For most students, even for most economists, the economic concept of demand is not going to be the most exciting topic to learn about for a hour and a half. Yet this is what I subjected my class of thirty ninth grade students, at West Bloomfield High School, to. As an introductory economics class, that students must take before they graduate, they were bound to learn about demand sooner or later, so I do not feel too bad. The lesson that I describe in this paper was developed and taught in early March. The lesson was the students first exposure to the economic concept of demand. In terms of where it fit into the overall semester it was preceded by business organization types and followed by introduction to supply. For my lesson I developed a notesheet that students could follow along with and served as an outline for me as I taught. In terms of economic modeling there is perhaps no more important topic to grasp than demand, so I wanted to make sure that the students could understand it in their own terms. To achieve this, throughout the lesson I relied on the students to define the terms on the notesheet using terms from their everyday life and using examples that they provided, rather than rely on vague textbook definitions. I started the lesson out with this idea in mind, on the top of the note sheet there is space for students to define the terms: market, demand, quantity demanded, and demand schedule. I assigned the students into groups and they defined the terms based on what they thought the term meant. Then as a class we discussed each group's definitions and as a class came up with one final definition of each term. Once I was certain that all of the students understood the terms I used the four terms that we had just defined to demonstrate and explain the process of using a demand schedule to create a demand curve.

As I walked through an example on the white board students followed along on their notesheet. Once I completed this I called on a student, at random, to repeat the steps of how to properly graph a demand curve back to me so that I could asses if students understood the

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process. From here I used the demand curve that I just created to explain the law of demand and why there is an inverse relationship between price and quantity. Keeping all of the definitional and procedural concepts that I had just covered in mind, I told the students that we were had arrived at the most important point in the lesson; shifting the demand curves. Before students would be able to properly shift them they would have to know what shifted them. There are five basic determinants of demand and these are the five factors that have the ability to shift demand curves. To make this easy for the students to understand I had listed the five determinants of demand on the notesheet along with the components of each. I again had the students create definitions for each term but this time we did it as an entire class and not in small groups. After the class had sufficiently defined each term, I provided an example on the overhead of how a change in that determinant of demand would shift the demand curve (i.e. an increase in the number of buyers in a market would result in an increase in demand and shift the demand curve to the right.) Once we wrapped up our discussion of the determinants of demand I briefly lectured about what would not shift the demand curve. I saved this piece of information for the back end of class because I wanted to make sure that students were most attentive to it, because it shifting demand curves with non-determinants is a common error that many students make. Following this tidbit I instructed the students to complete the set of problems on the back of the worksheet that asked the students to appropriately draw and shift the demand curves. Once the students had finished this we went over the answers on the whiteboard. One student was assigned to present their solution to each problem and explain their solution. The students then either critiqued or approved of the students solution. By the time we had gone through each problem the bell was ringing and the class was filling out.

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The theory of development that I think is most relevant to discuss is sociocultural theory, specifically the framework proposed by Vygotsky. I think that this developmental theory was really applicable in this lesson because I was introducing one of the foundational concepts in the discipline of economics and because of this I really focused my lesson on showing students how to construct an understanding of the concept and how to practically use it. Because of this I used a lot of guided examples to show students how to construct and shift demand curves. This can be seen as an example of zone of proximal development because I, initially, had to show the students how to construct the demand curves and then how to shift them but at the end of the lesson they were able to construct and shift them independent of my help. The students were learning the practices of economic modeling, which is the practice of writing and graphing economic observations. In this way I was passing on the "culture" of the discipline to them. Throughout my lesson planning I was focused on thinking about how to scaffold the students understanding and development in terms of understanding the concept of demand. Sociocultural theory emphasizes participation in activities that require cognitive and communicative functions. By having the students define terms in their own words and provide many of their own examples I was able to have students think about what they were learning and then communicate it back to me. Although Vygotsky's theory traditionally applied in more cultural contexts I think that it can still be applied here because I was, in a way, passing on the culture and practices of a discipline which in itself has rules, norms, and methods of inquiry much like a culture.

Also in this lesson were elements of cooperative learning theory. Cooperative learning is an approach to instruction in which students work in small groups of peers to achieve a common goal and help one another learn. I used this learning theory throughout my lesson, for almost all of the definitions on the worksheet students came up with their own definitions and refined them

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without the aid of the textbook or by guidance. Students provided examples and explained how they fit into each particular determinant. The whole class really cooperated and worked together to provide an understanding of what each term meant. I think that this really put the onus of the learning into the student's hands and it also put the vague economic terms into definitions that they can understand and use. In this way the class was also self correcting in that, when we would go over the answers to the problem set or terms the class was able to moderate one another by explaining why an answer was incorrect or how to modify an answer to make it correct. There was no one student who was the leader of the group rather all of the students played a role in completing the lessons tasks. I think that cooperative learning worked well in this case because the students had clear goals that they were working toward (defining terms, coming up with examples) and because I did not allow the students an excessive amount of time, which might have encouraged them to get off task. Additionally the students were dependant upon one another for the completion of the lesson; they needed to work together to define terms and find solutions to the question set on the worksheet. The lesson moved at the pace of the student and in this way ensured that we spent ample time on each topic and concept. The class' ability to monitor itself and keep one another on task was not entirely the product of my teaching, more likely the fruit of my cooperating teachers classroom management, but that foundation helped set the foundation for the success of the cooperative learning used in my lesson.

As I planned my lesson I began to realize how important student motivation would be to the success of it. If students were not motivated to participate, share, or volunteer the lesson would have flopped. The lesson was designed to engage students and make them active participants in it; I feel that if it were designed in way such that the students were not

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participatory they would not have taken as much away from it. The aspects of motivation that I could see working well in the lesson were that there were clear goals to each activity, students were clearly exerting mental effort and cognitive energy to the tasks, and being persistent in their work when they encountered difficulty. Although I noticed these indicators of motivation I am conflicted as to whether to attribute these behaviors to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. I would like to think that the students were engaged and trying because I am such a great teacher and had a really great lesson. The more likely conclusion is that the students were on their best behavior and trying because I am a student teacher and they usually behave better when I teach. Perhaps my cooperating teacher had "threatened" them in some way to coerce their good behavior and effort. At the same time though these are really excellent students and they must have at least some intrinsic motivation that keeps them going, after all they attend one of the top fifty high schools in America, according to Newsweek. Overall there were probably many motivation factors in play when I was teaching this lesson, yet I think they all came together quite well and enhanced the quality of the lesson.

This lesson also contained aspects of formal and informal assessment. Much of the assessment that I did throughout the lesson was informal and formative. This formative assessment was done throughout the lesson as I asked students questions, evaluated their answers, and as when I probed students for deeper thinking and knowledge. This formative assessment served as a guide to my teaching because I was able asses if students were understanding the material throughout my lesson, and I could either go back and reinforce a concept or move on to another. Both my formal and informal assessments stayed at the level of understand and apply on Bloom's Taxonomy. The only higher level of thinking that I assessed students on was the create level, but even then I had guided the students through many examples

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of how to create demand curves so it was not true creation. My formal assessment was the problem set on the back of the worksheet where I were to appropriately shift demand curves based on the scenario described in each problem. As I listened to the students explain their answers in this section I was able to see where students understanding was. I think that students knew how to appropriately shift them based o the demand shock described, yet I think that they were still unclear on what is and is not a determinant of demand and the role of price. I would have addressed this problem if I had had more time in the class. I think overall the formal assessment was fair; there really were no "trick" problems or anything trying to throw the student off. The problem set was very straight forward and each problem was meant to assess understanding of a particular concept. For example, if a student incorrectly answered problem number seven, about a change in the price of orange juice, I know that that student does not understand that price is not a determinant of demand. In this way the assessment was very focused and can provide me with meaningful feedback.

I believe that this lesson was a very good introduction to the concept of demand, met my objectives, and most importantly provided the students with a solid foundation in the concept that will help them understand it into the future. When I teach this lesson again there are two things that I would do differently. First, I wouldn't allow students to use their books when they come up with their definitions because I think that the students need to be able to learn from their peers and rely on other things outside of "experts" or textbooks. This also would enhance the aspects of cooperative learning that I was trying to emphasize in this lesson. The second thing that I would do differently is to have examples from everyday life or current events to illustrate each objective. I picked objectives based upon what I thought was important for students to know, yet I did not have a good way of conveying that to students when they wanted to know

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more about a topic. I stumbled for examples in the first period when students asked clarifying questions. I think that if I had had these already written down it would have been easier for me to answer and clearer for the students to understand. Though it is tough to anticipate every question and point a student may raise. I felt comfortable leading the class and I think that I got a lot of good work and participation from many of the students. Overall, I am confident that this was a good learning experience for both the students and myself.

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