

Economics Line of Inquiry

Lesson 3

Reading 2 Handout – Answer Key

NPR article: [How to make sense of the country's stunningly strong job market](#)

Answers are shown in **red**.

Vocabulary Assessments

I. Odd One Out

Directions: Identify the word that does not belong for each set of words.

1. **Defy**: resist, challenge, **obey**, disregard
2. **Policymakers**: legislators, **citizens**, decision makers, officials
3. **Inflation**: rise, increase, prices, **cheaper**
4. **Implication**: **resistance**, consequence, ramification, conclusion
5. **Snapshot**: overview, **essay**, summary, synopsis

II. Complete the Sentence

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the appropriate vocabulary words.

Word Bank: implications, defying, snapshot, policymakers, inflation

1. Understanding the long-term **implications** of changes in the job market is essential for crafting effective policies to support sustainable economic growth.
2. **Policymakers** play a crucial role in shaping economic policies, and their decisions can have far-reaching effects on employment and business growth.
3. The job market is **defying** all odds, as the number of new hires in September was significantly higher than anticipated.
4. The quarterly employment report provides a **snapshot** of the current state of the labor market.
5. The central bank closely monitors **inflation** rates to ensure prices don't rise too quickly.

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Reading 2 Comprehension Check

Directions: Read the article and choose the correct answer for each question.

1. What was the unexpected trend in the U.S. job market in September, and how did it differ from forecasts?
 - A. Job losses as forecasted
 - B. Slower job growth than expected
 - C. Faster job growth than expected**
 - D. Stable job numbers as predicted
2. How might the strong job growth in September impact the Federal Reserve's efforts to control inflation, and what is the main concern mentioned in the text?
 - A. It would make inflation control easier; concern about job losses
 - B. It could make inflation control harder; concern about upward pressure on wages**
 - C. It has no impact on inflation; concern about job market instability
 - D. It would lead to deflation; concern about economic downturn
3. Which industries experienced significant job gains in September?
 - A. Decrease in all industries; negative impact on job market health
 - B. Broad-based gains in nearly every industry; positive impact on job market health**
 - C. Only technology sector gains; neutral impact on job market health
 - D. Decrease in service industries; uncertain impact on job market health

Graph Comprehension

1. Between April 2020 and September 2023, how many jobs were added?
26.4 million
2. "COVID-19 had a devastating impact on the U.S. economy in 2020." Identify at least two pieces of information from the graphs that support this statement.

Possible answers include:

- **Between February and April 2020, the number of jobs dropped by 22 million (Graph 1).**
- **Unemployment increased by 11.2% (Graph 2).**
- **Prime-age labor force participation dropped by 3.2%.**

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Writing Prompt

Considering the information in the text and the graphs, should a job seeker feel encouraged or discouraged about the state of the job market as of September 2023? Write one paragraph answering this question and support your response with at least one piece of evidence from the text and one piece of evidence from the graphs.

Answers will vary.