

NEWS BREAK

Article: **America wants to make more generic drugs. India shows why that's hard**

Section: **BUSINESS, C5**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, October 11, 2026**, of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

Feel free to adapt this lesson for your students. For instance, some educators may assign this as a homework task, while others might facilitate the reading and discussion of questions within small groups or larger class discussions.

****Please take a moment to review all NIE content before classroom use to ensure it is suitable for your students.****

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Learning Objectives:

After reading the article, students will explain why India produces so many generic drugs and why it is difficult for the United States to bring more drug manufacturing back home. Students will explore how labor costs, manufacturing expertise, and global supply chains affect where medicines are made and how much they cost. Students will evaluate the pros and cons of using tariffs to encourage drug production in the United States, including the potential effects on American jobs, medicine prices, drug supplies, and patient safety. Students will consider how the United States and other countries can work together to make sure people have access to safe, affordable, and reliable medications.

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think the article will be about, using these pictures?
- Are there any clues? What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted word means using context clues? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the meaning of the word.

“The scale of India’s pharmaceutical industry has made it a **cornerstone** of the global drug supply.”

Cornerstone Guess:

Cornerstone Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. Inside the facility, about 1,900 Indian workers for Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories work around the clock to manufacture more than ____ generic drugs, including antihistamines, statins and antidepressants.

2. Of the nearly 1 billion oral doses produced there each month, ____% go to patients in the United States.
3. President Donald Trump has said he wants to bring generic drug production back to America, using _____ to pressure pharmaceutical companies.
4. In a July social media post, Trump said he planned to impose a ____% tariff on generic drugs starting in 2028, followed by a ____% tariff a year later, when his term will have expired.
5. Generics account for ____% of drugs prescribed in the United States, and ____% of them are made in India.
6. Doctors and supply chain experts say taxing imported generics would raise costs, spur rationing and lead to _____ of crucial drugs.
7. India got its start in generics in the 1970s by prioritizing _____ for its huge and mostly poor population at a time when Western multinational drug companies did not. Around the same time, Americans started embracing generic drugs.
8. Over the next five to seven years, Jain said, ____major patents worth \$300 billion a year will expire in the United States, widening the pipeline for Indian manufacturers.
9. Mennisha Paka, 23, supervises a line at the FTO U-3 factory for Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, packaging generic metoprolol, a beta blocker prescribed to heart patients. She earns \$_____ a year and uses part of her salary to pursue a bachelor's degree in pharmaceutical chemistry.
10. For years, relying so heavily on Indian factories had a downside: _____.

Class Discussion Questions:

- What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?
- At first, I thought _____, but now I think _____?

Deeper-Dive "Connect & Explain" Comprehension Questions for Small Groups, Entire Classes or Journal Entries and/or Essay Prompts for Extended Enrichment:

1. The article explains that India produces about 40% of the generic drugs used in the United States. How did India's focus on affordable medicines, manufacturing expertise, and large-scale production help it become a major supplier of drugs around the world?
2. The article explains that producing generic drugs in India can cost much less than producing them in the United States. How do differences in labor costs, manufacturing efficiency, and production expenses influence where companies choose to make medicines?
3. President Donald Trump wants to use tariffs to encourage pharmaceutical companies to manufacture more generic drugs in the United States. How

- might tariffs help bring manufacturing jobs back to America, and why could they also lead to higher medicine prices or drug shortages?
4. The article describes past quality-control scandals involving Indian drug manufacturers and explains how major companies now undergo inspections to help ensure drug safety. Why is quality control especially important when manufacturing medicines, and how can countries make sure drugs are both affordable and safe?
 5. The article explains that drug manufacturing often involves several countries, with ingredients, materials, and finished products traveling across international borders. Why might it be difficult for the United States to produce every part of its drug supply domestically, and what are the benefits of working with other countries?
 6. The article raises an important question: What problem is the United States trying to solve by bringing drug manufacturing back home? Should the main priority be creating American jobs, keeping medicines affordable, or preventing drug shortages? Explain your reasoning and consider how these goals might conflict with one another.

Extended Essay Prompts

- The article explains why India has become a major producer of generic drugs and why the United States faces challenges in bringing more pharmaceutical manufacturing back home. In your essay, examine the factors that give India a competitive advantage and evaluate the potential benefits and drawbacks of shifting more drug production to the United States.
- The article describes how the United States depends on India for many generic drugs, while India depends on China for important drug ingredients. What does this reveal about the challenges of relying on global supply chains for essential medicines? In your essay, explain how the United States could balance domestic manufacturing, international partnerships, and emergency planning to help ensure a reliable supply of affordable medications.
- President Donald Trump wants to use tariffs to encourage more drug manufacturing in the United States. Do you think tariffs are the best way to achieve this goal? In your essay, use examples from the article to evaluate the potential effects on American jobs, drug prices, and access to essential medicines. Consider whether other approaches might be more effective.

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