

Read the “Directions” sheets for specific instructions.

SUMMARY

In this activity, children and adults will take a trip together to explore a locally owned business in their community. Children and adults will use the suggested questions to learn more about what it takes to run a business while thinking about the business history of their hometown.

WHY

Although children frequently visit all kinds of businesses with their parents and other adults, their experiences and comprehension are generally limited to goods like groceries and services like trips to the dentist. Field trips give students the opportunity to look at familiar and unfamiliar places in new ways and for new reasons. Using the guiding questions, students can learn about the role money plays in the places they go every day and gain greater understanding about the people in their communities.

TIME

- 10-90 minutes, depending on activities and options chosen.

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP

This activity will work best for children in kindergarten to 4th grade.

CHALLENGE WORDS

- **business:** the activity of making, buying, or selling goods and services for money
- **price:** the amount of money that you pay for something
- **employee:** a person who works for a company in return for money
- **cashier:** the person in a business who adds up a customer’s purchases on the cash register and collects money for the purchases.
- **business costs:** the money a business owner pays for the things that are needed to run the business, like wages for employees, rent for the building, and materials to make what they sell
- **profit:** the money that a business makes from selling goods or services that is leftover after all the others costs are paid

GET READY

- Read *Lemonade in Winter: A Book About Two Kids Counting Money* by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. For tips on reading this book together, check out the Reading Guide (<http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/money>)
- Consider reviewing the Step Back in Time sheets and the Challenge Words from the Reading Guide.

YOU NEED

- *Lemonade in Winter: A Book About Two Kids Counting Money* by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by G. Brian Karas
- A Business Build Up sheet (*attached*)
- Directions sheets (*attached*)
- Interview and Learn Sheet (*attached*)
- A pencil and a clipboard
- Challenge Words definitions
- Transportation (*possibly*)
- A computer with internet, or phone book (*possibly*)

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/money/>.



Local Business, Big Reach

A Business Build Up, page 1 of 1

For more information, visit the American Enterprise website at <http://americanenterprise.si.edu/> and enter the EXPLORE section

In the 1830s, when the United States was barely 60 years old, a French philosopher named Alexis de Tocqueville (pronounced like toke-vill) took a trip around the country and wrote a book about what he saw here. That book is called *Democracy in America*, and in it he talks about all sorts of people, places, and things. One thing that greatly impressed him was how many businesses he saw in the towns he visited. Merchants, carpenters, people who traded horses, owned taverns, and operated mills; everywhere he looked he saw local businesses at work.

Small scale, privately owned businesses like the ones Tocqueville saw have always made up a very important part of the American economy. This was especially true as new towns and cities popped up in growing states and people needed more goods and services. Americans of all ages and backgrounds needed to buy things like food for themselves and their animals and tools to run their farms and factories. Local businesses provided a place to buy those items. Today, almost 200 years later, America is brimming with nearly 23 million businesses that are owned and operated by our neighbors.

“What astonishes me in the United States is not so much the marvelous grandeur of some undertakings as the innumerable multitude of small ones.”

- Alexis de Tocqueville



Pauline and John-John sell lemonade, limeade, and even lemon-limeade to their neighbors [Image from *Lemonade in Winter*]

Local businesses still make all of the same choices that national companies have to make. Businessowners decide what to sell, how much to sell their products for, where they will set up shop, who they will hire, and so much more. They also have to find ways to attract customers and to convince people to buy the goods and services they offer. In this activity, you will learn about business from your local business owners and workers.

For kids and adults to do together.

1. Print out two copies of the Interview and Learn sheet or write down the questions on a sheet of paper of your own. Grab a pencil and paper for notes.

2. Review the Challenge Words together to make sure you understand them. Pretend you are visiting Pauline and John-John's business and talking to them about everything you see. Use your copy of *Lemonade in Winter* to try to answer all of the questions (including all of the Suggested Questions!) on the Interview and Learn sheets.

3. Choose a locally owned business in your community to visit. Having trouble thinking of a business to visit? Find community-based businesses near you by using the internet to find your community's Chamber of Commerce (enter the name of your town and "Chamber of Commerce" into your favorite search engine). Explore their site or use their contact information to find a list of businesses nearby.

Tip

Try using a phone book! Look up the kind of business you would like to visit (for instance a bakery or a hair dresser) and pick a name from the list to call.

4. Visit the business!

Tip

Contact the business before your trip to see if you can set up an appointment with a manager or the business owner.

Before you leave, review the suggested questions on the Interview and Learn sheet. Is there anything else you want to learn about? You might not have very long to talk with someone when you get to the business, so consider picking just two or three questions that you want to ask.

5. When you arrive, answer the first questions on the Interview and Learn sheet for yourself.



Directions, page 2 of 2

6. Next, find someone who works at the business to speak with. Ask if they have a few minutes to talk or if there is a manager available to speak with you. Explain to them that you are on a trip to learn more about small businesses in your community and that you have a few questions to ask.

If someone is available, ask him or her your questions. If not, spend a few minutes exploring the public areas of the business and thinking about what you see. Can you answer the questions on your own? What evidence are you using to answer the questions?

*Always remember to thank people who help you!
Anyone you speak with deserves your appreciation.*

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/money/>.



Local Business, Big Reach

Interview and Learn, page 1 of 3

Before you talk with anyone, what can you see:

Name of Business:

What do they sell here? What is your favorite thing this business sells? What is its price?

How many employees can you see? What kinds of jobs are they doing?

Think back to the strategies Pauline and John-John used to sell lemonade. Can you find any examples of these strategies at this business?

HINT: The strategies Pauline and John-John used were advertising, entertainment, a sale, and decorations.

Draw the examples you see!



Local Business, Big Reach

Interview and Learn, page 2 of 3

Now it's time to talk with someone! Ask one of the employees if you can speak to them for a few minutes or if you can speak with a manager. Explain to the employee that you are on a trip to learn more about small businesses and that you have a few questions to ask about money.

Name of the person you are speaking with:

What is his or her job?

Ask the person if he or she can show you the cash register. Draw what you see!



Suggested Questions for your Interview: Remember to pick only a few!

1. Who makes the things that are for sale here? If the owner or the employees make them, what do they use to make their products?
2. Talk to this person about business costs. What kinds of things does the business have to spend money on in order to stay in business?
3. How many customers pay with coins and dollars, and how many customers pay with credit cards? What happens when the cashier runs out of money?
4. Who has to count all the money at the end of the day? How do they keep track of it all?

Use this page to write down the questions you picked to ask and the answers you get!

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

Don't forget to say Thank You!!

WHY

Adjust this activity for your classroom! If you cannot take a class field trip to a local small business, explore options for virtual visits by looking through company websites or contact local small business owners to invite them into your classroom to be interviewed by students. Contact your community's Chamber of Commerce or local government for information about small businesses in your community.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be better able to:

- Formulate and ask relevant questions relating to business.
- Recognize the value of money and how transactions work.
- Interact with adults in an appropriate manner.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Correctly identifies text examples of each persuasive tactic.
- Demonstrate their understanding of new business vocabulary by using the Challenge Words appropriately.
- Accurately describe some of the reasons why a small business is designated as “small.”

STANDARDS

IRA/NCTE Language Arts Standards

5. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).



NCHS History Standards

K-4 History Content Standards

2A: The student understands the history of his or her local community.

K-4 History Thinking Standards

3A. Historical Analysis and Interpretation – Formulate questions to focus their inquiry or analysis.

Common Core Standards

English Language Arts

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.