

# Wants and Needs

## An Economics Concept

Teaching Resources

### TYPES OF RESOURCES

[Children's Books](#)

[Lesson Plans](#)

### **Children's Books**

Agee, Jon. **Nothing.**

One of the most popular clichés in economics is “there’s no such thing as a free lunch,” with the implication that you cannot get something for nothing. Jon Agee’s clever book turns this notion upside down when the richest lady in town walks into Otis’s empty antiques shop at closing time and buys nothing for something. Amazed that this wealthy woman who has everything would pay \$300 for nothing, the neighboring merchants quickly change their signs and their sales pitches – I have the finest in nothing! I sell nothing from China! – and the odd purchase sets off a buying craze. *Nothing* is ingenious in the way it parodies herd behavior in consumer shopping patterns at a level that young children will understand and enjoy. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/wants-and-needs/794-nothing> )

***Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection***

Beard, Darlene Bailey. **Annie Glover is Not a Tree Lover.**

Fourth-grader Annie Glover wishes desperately that her mother would pick her up early from school so she would not have to suffer the humiliation to which her grandmother has subjected her. It's one thing for Grandma to have built up her reputation as a community activist, but another thing altogether when Grandma's newest cause involves protecting a 100-year-old tree directly across the street from Annie's school. Even worse, Grandma has chained herself to that tree while wearing a silly outfit with pink high-top shoes and chanting through a bullhorn. And if things could not get any worse, Grandma's protest could jeopardize the construction of a brand-new community pool that has fueled excitement among all the kids, including Annie.

It takes the discovery of a unique historical fact about that tree, as well as reminders of the special role that tree has played in the lives of her family and friends, to prompt Annie to think more carefully about the seriousness of Grandma's protest and the costs of losing the tree. This enjoyable book provides children with an opportunity to think about the power of grass-roots activism in an amusing storyline that will keep the pages turning. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2009-first-word-a-i/1429-annie-glover> )

***Closest location: Not available in the Oshkosh area. Please submit an “Interlibrary Loan” for this book.***

Boelts, Maribeth. **Those Shoes.**

This clever book contains a powerful lesson about differentiating between wants and needs in the face of tight budget constraints. At the same time, the subtle text and expressive illustrations communicate clearly a child's desire to conform. At a time when expensive shoes have become a high-status consumption good, *Those Shoes* comes out a winner for telling an appealing story to which readers across age groups can relate. (Source of summary:

<http://econkids.rutgers.edu/scarcity/1116-those-shoes> )

*Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection*

Brown, Marc. **Arthur's TV Trouble.**

When Arthur sees advertisements for the amazing doggy Treat Timer, he decides to earn enough money to buy it for his dog Pal. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/wants-and-needs/171-arthurs-tv-trouble> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library - or submit a "Universal Borrowing" request- it will take 2-3 days to arrive*

Crum, Shutta. **A Family for Old Mill Farm.**

A family with another baby on the way needs a new house, but their real estate agent just cannot seem to find the right house. A lodge on the breezy shore, a ranch house in the desert, a mountain-top home, none of them can provide the space and setting that the family members know they want. A raccoon realtor, on the other hand, has no trouble finding a succession of animal families the perfect home on the grounds of Old Mill Farm, an old barn nestled in the woods and hills with a stream running from a nearby pond. Could Old Mill Farm be the dream home for the people family as well? With its warm illustrations and parallel story lines, this unique children's book makes a useful resource for discussing wants and needs, as well as supply and demand, in the context of real estate. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2007-first-word-a-i/1455-a-family-for-old-mill-farm> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library - or submit an "Interlibrary Loan" request*

Beale, Fleur. **Walking Lightly.**

This enjoyable book does a nice job teaching about the difference between wants and needs, one of the first economics concepts to which children are exposed at school and in their daily lives. The plot moves quickly, the illustrations add a lively touch, and the lead character has a likeable, modest personality. *Walking Lightly* makes a nice addition to any collection of high-quality books that appeal to children across a wide range of ages. (Source of summary:

<http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2006-and-earlier/959-walking-lightly> )

*Closest location: Not available in the Oshkosh area. Please submit an "Interlibrary Loan" request for this book*

Dewdney, Anna. **Llama Llama Mad at Mama.**

Llama llama, no different from other kids his age, would rather continue playing than head off with Mama to the Shop-O-Rama. Mama probably feels much the same way, but the weekly groceries and errands need to get done. Llama llama grows progressively more agitated during the shopping expedition, resulting in a tantrum that sends the shopping cart contents scattering throughout the aisle. Clever mama finds a way to calm her son and finish buying what they need at the supermarket. The book, with marvelous illustrations that clearly express Llama llama's growing frustration, can be used to teach young children about wants and needs, goods, and markets. Also essential is the message that parents can find grocery shopping just as tedious as their little ones. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2007-first-word-j-p/1662-llama-llama-mad-at-mama> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library - or request through "Universal Borrowing"*

Fagan, Cary. **Banjo of Destiny.**

This bittersweet novel has just the right touch of wit and creativity to catch and keep the attention of young discerning readers. Thoroughly entwined into the novel is an unusual twist on the economics concept of wants versus needs that will encourage readers to think about what brings true happiness. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/older-children-and-young-adults-2011/2015-banjo-of-destiny--by-cary-fagan-illustrated-by-selcuk-demirel> )

*Closest location: Not available in the Oshkosh area. Please submit an "Interlibrary Loan" request.*

Grimes, Nikki. **Almost Zero.**

Outspoken third-grader Dyamonde Daniel has returned for another interesting adventure, this one involving an agonizing lesson about true needs. When stylish Tameeka showed up at school in a fabulous new pair of pink high-tops, Dyamonde told her mother that she absolutely had to have the same pair in red. Mom had different ideas though, and she emptied almost all the contents of Dyamonde's closet to help her better distinguish between wants and needs. This lesson was further reinforced for Dyamonde when a serious fire left a classmate's family with virtually nothing except the clothes on their backs.

Award-winning author Nikki Grimes has built on the Dyamonde Daniel series with another book that weaves together engaging characters, a unique story, and a powerful lesson. This short novel provides a good opportunity to talk with children about wants and needs, one of the first economics concepts to which young learners are exposed in elementary school. Dyamonde Daniel is a very real and likeable character; young readers are bound to eagerly anticipate her next learning experience. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2010-first-word-a-i/1969-almost-zero-a-dyamonde-daniel-book-by-nikki-grimes-illustrated-by-r-gregory-christie> )

*Closest location: Berlin Public Library - - or submit an "Interlibrary Loan" request*

Isadora, Rachel. **The Fisherman and His Wife.**

Using an African-themed setting that includes striking fabric designs, Rachel Isadora retells the classic Brothers Grimm tale about a hapless fisherman and his greedy wife. When the fisherman is surprised to catch a talking flounder, he consents to its request for release back to the sea. The wife, upset that her husband came home with no fish to cook for dinner, insisted that he go back and ask the magical fish to grant them a wish.

What started out as a reasonable wish to replace their dilapidated and stinky shack with a new hut that they genuinely needed, turned into a subsequent set of wishes for increasingly grandiose positions of wealth and power. The more unreasonable the wishes became, that's the darker and angrier the stormy sea grew, until the wife's final extravagant and impossible wish led them back to their original situation in the dilapidated shack. This book serves as a nice vehicle for teaching about the difference between wants and needs and the potential pitfalls of allowing the pursuit of wants to escalate. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2008-first-word-q-z/908-fisherman-and-his-wife-the> )

*Closest location: Menasha Public Library – or submit an “Interlibrary Loan” request*

Koss, Amy Goldman. **The Not-So-Great Depression.**

Up until the day when their mother lost her high-powered job, Jacki and her siblings had enjoyed a pampered lifestyle: private schools; a fancy car; a large house with a pool in a posh neighborhood; restaurant and takeout meals; a housekeeper, gardener, and driver; and an abundance of clothing, gadgets, and toys. All these perks slowly started to unravel as it became increasingly clear that Mom's various job interviews were not translating into a job offer, the value of their financial investments would continue to tank, and opportunities for loans were drying up faster than the weather. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/book-of-the-month-navmenu-221/1905-depression> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library*

Levy, Janice. **Gonzalo Grabs the Good Life.**

Gonzalo the rooster has some quibbles about his working conditions on the farm, so winning the lottery provides the perfect opportunity for him to seek contentment somewhere else. Gonzalo uses his new wealth to purchase a mansion in Florida, hire a domestic staff, join a country club, buy a fancy yacht, and become a party animal, but none of these luxuries make him happy.

Running out of money and friends may prove a blessing in disguise as Gonzalo embarks on a different path to discover what it is that he truly needs. (Source of summary:

<http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2009-first-word-a-i/1402-gonzalo> )

*Closest location: Not available in the Oshkosh area. Request through “Universal Borrowing” (it will take 2-3 days to arrive).*

Mobin-Uddin, Asma. **The Best Eid Ever.**

An outstanding book, *The Best Eid Ever* provides readers with an interesting account of the Eid holiday and Muslim culture as seen through the eyes of a young child. Wrapped into the story is an important lesson about the economic hardships associated with war, and a child's growing awareness of the difference between wants and needs. The lush colors and expressive features in the pastel pencil illustrations add a rich dimension to this enjoyable story. (Source of summary:

<http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2007-first-word-q-z/1726-the-best-eid-ever> )

*Closest location: Menasha Public Library – or request through “Universal Borrowing”*

Munsch, Robert. **Something Good.**

When Tyya goes shopping with her father she gets into a lot of trouble because she wants to buy "good food." (Source of summary: WorldCat)

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library – or request through “Universal Borrowing”*

Nielsen-Fernlund, Susin. **The Magic Beads.**

*The Magic Beads* is an excellent example of a children’s book that broaches a difficult topic—in this case, domestic violence—in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner. The expressive illustrations work effectively to communicate the conflicting emotions that the protagonist feels.

Woven into the compelling story are some powerful economics lessons about scarcity, wants and needs, and the economics of conflict. This book offers a hopeful message that Lillian and her mother, who experienced extreme conflict at home and a change in living standards at the shelter, are able to find help and support as they transition to a new chapter in their lives.

(Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2007-first-word-q-z/1729-the-magic-beads> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library*

Noble, Trinka Hanks. **The Orange Shoes.**

*The Orange Shoes* takes no shortcuts in conveying to young readers the difficulty of living in poverty and the importance of dignity in meeting life’s challenges. The striking illustrations and the text’s powerful examples both do an excellent job in communicating the manifestations of poverty in Delly’s life. The book also serves as a useful vehicle for teaching young readers about wants and needs, and about auctions as an effective means of raising money. One cannot help but cheer for Delly Porter as she faces life’s hardships square in the eye with a dash of humility and grace. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2007-first-word-q-z/1731-the-orange-shoes> )

*Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection*

Olaleye, Isaac. **Bikes for Rent!**

Lateef, a poor young boy living in a village in western Nigeria, works hard so he can rent a bicycle and ride with the other boys.

*Closest location: Not available in the Oshkosh area. Please request through “Universal Borrowing” (it will take 2-3 days to arrive).*

Polacco, Patricia. **Chicken Sunday.**

To thank Miss Eula for her wonderful Sunday chicken dinners, three children sell decorated eggs to buy her a beautiful Easter hat. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/wants-and-needs/170-chicken-sunday> )

*Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection*

Primavera, Elise. **Louise, the Big Cheese.**

Although Louise Cheese lived in a modest house and had unpretentious parents, she wanted desperately to look like a big cheese. The ticket to success, she figured, was to replace her boring brown laced shoes wear a pair of shiny patent leather pumps with sparkles on the toes. A shopping expedition with mom certainly raised Louise's hopes, but Mrs. Cheese was far too practical and simply purchased a new pair of brown laced shoes. Imagine Louise's displeasure when the next day her best friend Fern skipped up the street in the very shoes Louise had desired. Could their friendship stand the test of the green eyed monster?

Cleverly intertwined in this humorous story is a basic economics lesson about wants versus needs, a lesson that children can appreciate at an early age. A feisty lead character and comical illustrations work well to engage young readers while they consider what it really means to act like a big cheese. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2010-first-word-j-p/1946-louise-the-big-cheese-and-the-la-di-da-shoes-by-elise-primavera-illustrated-by-diane-goode> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library*

Silverstein, Shel. **The Giving Tree.**

A young boy grows to manhood and old age experiencing the love and generosity of a tree which gives to him without thought of return. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/wants-and-needs/145-the-giving-tree> )

*Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection*

Usher, M.D. **Diogenes.**

Diogenes, an unusually thoughtful dog in ancient Greece, lived a comfortable life free of trouble or need. Yet Diogenes wanted more; he wanted to be his own master. Inspired by his observations of a carefree mouse, Diogenes left all his creature comforts behind and set off for the great city of Athens. There he spent the rest of his doggy days performing various tricks to teach people about the value of a simple lifestyle and the importance of avoiding moral bankruptcy. Based on the actual story of a man who founded the Cynic school of philosophy, this unique book offers children an interesting opportunity to explore ethics and morals in an ancient Greek setting. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2009-first-word-a-i/1065-diogenes> )

*Closest location: Appleton Public Library – or submit an “Interlibrary Loan” request*

Wells, Rosemary. **Bunny Money.**

Max and Ruby spend so much on emergencies while shopping for Grandma's birthday presents, that they just barely have enough money left for gifts.

*Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection*

Wells, Rosemary. **Max's Dragon Shirt.**

On a shopping trip to the department store, Max's determination to get a dragon shirt leads him away from his distracted sister and into trouble. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/wants-and-needs/168-maxs-dragon-shirt> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library - or request through “Universal Borrowing”*

Willard, Nancy. **The Flying Bed.**

Serendipity leads Guido to an extraordinary bed shop, where he acquires what is, unbeknownst to him, a magical bed. This bed takes Guido and Maria to a magical town far away, where a master baker gives them a special kind of yeast. When Guido and Maria bake bread with the unusual yeast, the delicious smells and tastes bring them so many new customers that their financial constraints disappear virtually overnight. Unfortunately, they learn the hard way that such a gift is not to be squandered through greed and short-sightedness. (Source of summary: <http://econkids.rutgers.edu/new-picture-books-in-2007-first-word-q-z/1727-flying-bed-the> )

*Closest location: Oshkosh Public Library – or request through “Universal Borrowing”*

Williams, Vera. **A Chair for my Mother.**

A child, her waitress mother, and her grandmother save dimes to buy a comfortable armchair after all their furniture is lost in a fire.

*Closest location: EMC Picture Book Collection*

## **Lesson Plans**

**Do You Really Need It?**

[http://financialeducation.citigroup.com/citi/financialeducation/curriculum/pdf/k\\_2\\_needit.pdf](http://financialeducation.citigroup.com/citi/financialeducation/curriculum/pdf/k_2_needit.pdf)

Grades K-2

**Do You Really Need It?**

<http://tcaassets.org/public/lesson-plans/grade-four-do-you-really-need-it.pdf>

Grade 4

**Giving of Treasure: Heart and Mind**

<http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit31/>

Grades 6 - 8

**I Want It! I Need It!**

<http://www.denvergov.org/Portals/709/documents/I%20Want%20It!%20I%20Need%20It!%204-6.pdf>

Grades 3 - 6

**Kids as Decision Makers – Distinguishing between Needs and Wants**

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/3244>

Grade 1

**Making Money**

[http://www.pbs.org/parents/itsmylife/lesson\\_plans/making\\_money.html](http://www.pbs.org/parents/itsmylife/lesson_plans/making_money.html)

Grades 3 - 7

### **Savings Plan**

<http://tcaassets.org/public/lesson-plans/grade-three-savings-plan.pdf>

Grade 3

### **Toys for Me: A Lesson on Choice**

<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lid=517&type=educator>

Grades K-5

### **Train Wants and Needs Worksheet**

<http://www.makinglearningfun.com/themepages/TrainWantsandNeedWorksheet.htm>

### **Utility**

<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lid=925&type=educator>

Grades: High School

### **Wants and Needs: Grade 1**

<http://tcaassets.org/public/lesson-plans/grade-one-wants-and-needs.pdf>

Grade 1

### **Wants and Needs**

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/SSOWantsAndNeeds-WithMagazinePics12.htm>

Grades 1 - 2

### **The Wants and Needs of Making a Difference**

<http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit202/lesson1.html>

Grades K-2

### **Wants vs. Needs Worksheet**

<http://www.smartaboutmoney.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=btPZX3SemLs%3D&tabid=632>

### **Where Does Your Money Go?**

[http://financialeducation.citigroup.com/citi/financialeducation/curriculum/pdf/6\\_8\\_where.pdf](http://financialeducation.citigroup.com/citi/financialeducation/curriculum/pdf/6_8_where.pdf)

Grades 6 - 8

### **Lesson Plans found in Books in the EMC's Teaching Ideas Collection**

Stockard, James W. *Activities for Elementary School Social Studies* (Second Edition).

See page 153

EMC Teaching Ideas LB1530

Seefeldt, Carol. *Active Experiences for Active Children: Social Studies*.

See page 135

EMC Teaching Ideas LB1139.5.S64 S44 2006

Compiled by Stephen Katz

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