

WHO KILLED THE FISH?

Year 11 Bridging Activity: Introduction to Micro and Macroeconomics

Welcome to Seabreeze Harbour

You are about to investigate a real-world economic mystery affecting a coastal town that depends on fishing and tourism. Fish stocks are falling, prices are rising, and tourists are staying away. Your task is to uncover the cause.



What You Will Learn

This activity introduces both microeconomics (individual markets and decisions) and macroeconomics (the wider economy).

Microeconomics

- Supply and demand
- Finite and infinite resources
- The 4 factors of production
- Needs vs wants
- Types of goods (public, private, merit, demerit)
- Externalities

Macroeconomics

- Inflation
- Unemployment
- Economic growth (GDP)
- Government intervention


Your Mission

Investigate the suspects, analyse the evidence, and decide: Who killed the fish?

Final Outcome Create a front-page newspaper article presenting your findings, economic analysis, and final judgement.

WHO KILLED THE FISH?

A Year 11 Economics Bridging Investigation Activity

 Case Study Background: Seabreeze Harbour

Seabreeze Harbour is a beautiful coastal fishing port known for:

- A long-standing fishing industry
- A thriving tourism sector with hotels, caravan parks, and seaside attractions
- Famous fish restaurants and fish & chip shops

In recent years, the town successfully transitioned into a dual economy:

Fishing + Tourism

The Crisis

However, things have taken a turn for the worse:

- Fish stocks are falling rapidly
- Fish prices are soaring → businesses pass costs onto customers (inflation)
- Dead fish are washing up on beaches
- Beaches smell unpleasant → tourists are cancelling bookings
- Hotels and caravan parks report falling demand
- Rising concerns about job losses (unemployment)

The local council has launched an investigation...

Your Mission

You are economic investigators.

Question: Who killed the fish?

Or: What is causing the crisis in Seabreeze Harbour?

You must analyse evidence from 5 suspects, apply economic theory, and present your conclusion.



THE SUSPECTS

1. 🚢 OceanBlue Fishing Ltd (Commercial Fishing Company)

Profile:

- Operates large industrial trawlers
- Supplies fish nationally and internationally
- Employs 120 local workers

Suspicious Activity:

- Increased fishing output by 40% in the last 2 years
- Uses large trawl nets, catching both mature and juvenile fish
- Reports record profits despite falling fish stocks

Economic Links for you to investigate:

- ✅ Finite resources (fish stocks)
- ✅ Factors of production (labour, capital – boats, natural resource)
- ✅ Supply and demand (over-supply now → shortage later)
- ✅ Profit maximisation
- ✅ Negative externalities

2. 🏠 Seabreeze Tourism Group

Profile:

- Owns 3 hotels, 2 caravan parks, and multiple beach cafés
- Key driver of local GDP

Suspicious Activity:

- Expanded rapidly → increased water usage and waste
- Built new seafront facilities
- Increased number of tourists by 60%

Economic Links:

- ✅ Economic growth (GDP increase)
- ✅ Needs and wants (tourism = wants)
- ✅ Private goods (hotel stays, meals)



- ✓ Environmental pressure from development
- ✓ Opportunity cost (economic growth vs environment)

3. 🏡 GreenFields Farming Cooperative

Profile:

- Large inland farming group near river feeding into the sea
- Produces crops for supermarkets

Suspicious Activity:

- Uses fertilisers and pesticides
- Recent reports of runoff entering the river
- Algae blooms spotted near the harbour

Economic Links:

- ✓ Negative externalities (water pollution)
- ✓ Demerit goods (pollution-producing activity)
- ✓ Market failure
- ✓ Public goods (clean ocean)
- ✓ Sustainability issues

4. 🏭 Neptune Chemicals Ltd

Profile:

- Local factory producing cleaning products
- Provides 200 jobs

Suspicious Activity:

- Accused of dumping waste into the sea at night
- Claims waste disposal meets legal standards
- Recently fined for minor environmental breaches

Economic Links:

- ✓ Regulation and government intervention

- ✓ Costs vs benefits (profit vs environment)
- ✓ Unemployment trade-off (closing factory risks jobs)
- ✓ Inflation pressure if production costs rise
- ✓ Normative vs positive statements

5. 🧑 Local Fishermen’s Association

Profile:

- Small independent fishing boats
- Traditional methods, community-based industry

Suspicious Activity:

- Increased fishing hours due to falling incomes
- Ignoring catch limits
- Using banned fishing zones

Economic Links:

- ✓ Survival vs profit motives
- ✓ Labour as a factor of production
- ✓ Tragedy of the commons
- ✓ Supply pressures
- ✓ Inflation (cost-push)



📊 Mini Data Evidence

Indicator	3 Years Ago	Now
Fish Stock Index	100	52
Average Fish Price (£)	5	11
Tourist Visits (per year)	500,000	320,000
Hotel Occupancy Rate	82%	54%
Local Unemployment	4%	9%

Key Economic Concepts to Investigate

Students should apply:

Microeconomics:

Demand and supply

Elasticity (extension task)

Externalities (positive/negative)

Public, private, merit & demerit goods

Finite vs infinite resources

Factors of production

Macroeconomics:

- Inflation (cost-push)
- Unemployment
- Economic growth (GDP)
- Government intervention

Thinking Skills:

Positive vs normative statements

Evaluation (who is MOST responsible?)

Student Tasks

Task 1: Evidence Analysis

Complete a table:

- What did each suspect do?
- What economic concept does it link to?
- How might it contribute to the problem?

Task 2: Economic Explanation

Explain:

- 👉 Why are fish prices rising?
- 👉 Why is tourism falling?
- 👉 How are businesses affected?

Task 3: Judgement

👉 Who is most responsible?

👉 Is it one suspect or multiple causes?

Support with:

- Economic theory
- Data
- Reasoned judgement

Task 4: Policy Solutions (Stretch)

Recommend 2 solutions:

- Government regulation?
- Fishing quotas?
- Pollution controls?
- Tourism limits?

Explain trade-offs.

🎯 Extension Activities

Draw a supply and demand diagram for fish

Identify market failure

📰 FINAL TASK: FRONT PAGE BREAKING NEWS

🔪 “You are now an investigative journalist...”

The editor of The Seabreeze Gazette has asked you to write the front-page headline story about the crisis.

Your report must answer the big question:

👉 WHO KILLED THE FISH?

Create a front-page newspaper article that includes:

🌱 1. Headline


A bold, eye-catching headline

👉 e.g. “DEAD FISH DISASTER: WHO IS TO BLAME?”

2. Opening Paragraph (The Hook)


Summarise:

- What has happened
- Where
- Why it matters

 Include at least one statistic from the data

3. Investigation Findings

- Present at least 2–3 suspects
- Explain what they did
- Link to economic concepts

 Use phrases like:

- “Evidence suggests...”
- “Economic data shows...”
- “This has led to...”

4. Economic Impact

Explain:

- Rising fish prices (inflation)
- Falling tourism (fall in demand)
- Job losses (unemployment)
- Impact on local businesses (GDP effect)

5. Your Verdict

 Who is MOST responsible?

Or is it a combination?

Support your judgement with:

- Evidence
- Economic reasoning

6. Quotes (Creative Element)

Include at least two quotes, for example:

- Local fisherman
- Tourist
- Business owner
- Council official


 e.g.

“We’ve never seen anything like this,” said a local fish shop owner.

7. Solutions Section


Briefly suggest:

1–2 possible actions (e.g. regulation, fishing limits)


 YouTube Channels (Teacher-approved)

Tutor2U YouTube


Economics Explained

 Office for National Statistics (ONS)

 <https://www.ons.gov.uk>

 Bank of England

 <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/education>

 Economics Help

 <https://www.economicshelp.org>

 Tutor2U Economics

 <https://www.tutor2u.net/economics>

BBC Bitesize Economics

 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zmxpyrd>

 National Geographic

 <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment>

 WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature)

 <https://www.wwf.org.uk>