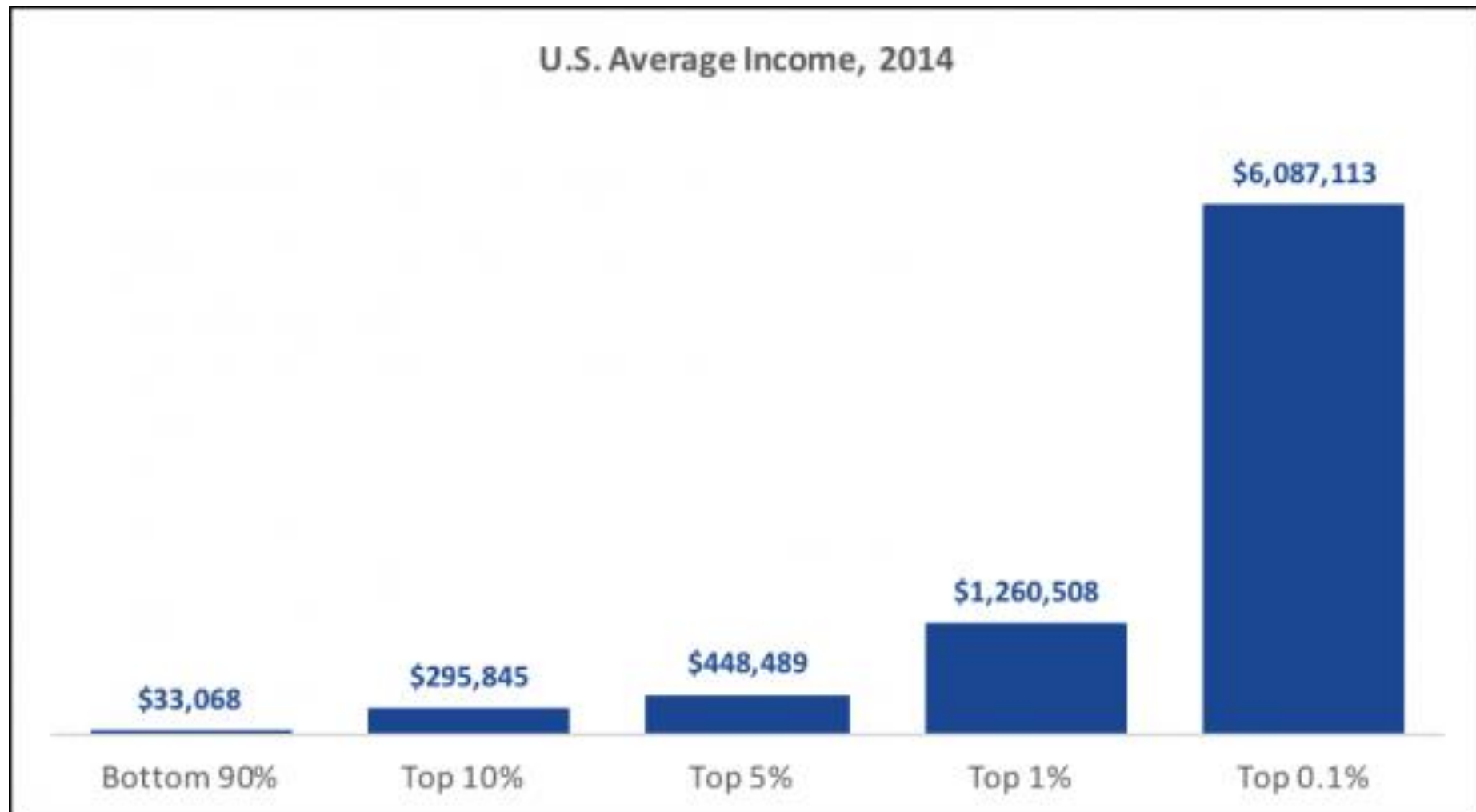


Figure 3 data acquired by Marc Priester and Aaron Mendelson
(inequality.org / creative commons 3.0)

Station 4 (Solutions)

1. Assign the following information to either Malcolm X or Martin Luther King OR to both of them:

This task is a creative task to give the students the opportunity to get to know existing ideas how to cope with racism in everyday life. Sensitivity, awareness, but also enthusiasm of projects out there shall encourage to do likewise.

2. In pairs: Translate the following definitions

Rasse

Rasse ist eine Kategorie die Menschen bestimmten Gruppen zuschreibt und dies auf bestimmte äußerliche Merkmale, wie Knochenstruktur, oder Hautfarbe zurückführt. Es ist auch eine Kategorie die über Zugehörigkeit und Ausschluss in modernen Institutionen entscheidet.

Ethnizität

Bezieht sich auf eine bestimmte Gruppe von Menschen die soziale Praktiken einschließlich Sprache, Religion, Rituale und andere Verhaltensmuster teilen. Der Term wird auch gemeinhin dafür genutzt um das Bewusstsein gegenüber Ausschluss oder Unterordnung einer bestimmten Gruppe durch andere auszudrücken.

Nation

Dem Oxford English Dictionary zufolge bezieht sich die Definition des Terms auf Menschen die bestimmten Faktoren, wie Sprache, Politik, Kultur, Geschichte und Besetzung des gleichen Territoriums teilen. Frühe Definitionen haben Nationalität außerdem als Konzept einer Rasse, oder gemeinsamer Herkunft verstanden. Dies wird heute in Frage gestellt.

Kultur

Der Begriff Kultur tauchte zuerst im 18. Jahrhundert auf. Zu dieser Zeit war er gleichbedeutend mit Zivilisation und schloss auch Einwohnerschaft mit ein. Heute unterscheidet sich die Bedeutung von dieser Definition. Sie meint den Lebensstil einer Gruppe von Menschen allgemein, einschließlich aber nicht ausschließlich beschränkt auf Musik, Literatur, Theater, Film und im Allgemeinen urbanes Leben.

Station 6: The war on drugs – criminalization vs. legalization

America has accomplished so much in these last few years, whether it's been rebuilding our economy or serving the cause of freedom in the world. What we've been able to achieve has been done with your help -- with us working together as a nation united. Now, we need your support again. Drugs are menacing our society. They're threatening our values and undercutting our institutions. They're killing our children.

(Ronald and Nancy Reagan, 1986)

Source: pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience

America's public enemy number one in the United States is drug abuse. In order to fight and defeat this enemy, it is necessary to wage a new, all-out offensive.

(Richard Nixon, 1971)

Source: presidency.ucsb.edu

I would really want to think about [the problems of drug use in California].... Because in some ways I think it's good and in other ways it's bad. I do want to see what the medical effects are. I have to see what the medical effects are and, by the way — medical marijuana, medical? I'm in favor of it a hundred percent. But what you are talking about, perhaps not. It's causing a lot of problems out there.

(Donald Trump, 2016)

Source: mpp.org/2016-presidential-candidates

The war on drugs has been an utter failure. We need to rethink and decriminalize our marijuana laws. We need to rethink how we're operating the drug war.

(Barack Obama, 2004)

Source: reuters.com

1. The above statements are glimpses on the United States' war on drug. Use them to outline the history of the war on drugs.



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