

What If?

Wyoming Social Studies, Language Arts

Objectives:

- The students will recognize the interdependence of the producers and consumers.

Background:

Farmers and consumers rely on one another. Not only would one not exist without the other, but the actions of each depend upon the actions of the other as well. There is an interdependent relationship.

Supply and Demand - How does it work?

Generally...

- Supply of something gets large, demand stays the same or goes down; prices go down.
- Supply of something gets small, demand stays the same or goes up; prices go up.
- Demand for something gets large, supply stays the same or goes down; prices go up.
- Demand for something gets small, supply stays the same or goes up; prices go down.

Agriculture is heavily affected by supply and demand. For example, a large wheat harvest around the world (supply goes up), demand stays steady then the U.S. wheat prices will go down.

Activity Procedures:

1. Before the activity, cut apart “What if” statements and place them in the corresponding containers (milk statements in milk jug, etc.). In a visible place on each container write, “What would happen if...?” Copy and separate arrows (enough for one arrow per pair for each student).
2. Create three groups of students and give one container to each group. Have group members choose a partner in their group and give an arrow to each student.
3. Have the students take turns drawing and reading “What if” statements from their containers. Have pairs discuss whether supply would go up or down followed by whether demand would go up or down. You may also offer the option of “no effect on the farmer” (communicated by not raising the arrow). You may also want to ask whether prices would go up or down or if the outcome is good or bad for the farmer.



Standards

Social Studies

Culture/Cultural Diversity:
2.1

Production, Distribution,
& Consumption: 3.1

Time, Continuity,
& Change 4.2

People, Places,
& Environments: 5.4

Language Arts

3rd Grade:

Reading: 1.1E

Speaking & Listening:
3.1, 3.5

4th Grade:

Reading: 1.1C, 1.1D,

Speaking & Listening: 3.5

Materials

- Three “What if” statement sheets
- Milk container
- Pickle jar
- Egg carton
- Copies of arrows

Estimated Time

40 Minutes

Grades 3-4

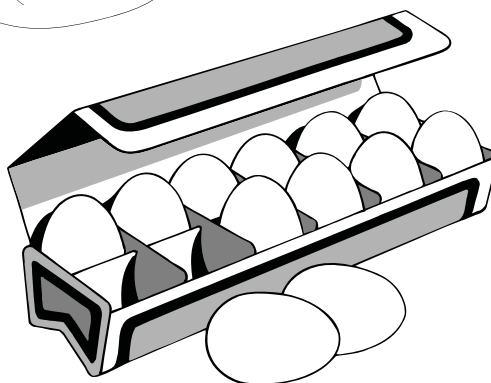
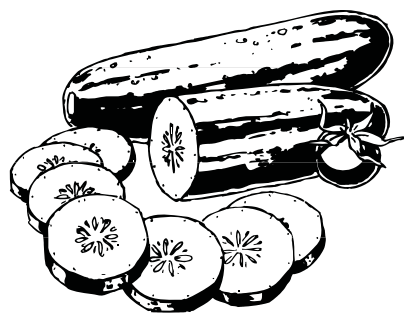
notes:

- *consumer*
- *producer*
- *supply*
- *demand*
- *economics*
- *interdependence*

4. After a specified amount of time, the pairs, (or individuals) may hold up their arrows in an up or down position to communicate their answer to the “what if” statement. Allow students to explain their answers or to discuss differing views. Facilitate the discussion to eliminate confusion.
5. Stress that regardless of whether the outcome is good or bad, each event does effect the farmer and in turn, the consumers—US!
6. Introduce the word, “interdependence.” Discuss the interdependence between the farmers and the consumers. Could one exist without the other?
7. To check the classes understanding of this concept, read several “What if” statements alternating between containers. Ask them to show you their arrow positions based on questions affecting the farmer and then the consumer. (Would the consumer’s demand go up or down? Would the farmers’ supply go up or down?)

Additional Activities:

- Watch the headlines for real life scenarios affecting the supply/demand relationship in commerce. Present the scenarios to the class and ask what they predict the result will be. Encourage students to bring in headlines as well.



Milk “What if” Statements

- The trucker who transports the milk from the dairy wrecked their truck after leaving the dairy?
- Orange juice became more popular to drink than milk?
- No one ate in the lunchroom or bought milk for their sack lunch?
- Fewer people became dairy farmers?
- The government gave out free butter to everyone?
- There was an ice cream eating contest in Denver, New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Atlanta, and Detroit?
- Chocolate milk went on sale for 35 cents per gallon?
- Ice Cream became the most popular dessert?
- There was a contest where milk lids contained cash prizes?
- Milk was the only beverage available at all professional sporting events?
- The cost of feed for dairy cattle more than doubled?
- A widespread disease killed 20 percent of the nation’s dairy cattle?

Pickle “What if” Statements

- Cucumbers were found to cure the common cold?
- An early frost cut cucumber production by 25 percent?
- Honeybees stopped pollinating cucumber blossoms?
- People preferred hot peppers to pickles?
- Fast food restaurants were required to put pickles on ALL their sandwiches?
- Pickle companies came out with the most popular commercials on television?
- A famous movie star choked and died on a pickle?
- Half of the United States population suddenly became allergic to pickles?
- Imported pickles were sold at a much cheaper price than domestic pickles?
- Pickles were proven to make you smarter?
- More than half of all vinegar factories were shut down?
- Insects destroyed more than half of all cucumber crops?

Egg “What if” Statements

- Five Major Athletes did commercials for eggs?
- Scientist developed an egg without cholesterol?
- Scientist were able to completely eliminate salmonella from all eggs?
- All third grade classes across the United States were required to incubate eggs?
- The price of eggs was 15 cents a dozen?
- Egg farmers were required to donate 25 percent of their eggs to feed the poor?
- Omelets became the most popular breakfast food?
- Egg substitute became more popular than eggs?
- Half of all egg farmers quit raising laying hens and used their chicken building to raise broiler/roaster chickens?
- A disease caused half of all laying hens to stop laying eggs?
- Everyone wanted brown eggs instead of white eggs?
- Eggs became a popular breakfast, lunch and dinner food?

