

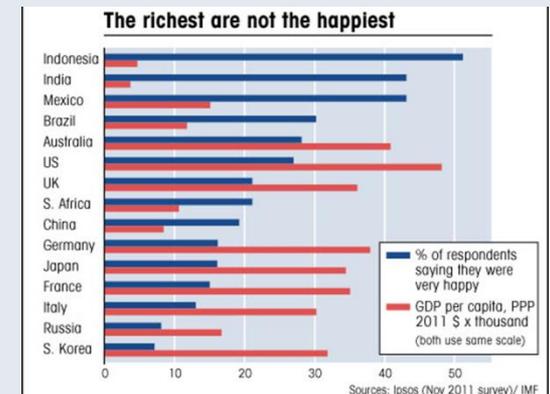
# New Internationalist

The people, the ideas, the action in the fight for global justice

# The more money we have ...

NEW INTERNATIONALIST  
EASIER ENGLISH

INTERMEDIATE READY LESSON



# This lesson:

1/ Grammar

2/ Speaking: about ideas and graphs

3/ Reading: for gist and detail

4/ Writing: make a poster

**Make sentences from the purple words to mean the same as the 3 red sentences.**

**a/ If we get richer, we are happier.**

the poorer

the happier

**b/ If we don't have so much money, we won't be so happy.**

the more money

we feel we have

the richer

**c/ If we have less money, we are happier.**

we are we get

the sadder

## Match:

- a) The more money we have,
- b) The more equal a country is,
- c) The poorer we become,
- d) The more we read,
- e) The less we work,
- f) The richer we get,

1/ the more we are afraid.

2/ the more intelligent we become.

3/ the more stressed we get.

4/ the happier everyone is.

5/ the more spare time we have.

6/ the more we want.

# What's the grammar?

**The** + **comparative** + **verb**,

**the** + **comparative** + **verb**.

**The** prettier she looks, **the** shyer she becomes.

**The** more he reads, **the** more he understands.

**The** better she cooks, **the** more everyone eats.

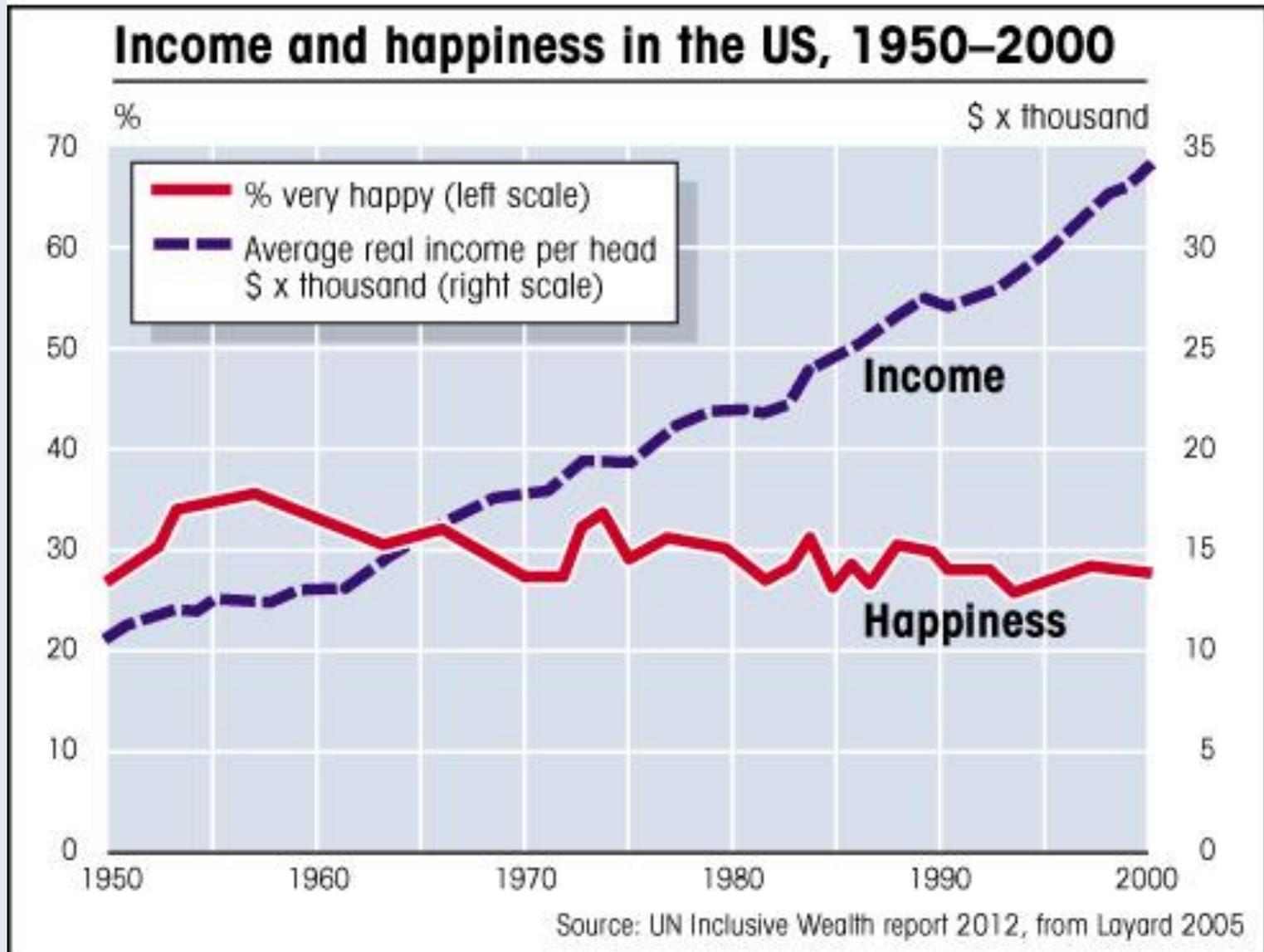
**The** more they spend, **the** more they have to earn.

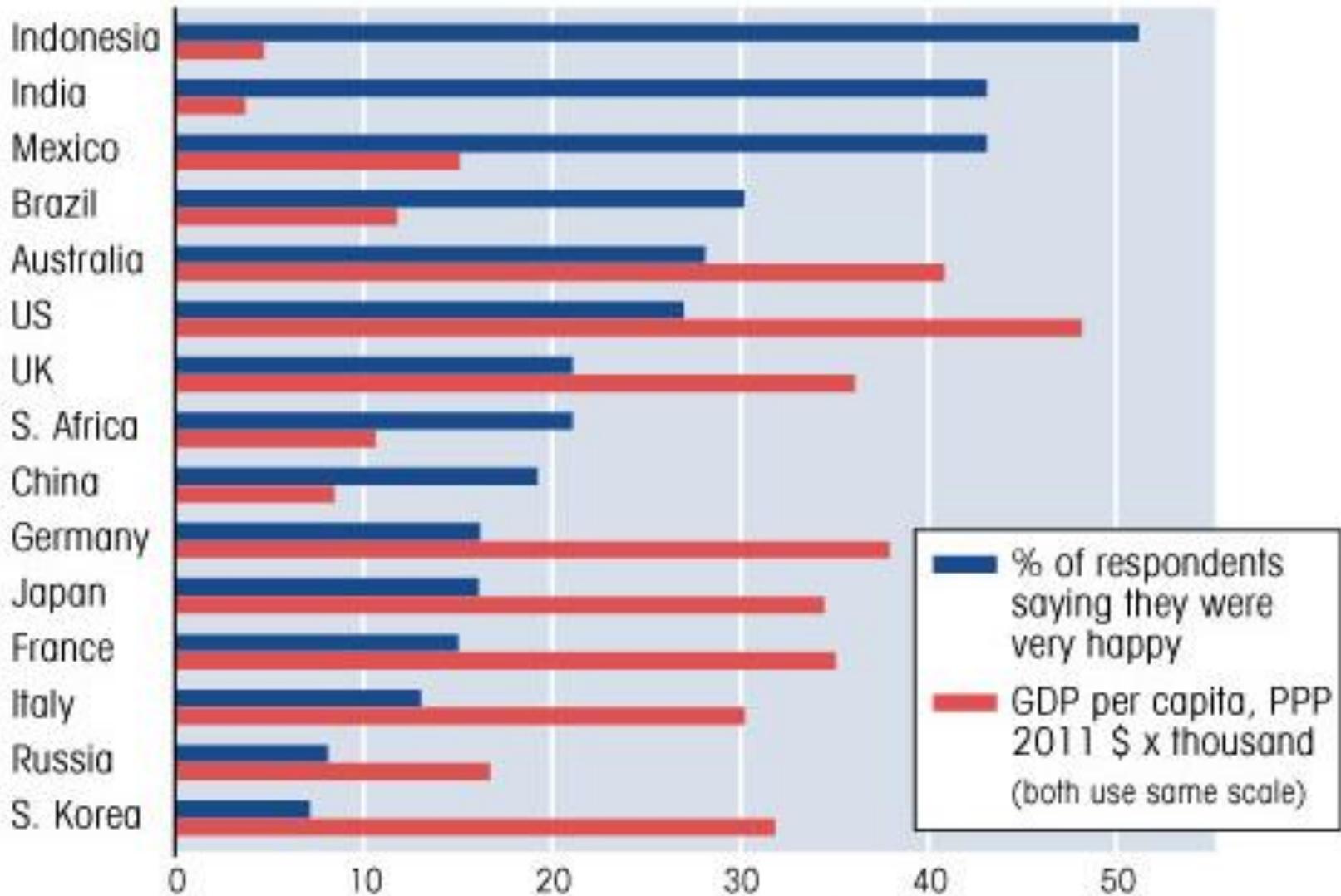
**The** taller she gets, **the** faster she runs.

# Discuss: which do you agree with, and why?

- 1/ The taller you are, the more friends you have.
- 2/ The more you read, the more intelligent you get.
- 3/ The more we study, the better job we get.
- 4/ The richer people get, the more stressed they get.
- 5/ The better we cook, the more we eat.
- 6/ The more you earn, the more you spend.
- 7/ The more money we have, the happier we are.
- 8/ The more money we have, the more stressed we are.

# What does this graph show?





Sources: Ipsos (Nov 2011 survey)/ IMF

**What does this graph show?**

# Read this:

[http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Even in difficult times, we can still be happy...](http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Even_in_difficult_times,_we_can_still_be_happy...)



**to find out if these sentences are true:**

a/ The more money you earn, the more money you want.

b/ The more money we have, the happier we are.

c/ The more money we have, the more stressed we are.

# Does money bring happiness?

When the economy stops growing, this doesn't have to mean we will not be happy. We need to share the money more equally and think again about what happiness is.

The good news is that happiness does not directly depend on how much money you have. Many surveys in the last twenty or thirty years show this: when we get enough money to live on, with enough money to not be poor, then more money doesn't mean more happiness too. Happiness can go down when income goes up.

This is because we expect more when we have more money: the more we earn, the more we want; and it is more difficult to feel satisfied. And when we try to keep the level of money we are then used to, we get more stressed.

When people study the relationship between income and happiness, or money and happiness, they find that they are not really related. But income equality (when there is less difference between the richest and the poorest in a country) is related to happiness.

Some of the poorest countries have some of the happiest people. But only if the money is shared quite fairly. Of course there are other things we need to think about, eg. climate and culture and the way people answer questions like this. But the important point in this study is that less money doesn't have to mean less happiness. And if less income comes together with more equality, it could bring more happiness.

The most important thing is to see how life relates to what people expect. We expect more as we get more money, often more than we can buy. When we have enough for basic needs, more money makes us want more, and what we want is often unrealistic; so we are less satisfied. Also, maybe, the type of people who want more are also the type of people who find it more difficult to be satisfied.

As we get more money, we also get more worried about our place in society. We compare ourselves to other people, and of course there is always someone near us who seems to have a better life than us; 'the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence'. We don't like it when rich people show all their money – this makes us think about how unfair life can be.

But we shouldn't be jealous – they are probably not satisfied with their own lives anyway. The Stoic philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome understood that it is useless to worry about all the parts of life that we cannot control. It's better to follow the advice of Seneca: If you are not satisfied with what you have, then, even if you have a lot more, you will never be happy. Or better, Epictetus, who said that the best way to be happy is to make your expectations lower and lower until they are the same as reality.

It is not easy to see what is the cause and what is the effect with something like as happiness. But it seems that equality is much more important than money alone. Prosperity is linked to other things as well as money; health, relationships, environment, work – it is not surprising that unemployment is one of the biggest causes of unhappiness.

Another good thing about changing what we understand by 'prosperity' is that when we accept that growth is not what we want now (we need the opposite - to buy and use less resources), all the arguments against things like higher taxes and more regulation of finance (eg. that we will have less business because businesspeople won't have so much motivation to get money etc.) do not work anymore. The big challenge now is how to improve our living standards in other ways – not just to buy more and use more resources (and warm the world and maybe end the human race). We will still need to get people to invest in real industry, and also to encourage people to develop technology to find solutions to problems. But we shouldn't have to rely on motivation of greed.

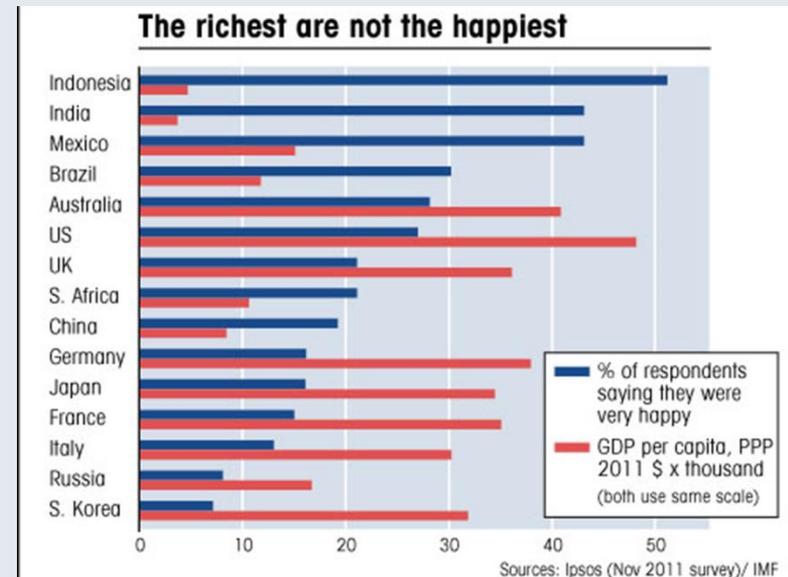
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**Now read it again, and, in pairs  
complete these sentences:**

- 1/ The more money we get, ...
- 2/ The lower your expectations are, ...
- 3/ The more equal a society is, ...
- 4/ The more a country develops, ...
- 5/ The more tax we pay, ...

# In groups, make a poster

## Collect the best “the + comparative” sentences from the class and make a poster to make people think



# Homework:

Read the original – more difficult – article and learn some new vocabulary and structures:

<http://newint.org/blog/2014/12/01/difficult-times-still-be-happy/>

