The Cost of War in Iraq:
How does it affect my community?

According to the National Priorities Project’s website www.costofwar.com, by August 2009 the cost of the war in Iraq was over $687 billion. It is estimated that California provided $85.1 billion of this total and Watsonville provided $90 million.

TEAM QUESTIONS:
In your team discuss these questions and prepare a presentation for the class. Each person in the team needs to turn in her/his math work.

1. **Globally**: What could we do with the money spent on the war in Iraq to fund the solution of global issues? Come up with at least 4 different scenarios and explain how your team figured them out.
   
   a) Come up with a plan for spending the $687 billion to fund global improvement over a five year period. You should spend as much of the money as possible.
   
   b) Choose a different length of time (ie. 2, 10, 20 years) and come up with four different spending scenarios. You can also use different lengths of time for each issue.
   
   c) Explain why your team chose to spend the money in this way.

2. **Our local community**: What could Watsonville do with the $90 million being spent on the War in Iraq? Come up with at least 4 different scenarios that would benefit people of Watsonville.
   
   a) Come up with a plan for spending the $90 million over a five year period.
   
   b) Choose a different length of time (ie. 2, 10, 50, 100, 148 years) and come up with four different spending scenarios. You can also use different lengths of time for each issue.
   
   c) Explain why your team chose to spend the money in this way.

3. **Internet Research**
   Go online and find more statistics about spending on the war in Iraq. What do you find interesting? How does the US compare with other countries in terms of military spending? How much of our national budget do we spend on warfare?
   
   Relevant sites:
   www.costofwar.com
   www.nationalpriorities.org
   http://nationalpriorities.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=97&Itemid=132
   www.borgenproject.org
   www.cdi.org
   www.populareconomics.org
   http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/89xx/doc8917/Chapter1.5.1.shtml
   http://armscontrolcenter.org/policy/iraq/
   http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending
**Annual Cost of Improving the World:**
The Borgen Project (www.borgenproject.org) estimates the following costs of funding global improvement for one year.

- $19 billion: Eliminates starvation and malnutrition globally
- $12 billion: Provides education for every kid on earth.
- $15 billion: Provides access to water and sanitation.
- $23 billion: Reverses the spread of AIDS and Malaria.
- $2.808 billion: Immunize every child in the developing world

**Annual Cost of Services in California:**
The following are estimated figures for one year:

- Average yearly salary of a CA public school teacher $50,198
- Average yearly salary of a CA nurse $64,700
- One year’s costs for UC Santa Cruz $17,445
- Cost to provide one child with Head Start pre-school services for one year $8,362

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1 [http://borgenproject.org/](http://borgenproject.org/)
2 [http://borgenproject.org/](http://borgenproject.org/)
3 [http://borgenproject.org/](http://borgenproject.org/)
4 [http://borgenproject.org/](http://borgenproject.org/)
7 [http://admissions.ucsc.edu/discover/faq/finances.cfm#a1](http://admissions.ucsc.edu/discover/faq/finances.cfm#a1)
8 [http://www.nationalpriorities.org/tradeoffs?location_type=4&state=6&town=0.00013112291043045000000000000000&program=587&tradeoff_item_item=999&submit_tradeoffs=Get+Trade+Off](http://www.nationalpriorities.org/tradeoffs?location_type=4&state=6&town=0.00013112291043045000000000000000&program=587&tradeoff_item_item=999&submit_tradeoffs=Get+Trade+Off)
9 [http://www.payscale.com/research/US/All_K-12_Teachers/Salary/by_State](http://www.payscale.com/research/US/All_K-12_Teachers/Salary/by_State)

(Adapted from Gutstein, Peterson, *Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Numbers*, 2005)
The Cost of War in Iraq: How much money is that?

According to the National Priorities Project, www.costofwar.com, by August 2009 the cost of the War in Iraq was over $687 billion. How much money is that?

If we stacked $1 bills, how tall would that be? Consider that the Empire State building is 1,472 feet high (if we include the antennae height), would the money stack reach the top? Would it be taller?

RESOURCE/INFORMATION:
A stack of 500 $1 bills would be one foot tall.
http://www.crunchweb.net/87billion/

TEAM QUESTIONS:
1. Predict how tall $687 billion would be if we stacked $1 bills (without doing any calculations).

2. a) Calculate how tall $687 billion in stacked $1 bills is.

   b) How many times taller than the Empire State building is that?

   c) What if we stacked $5 bills? $20 bills? $100 bills?

3. What did you learn? What surprised you?

(Adapted from Gutstein, Peterson, Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Numbers, 2005)
The Cost of War in Iraq: How much money is that?

1. Pretend that you are able to set a $1 bill down on your desk every second without stopping. Make predictions or estimates.
   a) How long do you think it would take to set down $100?
   b) How much money could you set down in an hour?
   c) How much money could you set down in a day?
   d) How long do you think it would take to set down $1 million?
   e) $1 billion?
   f) $687 billion?

2. Now after making estimates, figure out the actual answers… SHOW ALL WORK! Use another piece of paper if necessary.
   a) How long would it take to set down $100?
   b) How much money could you set down in an hour?
   c) How much money could you set down in a day?
   d) How long would it take to set down $1 million?
   e) $1 billion
   f) $687 billion

3. a) How close were your original estimates?
    b) Was your team surprised by anything? What and why?

(Adapted from Gutstein, Peterson, Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Numbers, 2005)