**Fashion Design- Mrs. Troyanos** Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Portions of the online article:

***Offbeat indicators of economic health***  by [**New Investor Center**](http://money.msn.com/how-to-invest/)

**Reading between the lines**

Are things getting better in this economy? It’s hard to truly know from the economic data. More often than not, the picture is muddy. Yet beyond the latest estimate of gross domestic product or the Federal Reserve's Beige Book survey, there are offbeat indicators of how Americans are faring. **(Here are a few involving the fashion industry)-**

**Hemline index**

In the Roaring '20s, for example, when women began showing some leg, the rising hemlines were taken as a celebration of the thriving times. Fall 2011 fashion trends point to the emergence of the midcalf-length skirt, a possible reflection of the lousy economy.

**Men's underwear index**

Men, look no further than your underwear drawer. It may sound trivial, but the theory that hidden-from-view undergarments are the first thing men stop buying as the economy heads south has had former Federal Reserve [Alan Greenspan](http://www.bing.com/news/search?q=alan+grrenspan&form=MONEY6) among its subscribers.

Sales of men's underwear rose 7.9% in August from a year earlier, according research firm NPD Group. By this measure, at least, we're moving in the right direction.

**Lipstick index**

Leonard Lauder, chairman of **Estée Lauder** ([EL](http://investing.money.msn.com/investments/stock-price?Symbol=el&ocid=qbeb)), coined "lipstick index" in 2001 to describe the change in sales of small indulgences like cosmetics observed during hard times. Lauder suggested that consumers splurge with small purchases like lipstick when they're feeling less confident.

Today, nail polish may be the newer, new thing: Sales of nail-color products were up 65% since the first half of 2008, the NPD Group recently reported. The switch to nail polish is a response to a glut of lipsticks today and the "pick-me-up" associated with donning color, Lauder recently told Time magazine.

There are other “indicators” as well, such as the Big Mac Index, the Superbowl Index, the Hot Waitress Index, The Cinema Index and more. For the rest of the article go to: <http://money.msn.com/how-to-invest/offbeat-indicators-of-economic-health>

**Essay Question:** Why do you think the sale of these types of fashion products are an indicator of economic health for our country??? Write a detailed answer.