

TEACHERS ACTIVITIES



Theme:

Throughout history, people have traded goods and services, but knowing how to determine the *value* of what is being traded is essential to striking a good bargain.

Topics For Discussion:

Invite students to share their experiences attending garage or yard sales, flea markets, auctions, outdoor markets, and the like. Discuss features that these events have in common. How are they different?



Ask students if they have ever traded an object of their own for something that belonged to someone else. What did they trade? How did they and the other individual decide if it was an “even” trade?



Invite students to share an activity they especially enjoy doing with a grandparent.



For many people, Saturday is a favorite day of the week. Discuss with students how they spend their Saturdays.

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Have the students make a “key” to accompany the map that tells the nature of the exchanges that took place. They will need to assign a number to each stall Maria Lili and her grandmother visited. For example, Don Eugenio and Sebastian’s stall is “1.” On a chart, next to number 1, have students complete the sentence frame, “They traded _____ for _____” (e.g., “They traded six eggs for a bunch of green plantains.”). They do the remainder of the key in the same way by completing the sentence that describes the trade at each stall.

On a large piece of mural paper, have the students make a map of the marketplace where Maria Lili and Mama Ana did their trading. Have them label each of the stalls, that they visited, with the name of the person it belonged to.



The story refers to a number of foods that might not be familiar. Have students research plantains, cilantro, cassava, and cumin. What type of food is it? Where does it grow? How is it prepared or used in cooking? Are there some more familiar foods that it is similar to?



Make a Venn diagram that compares shopping in an outdoor market with shopping in a supermarket or grocery store.



Invite students to bring samples from their collections to put on display. (The owner of the collection sets the rules about touching items.) Provide time for students to talk about their collections. Discuss questions that the class might ask the owner, such as "How did you get started with your collection?"; "What is your favorite piece?"; "What is the most unusual story behind a piece in your collection?"; and the like. (Having a variety of questions will avoid the inevitable, "How much did it cost?")



Have a simple "swap meet" in the classroom. Have each student bring in an inexpensive item to swap. Objects might include toys students no longer want, books they have read, puzzles, games, etc. (A signed consent from parents on the item might be appropriate.) The teacher should bring something too and model the thought process of determining equal value by examining several of the available items at the swap meet and comparing them to his/her own. After everyone has something "new," have students talk about their trades.



With the assistance of the library media specialist, have students research the practice of bartering. Why did people barter? What types of items did they barter? Does bartering still take place today?



Enlist the aid of some parent volunteers and use the vegetables from the above math activity to make vegetable soup, the class's own version of "sancocho."

Bring a selection of vegetables for some mathematical exploration of the concept of weight. Possible objects for weighing include: a potato, an onion, a few carrots, a tomato, some green beans, and an ear of corn. Have students predict the weight of individual vegetables. Record their predictions on a chart and then weigh the items. Discuss whether their predictions were higher, lower, or just right. Pose some problems, such as "How many carrots will equal the weight of one ear of corn?" (Ask students to suggest problems, as well.) Again, have them predict before they weigh and discuss the accuracy of all predictions.

Supplemental Books:

THE TABLE WHERE RICH PEOPLE SIT
by Byrd Baylor, illus. by Peter Parnall (Scribners)

GRANDMA WENT TO MARKET
by Stella Blackstone, illus. by Bernard Lodge (Houghton Mifflin)

MARKET DAY
by Eve Bunting, illus. by Holly Berry (HarperCollins)

JOSEPHINA, THE GREAT COLLECTOR
by Diana Engel (Morrow)

SATURDAY MARKET
by Patricia Grossman, illus. by Enrique O. Sanchez (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

ARTHUR'S HONEY BEAR
by Lillian Hoban (HarperCollins)

FARMER'S MARKET
by Paul Brett Johnson, (Orchard)

JASMINE'S PARLOUR DAY
by Lynn Joseph, illus. by Ann Grifalconi (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

THE PUDDLE PAIL
by Elisa Kleven (Dutton)

MARKET!
by Ted Lewin (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard)

OH, NO, TOTO!
by Katrin Hyman Tchana & Louise Tchana Pami, illus. by Colin Bootman
(Scholastic)

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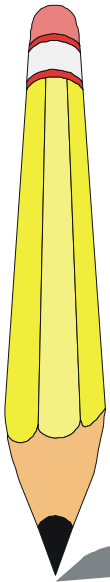


- **Concept of a dozen.** Brainstorm with students items which are often purchased by the dozen or in packages of twelve (e.g., eggs, cookies, doughnuts, cans of soft drinks, etc.). Have them look around the classroom and collect items in twelves, such as 12 books, 12 crayons, 12 pencils, 12 paper clips, and the like. Extend the discussion to include things that typically come in 2's, 3's, 4's, etc.

- **Graphing Saturday fun.** Take a survey of students' favorite activities to do on a Saturday and graph the results. To make a larger graph, survey other classrooms at the same grade level. Display the graph where all participating classrooms can see it and give it a title such as, "Third Graders' Favorite Things to do on a Saturday."

- **Estimating and determining weight.** Bring in a selection of vegetables, such as a potato, an ear of corn, a tomato, some green beans, an onion, a few carrots, etc., that could be the ingredients in a sancocho (stew). Have students estimate the weight of individual vegetables. Record their predictions on a chart and then weigh the items. Discuss whether their estimates were higher, lower, or just right. Pose some problems comparing the weights of the vegetables, such as, "How many carrots will equal the weight of one ear of corn?" Have students make up their own weight problems. Again, have them estimate before they weigh and then check the accuracy of all predictions. Use the vegetables to make stew. Discuss with students the importance of measurement, cooking time, and cooking temperature as they prepare the stew.

- **Determining value.** Collect a set of objects that would likely appeal to the students, such as a soccer ball, a stuffed animal, a board game, a book, a hand-held computer game, a collectible doll, a popular video, a puzzle, a baseball bat, and the like. Display the objects in groups of three. Give each student three small pieces of construction paper with the numerals, one, two, or three, written on them. Have students consider what each of the three objects on display is worth to them and show a "one," if the item is very valuable; "two," if they have no strong feelings one way or another; and "three," if the object is worth little to them. The purpose of this activity is not monetary value; instead, students are to think about what the objects are worth personally to them. Discuss how people's interests, hobbies, recreational activities, etc., often determine what they consider valuable. This activity may be extended further by making a list of the items with a 1, 2, and 3 next to the name and recording tally marks to represent the students' designations of worth. Use this chart to draw additional conclusions about value.



- **Bartering at a swap meet.** As a class, plan a swap meet that deals entirely in items made by the students. These tradable items might include the following: pictures drawn or painted by students (perhaps in paper frames); books and poems written and illustrated by class members; bookmarks; book jackets; puzzles (pictures mounted on tagboard and then cut into puzzle pieces); paperbag, stick, paper plate, or sock puppets; student-made board or card games; student-made trading cards (on popular subjects, such as dinosaurs, dogs, members of the class, or on topics they have studied, such as birds, mammals, etc.); and other ideas the students have for items they can make. When items are finished, display them on tables in the classroom so that students may browse for things they might be interested in bartering for. Have a “swap meet afternoon” and encourage students to talk about why (in terms of value and worth to them) they would trade items they made for certain other items.

- **Using ordinal numbers to recall the story.** Maria Lili and Mama Ana made ten trades altogether at the market. Make ten cards for a pocket chart with the ordinal words, first through tenth, written on them. Have students recall the story and brainstorm the trades that were made. Record the trades on sentence strips for the pocket chart. (At a later time, students may want to draw pictures or paste cutouts of the appropriate foods on the sentence strips.) Place the ordinal word cards on the chart and have the students decide which trade occurred at each stop in the marketplace. Allow them to refer to the book if needed.

Do-At-Home Activity

- **Practical math.** At a parent night or family math event or in classroom newsletter, make the following recommendations to parents:

Take children shopping and discuss how to compare prices. (For example, at the grocery store, a bigger size is often a better value, but only if you can use it.) Have children look at grocery ads for coupons and sale prices. Show them how to find prices on items at the store and how to search for lower priced items. Talk about the importance of buying better quality in some food items and how a less expensive brand will serve the purpose with other foods. When shopping for clothes, shoes, and other items, talk with children about how you go about deciding what is a good value. Also, encourage children to think about how much they want an item (Will they wear it?, Will they play with it?, Do they already have something similar?) rather than simply responding to an advertisement they have seen.

Occasionally, let children buy a small item for themselves, so that they learn the value of different coins, how to figure if they have enough money for the item and how to determine if they receive the correct amount of change.

When children accompany you to yard or garage sales, flea markets, or auctions, discuss the value of items you are considering and why you feel the way you do. Observe how people often negotiate prices and discuss why they do this.

Let children help prepare meals. Have them assist with reading recipes and measuring ingredients. Give them the responsibility of figuring out how many plates, knives, forks, and spoons are needed to set the table. When company is coming for dinner, have them determine how many extra chairs and the additional tableware that is needed.

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