

# Student Handout: Tracking the Recession

## Directions:

1. Over the course of the next several months, track the progress of the U.S economy following four leading economic indicators – employment, personal income, industrial production, and manufacturing sales. Information on these indicators can be found at the agencies listed below. Use the chart to record your data.
2. Observe whether the numbers for each economic indicator are rising or falling from the previous month.
3. Discuss your findings with your group and theorize on whether you believe the U.S. economy is rising out of the recession or continues to stay in it. Record your thoughts in the appropriate box
4. Review what economic experts say about the state of the economy and record this in the appropriate box.
5. Discuss the similarities and/or differences between your view of the economy and the experts.
6. Develop a final report on the state of the economy that contains line charts of the economic progression of the four economic indicators and commentary from your group discussions and economic experts for the months you tracked the recession.

**Employment** go to Bureau of Labor URL

<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.toc.htm> and click Employment Situation Summary. Read the summary and find out when the next info is to come out.

**Personal Income** go to Bureau of Economic Analysis URL

<http://www.bea.gov/national/nipaweb/SelectTable.asp?Selected=N#S2> and scroll down to table 2.6 under Personal Income and Outlays

**Industrial Production** go to Federal Reserve URL

[http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/g17/current/default\\_sup.htm](http://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/g17/current/default_sup.htm) and click Current Monthly Release, scroll down to Total Index on the Industrial Production and Capacity Utilization: Summary chart

**Manufacturing and Trade Sales** go to Census Bureau URL

<http://www.census.gov/mtis/www/mtis.html> and click the HTML link for the Current press release.

# Economic Indicator Tracking Chart

	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Personal Income</b>	<b>Industrial Production</b>	<b>Manufacturing Sales</b>	<b>Your thoughts on the state of the economy</b>	<b>Experts' thoughts on the state of the economy</b>
<b>Dec</b>						
<b>Jan</b>						
<b>Feb</b>						
<b>March</b>						
<b>April</b>						
<b>May</b>						