

Age Level: 3rd Grade

Suggested Time: 45 minutes

Location: Outdoors near the garden beds that will be used for planting

Understanding Economics and Community

Lesson 1 of 4

OVERVIEW

We will explore the concept of Community and give the students some applied experience in Economics by starting a small vegetable farming business. In this lesson we will explore student ideas and questions about the concept of Community and launch our business by planting our seeds/plants.

CLASSROOM PREP

Prior to this lesson, read Reflections Unit 6 - Understanding Economics and Unit 3 (Chapter 6) - Building Communities to introduce background information and vocabulary

MATERIALS

- Trowels -approx. 10
- Plant sprouts or seeds
- Planting diagram of where each plant will be planted in the garden bed
- 5 copies of the book Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen
- Popsicle sticks
- Permanent markers
- Garden Cafe prompts - each one written in the center of a large sheet of butcher paper
 - What is a community?
 - How do businesses use resources from the community?
 - What does it mean to be a good citizen in a community?
 - What choices do we have for spending money in our community?
- Garden Cafe markers - approx. 10

INTRODUCTION

We are going to start a pretend farming business. By doing this, we will gain first-hand experience that we can apply to the concept of Economics. We will also explore the idea of living and working in a Community. Over the course of 4 lessons, we will plant our "farm", tend our crops, learn about what it takes to run a small business, and harvest and enjoy our bounty!

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS (spoken directly to students)

We have 3 activities to accomplish today – planting crops, Garden Cafe and Shared Reading. We are going to break the class into 3 groups and each group will rotate to each of the 3 activities.

1. Planting Crops

- a. As a small farming business, we need to plant our crops in anticipation of later harvest.
- b. As farmers, we will start by mixing our soil with our trowels. Soil is a farmer's most important natural resource. As we do the work of farmers, we are also using our human resources which are the people who work to grow and sell the crops.
- c. Using the planting plan, you can now plant the seeds/plants in the soil.

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d. These seeds/plants will grow into vegetables that we could sell. When we make and sell a product we are producers.

e. Now, write the name of the seeds/plants you planted on a popsicle stick with a permanent marker and place it in the ground next to the items you planted.

2. Garden Cafe

a. We would like to build understanding of the idea of community, and the businesses in our community, in a collaborative way.

b. This will be done as a "conversation" conducted silently on paper.

c. Each paper has one prompt.

d. You will read the prompt and think of any ideas, questions or problems that come to mind. You will silently respond in writing to both the prompt and the thoughts of others.

e. You have the flexibility to move from one paper to another and take the time needed to think through the collective information written on the paper.

3. Shared Reading

a. It's your turn to take the leadership role. You will each take turns reading aloud to your partner from the book Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen.

GARDEN CAFE WRAP UP

- Share student thinking by asking students to read aloud the prompt and then the comments on the papers.
- Do the students notice any themes that emerged? Any common reactions? Are there ideas that surprised them?
- Can we connect any of the Garden Cafe comments to the other activities we did in this lesson?
- Tell the students that when we meet as a class next, we will take turns doing the jobs it takes to run a smoothie shop.

CLASSROOM EXTENSIONS

- Perform Uncle Willie as a play. You can find the script at http://www.partnershipsmakeadifference.org/uploads/3/9/3/2/3932381/uncle_willie_script_bw.pdf
- Create Discovery Journals to document garden observations, thoughts, questions and illustrations.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA STANDARDS

- History/Social Science 3.5- Students demonstrate basic economic reasoning skills and an understanding of the economy of the local region
- Life Sciences 3a,d
- ELA/Reading 2.0- Reading Comprehension, 3.0- Literary Response Analysis
- ELA/Writing 1.0- Writing Strategies
- ELA/Listening and Speaking Strategies 1.0