This is what we did in High School

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| INDICATOR - EXPLANATION | WHAT IT IS, EXPLAIN RECENT TREND IF NEEDED |
| Civilian Unemployment Rate | 6.6% from 6.7% in December (Before 7%)  http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empsit.pdf |
| Personal Consumption Expenditures | Measure of inflation (includes consumer changes due to price changes instead of a fixed basket)  1.1% change year over year (dec-13) |
| Effective Federal Funds Rate | Interest rate Fed lends to domestic banks  1/2014 -> .07 |
| Real GDP | Inflation adjusted measure of all goods and services produced in an economy  3.2% Growth in Q4 2013 4.1% in Q3 |
| Total Nonfarm Payroll Employment | 113k Jobs added in January |
| Capacity Utilization - GORDON | Used to measure the rate in which potential output levels are being met or used. Graphically, it is (actual output-potential output)/potential output)\*100. For capacity utilization, as demand grows, utilization goes up. Economists and bankers often watch capacity utilization indicators for signs of inflation pressures. If it goes up, inflation will also go up. Many think it is a leading indicator for inflation (especially in the bond market).  Current capacity utilization rate: 79.2 in December, a growth of 1.8 in one year. |
| Dollar/Euro Exchange Rate - GORDON | Dollar/Euro exchange rate: 1 dollar=.73 Euro.  Depends on the supply and demand of each currency (floating exchange rate). International investments in the U.S. increases if the dollar loses value. Depreciation of the dollar leads to increased exports and reduced imports. If the dollar appreciates, the opposite effect occurs. There are six factors that affect exchange rates: inflation, interest rates, current-account deficits, public debt, terms of trade, and political stability. Interest rates, inflation and exchange rates are all highly correlated. Foreigners are attracted to high interest rates, low inflation, and low public debt. |
| Housing Starts - Winters | Fell 9.8% in December 2013 but better than forecasted in the summer, still strong (sign market can absorb modestly higher rate) [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=4&cad=rja&sqi=2&ved=0CEoQFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Fnews%2Farticles%2FSB10001424052702304149404579326330271019094&ei=K435UpTMKrHNsQSUjoCIAQ&usg=AFQjCNFvIT65oKrTG6Pdj5ZjwUpvM660Mw&sig2=pEeAgX9lhg9fWuUmdf6oAg](http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304149404579326330271019094) |
| New Orders ex. Aircraft - Winters  Varun Jain | Provides an indication of current economic conditions as well as provide an indication of future manufacturing  fell 4.3% |
| Ratio of Inventories/Sales - Ella |  |
| Retail Sales - Ella | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | |
| Consumer Sentiment - Drew |  |
| Consumption/Savings - Drew |  |
| Hours worked -Brendan | Companies usually stretch out hours before hiring in order to first test the water before taking on more costs. Therefore it could indicate that companies have a more conservative mindset if hours are increasing. |
| Output per hours worked - brendan | shows the productivity and efficiency of a country. Countries with more output per hours usually have less hours worked.  -If many of the hours worked are lower paying this could lower productivity |
| Manufacturing Production - Saaketh | Manufacturing Production -- i.e. the Industrial Production Index  -- figures are based on the monthly raw volume of goods produced by industrial firms such as factories, mines and electric utilities, as well as the businesses of newspaper, periodical and book publishing, traditionally labeled as manufacturing in the United States.  --This index’s data is used to calculate capacity utilization ratios for each line of business, with a base year used as a benchmark level of 100% (currently 2002).  --It is considered a coincident indicator, meaning that changes in the levels of these indicators usually reflect changes in overall economic activity, and GDP. (Leading indicator indicates where economy is headed, and lagging indicators change after whole economy changes). Thus this indicator sheds light on short-term rates of change and business cycle growth, respectively.  --Fed watches this figure closely for this reason, because it understands that inflation shows itself first at the industrial level, when supplies of basic materials get tight - either for their manufacturers or for the corporate clients who buy them. Also, the industrial sector exhibits the most volatility in terms of nominal output during a business cycle peak to trough. As a result, big changes in this index have been a historical forecaster of business cycle inflection points. (From investopedia)  --Recent Trends show increase from recession era but beginnings of economic decline as well :/ |
| Real Exports - Saaketh | Real Exports -- i.e. foreign trade balance -- Exports of goods and services represent the value of all goods and other market services provided to the rest of the world. They include the value of merchandise, freight, insurance, transport, travel, royalties, license fees, and other services, such as communication, construction, financial, information, business, personal, and government services. They exclude compensation of employees and investment income (formerly called factor services) and transfer payments.  --Coincident Indicator (show where economy is atm)  --Shown on Trade Balance Report  --No questions are asked on this by the Fed Judges, so just understand basic concepts.  --Clearly the trend indicates a broad level of increase from 2009ish onward.    <http://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2/series/EXPGSCA> |
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| Trade balance on Goods/Services - varun | FRED Graph |
| Yield on Ten Year T-Bond - Varun  Has decreased greatly over course after recession. | FRED Graph |
| yen/dollar exchange rate |  |