

PART I: LESSON OVERVIEW AND INSTRUCTOR BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Knowing What You Need and Getting What You Want: First Grade

Goals:

1. Students will understand what a need and want are and make connections between economics and their lives.
2. Students will demonstrate they know how to use money and obtain money in society.
3. Students will learn about what a producer and consumer are.

Objectives:

Social Studies:

1. Students will be able to define and give examples of producers and consumers in the market. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, I – E1.0.1)
2. Students will be able to describe ways people earn money and explain reasons why people work for money. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, I – E1.0.5)
3. Students will be able to discuss ways their families are consumers of goods in the market. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, I – E1. 0.2)
4. Students will be able to make a list of their needs and wants. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, I – E1.0.3)

Mathematics:

1. Students will be able to differentiate the coins and their value. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations , M.UN.01.04)
2. Students will be able to exchange the correct number of coins for fewer coins (ex. five pennies for one nickel.) (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, M.UN.01.05)

Literacy:

1. Students will be able to make text-to-self connections about the needs and wants they have and the needs and wants of the characters in a book. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, R.CM.01.01)
2. Students will be able to discuss and understand informational text about how goods are made and consumed in our society. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, R.IT.01.04)
3. Students will be able to identify the problem and solution in a narrative text. (Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, R.NT.01.03)

Rationale:

The reason I am teaching this unit is because it is in our district's curriculum and I believe it is a topic that the students can relate to and apply in their everyday lives. It is an authentic topic in that it is based on real-world applications and students can find examples of the various topics all around them. The content matters because it is meaningful to the students. There is not a day that goes by that I do not deal with or see money being exchanged for a good or service, consume a product or think of how something was produced, or think about whether I really need or want something. These are all subjects that my students should learn about and understand, because they will be a big part of their

lives. There are several opportunities for inquiry in that students may wonder how something is produced, such as how paper goes from being a tree to the sheet that they are writing on, or why people make different amounts of money, or even how we consume things that are made in other countries. Learning about producers and consumers, the role of money in society, and differentiating between needs and wants helps contribute to developing the students into knowledgeable citizens, because it makes them aware of the basics of economics. Good citizens know how to be productive members of society who also contribute to society.

Social Studies Content:

What I know about this topic of economics are what needs and wants are, how money is an easier form of trade, and what producers and consumers are. I know that the needs of survival are air, food, water, and shelter, and that everything else that is not essential for survival is considered a want. Also, money is used as an easier form of trade for goods or services and that people earn money by working various types of jobs. Also, I know that people work in different places and do different things, and that there are differences in the pay that people receive for their work. The main reason people work is to earn money to buy the things that they need and want. Also, I know that a producer is someone who makes something, and a consumer is someone who uses a good or service.

What I don't know about my economics topic is how various goods are made. I do not know all the steps that go into making the things I use or eat. I would like to know more about this process and even the regulations that the government has in place on the various goods and services that are sold in our country. Also, I don't know very much about how we get goods from different countries and the regulations our government has on those. I know that our country imports and exports various goods; I would like to know more about how we trade with other countries and the rules and regulations on our imports and exports of products. Even though I do not know much about some of these topics I will learn more by researching on the internet and reading articles, talking to people who I know who understand these aspects of economics, researching international trade regulations online, and by maybe watching videos or television shows that show how things are made or produced.

What will be challenging in terms of connecting my knowledge to the students' capacities for understanding will be bringing the content down to their level. I know that I will be able to define what needs, wants, producers, and consumers are, but I do not know if the children will fully grasp the concepts. They may not understand that a need is something that is essential for survival and may think of it in a way that their shoes don't fit, therefore, they need new shoes. Also, another challenge may be getting them to understand that people in society make different amounts of money and do different things in order to earn money. They may not understand what happens when people don't work or lose their jobs. Also, it will be difficult to connect my knowledge with their capacities, because when I know about a topic I want to tell them everything about it and have to stop myself to try to simplify the content. Also, sometimes I find myself giving my students too much information and forget that they can only take in so much at one time, which will be a challenge for me during this unit.

The essential understandings that are going to be developed in this unit are for the students to be able to connect economics to their lives. I want the students to understand the difference between a need and a want and those will be developed throughout the unit, especially when we discuss producers and consumers in society. Also, it is essential for the students to understand the cyclical

nature of economics, which will be developed throughout the unit and when we learn about producers and consumers and the role of money.

My students will need to develop understandings about how producers and consumers are related to each other. People who work usually produce something, whether they work as a farmer and produce food for the nation, or whether they work in an auto factory and make cars; and we are all consumers every day, because we are wearing clothes that are made by someone else, eating food that was grown by someone else, writing on paper that was made by someone else, and so on. It is also important for the students to develop the idea that they can be producers and consumers at the same time. People who produce things also consume things and vice versa. Also, it is important that the students develop their understanding about needs and wants and the role of money. People work to earn money in order to afford the things they need and buy the things they want. When we buy things we are being consumers and when we work to earn our money we are usually being producers. All of the topics are interrelated and need the other to function. For example, if we didn't work, we would not have money and would not be able to afford the things we need and want.

The skills that my students will need to develop during this unit will be making connections to their own lives or personal experiences and background knowledge. The more experiences the students have the better they will be able to relate and fully understand what is being taught. Another skill that will be needed will be the skill of counting and trading in money. We will be working with money and giving the students "money" for doing a job in the classroom (i.e. listening, completing work on time, following directions, etc) and they will have to know how to count their money and exchange it for fewer coins. It is important that students understand how money works and the value of money, because it will help them apply what they are learning to their everyday lives.

The values that will need to be developed will be that of appreciating where things come from and how they get where they are. If you think of all the things you consume every day it is amazing to think of all the various people and the hard work it took to make all those goods. Also, it is important to value peoples' needs and wants. Even though we all have the same basic needs, not everyone has the same wants. Therefore, it is important for the students to value other's opinions and life-styles. They don't have to agree with them, but they do have to value that there is a difference.

There are many things that the students will learn from this economics unit about money, producers and consumers, needs and wants, and about how people work. Also, the students will see how economics is cyclical and will be shown it through several diagrams and illustrations throughout the unit.

Part II: Knowing Your Students and their Learning Environment

Topic: Economics

Ideas: Needs vs. wants, producers and consumers, why people work (for money, which is an easier form of trade.)

a). Who are my students?

I am teaching in a first grade classroom at Webster Elementary School. Webster Elementary School is part of the Hazel Park School District that is rather small with eight schools from pre-school – 12th grade. The school district is in an urban environment, in which many of the students live in working class to lower class households, and 48 percent of the students in the district receive free or reduced lunch. Hazel Park School District is somewhat diverse in that 67 percent of the students are Caucasian, and 29 percent are African American. The general education curriculum consists of *Everyday Math*, *Read Well*, *Being a Writer*, and *Making Meaning*.

Webster Elementary School has about 390 students. The student body is diverse in that 80 percent are Caucasian, 17 percent are African American, and less than one percent are Asian. The socio-economic status of the students in our school is consistent with that of the district in that 70 percent of our students receive free or reduced lunch.

In my first grade classroom there are currently 31 students, with 12 girls and 19 boys. The cultural make up of my students is consistent with that of the district and the school in that 64 percent of my students are Caucasian, about 23 percent are African American, and two percent are Asian. The socio-economic status of the students in my class is consistent with that of the school in that over 87 percent of the students in my class receive free or reduced lunch. There is a wide range of academic abilities among my students in that there are about six students who are at benchmark, five students who are intensive, and the remaining students are strategic; therefore, about one-third of my class are at two opposite extremes. With the two extremes, differentiation is crucial to my lesson planning and instruction. There are a couple students who are very easily distracted and have a difficult time focusing in class. These students usually sit near the front during instruction and need several reminders to stay on task. Also, one of our students was tested and confirmed to be cognitively impaired and spends about 80 percent of the day with the Special Needs Teacher. This student needs a lot of reinforcement and guidance when it comes to doing anything. She has a very difficult time understanding and comprehending what is being said. She knows her letters and her sounds, but cannot read words or sound words out.

We are currently in the process of having two more students tested for learning disabilities. For these students and the remainder of the intensive students, I have them sit at a small table during independent work time and work with them in a smaller group and provide them with more individualized attention. Most of the students in the class are very talkative and restless, in which case I try to make lessons somewhat shorter and transition often between their seats and the carpet in order to get them moving around.

My three focus students this semester for my social studies unit are going to be Hailey, Myren, and John. Hailey is a higher level student and is classified as “benchmark” by the DIBELS testing. Hailey works independently during work time and can follow directions when they are first given. She does not have any behavioral problems in the classroom and seems to get along with most of her peers. She is a very social student, but knows when it is time to work and when she can talk to her friends. Her mother is very involved with her school and attended the Student of the Month Breakfast for Hailey. My mentor and I have never had an issue with incomplete or missing homework from Hailey.

Myren is an average student and is classified as “strategic” by the DIBELS testing. When it comes to following directions, he sometimes needs a few reminders to keep him on task. He is very social, which can distract him during independent work time. His family is very involved with his school, and both parents have come to school events and functions. He always has his homework done and turned in on time. My mentor and I have not had any behavioral problem with Myren, and he always listens to his teachers during instructional time. He has a twin brother in the other first grade class and they seem to get along very well. Myren is a very sweet and polite boy, who is soft spoken and friendly, and can be sensitive at times.

John is a lower student who is classified as “intensive” by the DIBELS testing. During independent work time he works in a small group with me and gets one-on-one assistance. He needs several reminders to focus on his work and stay on task. If we switch to something else when most of the students are done working, he will rush through his work so he can join them. He has several friends in the classroom and looks for every opportunity to talk to them. Also, when the teacher is giving instructions and directions to the whole class he has a tendency to zone out. He is making slow but steady progress with his reading skills and letter and sound recognition. Last year he was in the Kindergarten special education program, but did not qualify for it this year. When working in a smaller group with him, I have noticed that he lacks fine motor skills. He does leave the room twice a week to work with the speech teacher. John is a very sweet and kind boy, who is always willing to help his peers.

b). Student knowledge and interests.

In terms of social studies the students recently learned about families, which was at the end of November during the Thanksgiving holiday. We do not teach social studies on a regular basis since the majority of our day consists of literacy and some mathematics. My students’ prior knowledge in regard to money would be from mathematics where we have talked about money and they have learned about the nickel and the penny so far (in terms of how much they are worth and how to trade in five pennies for one nickel). After informally talking with my students, of various academic abilities, many of them could not tell me what a producer or consumer was and simply shrugged their shoulders at me. When I asked one of my higher students, he told me that a producer was someone who produced things. I asked him to explain more to me, but he couldn’t. Then when I asked them why people work, many of them answered because people have to. I asked some of them why people have to, and they said “just because.” However, the students were able to tell me something that they needed and wanted, and some things that they use money for. Many could tell me that they wanted a video game, or that they wanted to go home and sleep, which showed me that they were very familiar with this concept. This tells me that the students have little prior knowledge about producers and consumers, but have a starting point in knowing needs and wants.

I think my students will be very interested in this unit, because it is something that they can relate to every day. Many of them know about needs and wants and can relate to people working, because many people in their families work. Also, the students have some prior knowledge about money and have probably heard their parents talk about money and spend money. What I have noticed in talking with them is that they have a misconception of what a need is. In economics a need is something that is essential for survival (air, water, food, shelter), but many of them were saying that they needed new shoes because the ones they have are too small, or that they needed gloves. I did have quite a few students tell me, though, that they needed something to eat or some food, but I'm not sure if it was because it was right before lunch and they were legitimately hungry or that they knew that it was a need. I would have to factor timing into my conversations with my students next time. Also, a misconception that the students may have is that when people spend money it is seen as a trade, because they are trading their money for a good or service.

c). Linguistic, social and academic challenges, resources and supports.

Accommodations that I will make for students in my class will be that for my students who very easily distracted, I will be sure to have them moving around at any time that the lesson allows (if I need help passing something out or demonstrating something), sitting near the front, and reminding them to stay focused. For my student who is in special education, I do not know if she will be in our room during the social studies time. If she is, I will be sure to partner her with one of the benchmark students who can keep her updated and can help her and guide her through our activity. For a few of my shy students, I will make sure to partner them with someone who is outgoing and talkative, in order to take the pressure off them to have to talk so much. This way they are comfortable and are learning. I will also explain that they need to participate with their partner and in the learning activity. For my intensive students I will have them work in the smaller group that they usual work in during independent work times. This keeps them more focused, on task, and provides them with more individual help. Also, for my students who have a difficult time reading and writing, I will spend time working with them on their assignments in order to help them understand the activity and be able to complete their work. Many times my students who struggle with reading and writing will take a while to get started on the assignment, because they don't think they can do it or don't like doing it since they struggle with it; but when I assist them with an assignment they get really excited on completion and a sense of pride comes over them.

Since most of the students in my class are restless, I will try to have as many hands-on and interactive activities that our schedule will permit. I think it will be a unit that most of them will be interested in, which will help keep them engaged and motivated in the activities.