

# 2008 Bessie B. Moore Award-Winning Projects

## Newcomer Category

### **BATS: Business and Trade Showcase**

**Nancy Archer**

**Jacksonville Girls Middle School  
Pulaski County Special School District**

Diva Magic, Chewey EEEwy, Oodles Soap Company...these are a sample of the businesses created in Ms. Archer's Gifted and Talented class. This class was a one semester economic unit designed to serve as an introduction to the exciting world of entrepreneurship. The students used technology resources to research state and national entrepreneurs and to share their findings with their peers. They brainstormed business ideas to help them achieve their goal of becoming successful entrepreneurs. They wrote business plans and became producers as they produced goods to be sold at the showcase finale. These 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders learned that being an entrepreneur involves much more than getting goods, displaying them in a store setting and waiting for the profits to start rolling in. They learned that many steps and much hard work is required to take an idea and turn it into a marketable product, produce it and market it to consumers. Interwoven in the project was a parallel objective...to encourage students to develop a systematic approach to tasks that will allow them to be successful. And without a doubt, these students are well on their way to success.

### **CAP: Create a Product Club**

**Christine Arnold**

**Immaculate Conception Catholic School  
Catholic Schools of Arkansas**

This club was a voluntary afterschool activity involving 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders who met one day a week. Club goals were to provide an interactive fun way to learn about different economic concepts and to have the students participate in the Economics Fair at Henderson State University in Spring 2007. Each meeting involved a game or project based on benchmarks that introduced an economic word or concept. During the first semester, economic concepts such as scarcity, barter, productive resources and consumers were introduced and learning was made fun with stories, games and computer activities. For the second semester, teams of four selected and focused on one lesson from the previous semester as they prepared to compete in the Economics Fair. They created a display board and developed an oral presentation focusing on their chosen topic. The success of the program was demonstrated by the awards won by the students at the Fair and the many students who said they planned to continue with the club in the current academic year!

### **Lights! Camera! Action!**

**Pamela Dickson**

**Norman Middle School  
Crossett School District**

*Lights! Camera! Action!* captured the interest, excitement, and energy of 37, sixth grade students in an innovative way. Students were given the opportunity to become economists in action by creating, producing, and starring in their very own skits on stage before an audience of the student body. Picture books were the anchor pieces that motivated and allowed students to generate real life economic connections through creative drama. They were allowed to choose books to read that would demonstrate real life economic applications. Students acquired economic concepts such as economic wants, goods, services, opportunity cost, productive resources and personal finance concepts through a series of exciting lessons and activities. A student-produced drama production incorporated the highest levels of learning, cooperation,

rigor, and high expectation. Students made economics real as it came alive on stage. One look at the excited faces of the performers and the engagement of the audience said it all!

### **Aniconomy**

**Sarah Glenn**

**Huntsville Intermediate School  
Huntsville School District**

*Aniconomy* was an integrated thematic unit that taught economic concepts based on subjects familiar to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students: pets and animals. The unit focused heavily on decision-making and the consequences of those decisions. The students researched pets and animals and used the PACED decision making model (state the Problem, list Alternatives, determine Criteria, Evaluation, make a Decision) to evaluate choices made in the care of the animals. They studied products, resources, producers, consumers and scarcity as they related to pets and animals. They explored poor decisions regarding exotic pets by visiting an exotic animal sanctuary and created mock zoos displaying their knowledge of economic decision making related to zoos. A field trip to the Tulsa Zoo gave the students an opportunity to see these decisions in action. With support from the community, the class raised \$1500 in Heifer International's Read to Feed program, which provides farm animals to families in developing countries. The students began the project by exploring economic concepts as they related to pets and animals, and ended up becoming involved in a program that improves the health and well-being of people around the world.

### **Saving the Trees**

**Valarie Harp**

**Hartford Elementary School  
Hartford School District**

The students in Ms. Harp's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade-split class live in an area surrounded by trees and mountains and see the impact of the forestry industry on their community. They noticed that harvesting trees often involves clear-cutting an area, and they became concerned that "we are running out of trees." *Saving the Trees* was a unit designed to assist students in learning how the wood products industry replenishes the supply of trees by replanting clear-cut areas and to also study how recycling paper products can help reduce the number of trees cut to produce paper goods. A papermaking business was developed that used recycled paper to produce and market seed mats. The seed mats were sold before and after school and during lunch and recess. Students applied and interviewed for specific jobs. Several departments were staffed, and students quickly became specialized in their production areas and production began. Division of labor proved successful once students realized production slows down when someone does not complete his job. Every student was a specialist in some area and felt he was an important part of the company. Students discovered that profit does not include production costs, and there is a reason to learn how to correctly count money! Students displayed their knowledge by writing and performing a reader's theater for other students and members of the community.

### **Do You Have a Plan?**

**LeAnn Helms**

**Manila High School  
Manila School District**

Comments from a local bank president about students' lack of preparation to manage time and money were the stimulus for the creation of *Do You Have a Plan?* The program was designed to expose 9<sup>th</sup> grade Civics students to economic concepts not found in their textbooks. A classroom economy was established where students earned income for performing classroom jobs and attending class. In return, they were required to rent their desks and pay fines when class rules were broken. Personal money management skills were reinforced by establishing a class bank and a class store, which provided students the opportunity to make decisions to spend or to save

their income. As an additional component of the unit, the introduction of new economic concepts and their relevance to the lives of the students were presented in game format on a bi-weekly basis. Students participated in activities such as Consumer Bingo, Balloon Volleyball, The Right to Be Heard and Sort Your Priorities, that were designed to illustrate personal decision making and resource management in fun, interactive lessons. The local bank president will be proud of the students who participated in this unit; they are now prepared to become effective managers of their time and resources.

**Economics: A Walk in the Park**

**Shirley Kiefer**

**Subiaco Academy**

*Economics: A Walk in the Park* was developed to integrate the content of a high school economics course with practical everyday experiences, such as a visit to a park. It allowed students to observe economic connections in the world around them by taking students on field trips to Petit Jean State Park, Mt. Magazine State Park and Hot Springs National Park. Students applied economic concepts taught in the classroom to various aspects of the history, development and use of the parks visited. Students were directly engaged in the observation and analytical study of the role economics has played in what we, as tourists and consumers, enjoy today. Ms. Kiefer incorporated activities through this project that would create curiosity and interest in economics for students who were not members of her economics class. When students asked, 'What is economics?' and "Why are you going on field trips?" she knew she was creating an environment to increase the demand for her product: The Study of Economics. Every student should know, economics can be as simple as a walk in the park.

**Tootie Fruitie Chips**

**Rhonda Kobylinski**

**Grace Hill Elementary School  
Rogers School District**

Ms. Kobylinski had lofty goals for her 4<sup>th</sup> grade class that included infusing all of the economic concepts in the revised 4<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies frameworks. Also, with 59% of her class speaking Spanish at home, she incorporated read-aloud books with mini hands-on lessons to introduce basic economic vocabulary. After a story was read and the vocabulary discussed, she used illustrated economics posters to review the main economic words of the day. One afternoon a dehydrated fruit snack was given as a class reward. Many students had never eaten banana or apple chips and wanted to know where to buy them. One question, 'Do you want to learn how to make them?' was all it took to generate excitement in learning how to produce fruit chips and sell them at school. The Tootie Fruitie Chip Company was in business! Students learned how to produce fruit chips, packaging strategies and how to calculate material costs and set prices that were fair, but profitable. Other life skills such as making change, keeping track of deposits, and monitoring inventory were learned. By the end of the five month unit, the students had gained knowledge of economic concepts by actively participating in economic lessons based on children's literature; participating in The Tootie Fruitie Chip Company gave students a chance to put their new knowledge into practice.

**Passing on the Gift**

**Susan Lushbaugh**

**Lingle Middle School  
Rogers School District**

This curriculum design began with a desire to address grade-level economics standards as they align to the Gifted and Talented process skills for middle school students. Instruction was divided into four segments: Interdependence and Leadership, Economic Awareness and Entrepreneurship, the Global Gateway Experience (International Heifer Ranch) and Passing on the Gift. The hands-on activities, classroom discussions and literature connections, entrepreneurship symposium at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville, school-wide marketplace

and Global Gateway overnight events were empowering experiences. Through their final reflections, the students defined the difference between the standard of living versus the quality of life, identified the need for personal change, recognized the importance of being part of the global economy, critiqued their self-directedness for financial independence, and implemented and executed a community service project. What started out as a goal to introduce economic concepts and recognize the importance of interdependence, concluded with an awareness of each student's role in the global economy and her desire to have a positive impact on the developing world.

**Using Case Studies in Economics**  
**Pulaski Academy**

**Lavada Pierce**

The purpose of this project was to utilize videos and document case studies that would be relevant and educational for students in Advanced Placement Microeconomics and Advanced Placement Macroeconomics classes. Case study analyses are extremely useful tools in economic education. Biographical case studies can be used to portray the life stories of successful entrepreneurs. Current event studies show how businesses must respond to changes in the economic environment. Both types of case studies help students develop critical thinking skills. *The Wall Street Journal Classroom Edition* served as the main source for document cases. Students specifically looked for examples in the articles that related to concepts studied in class. Biographical videos, *Ben & Jerry* and *Howard Schultz and Starbucks*, were used to compare and contrast two successful companies. Sampling Ben & Jerry's ice cream and receiving a \$5 gift card to Starbucks allowed students to make direct physical connections between classroom learning and real business activities. The ABC News video, *Teaching Tools for Macroeconomics, Government, and International Trade*, hosted by John Stossel, provided a wide array of real life examples demonstrating the impact of economic decisions. Supplementing the textbook with case studies provided an opportunity for the students to explore connections and relationships between various economic concepts.

**Building Economic Bridges**  
**West Memphis Christian School**

**Richard Runions**

The August 2007 collapse of a bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota was on the minds of Mr. Runions' 9<sup>th</sup> grade economics class because their families travel frequently for work, shopping and entertainment on the interstate bridges over the Mississippi River to Memphis. Their community of West Memphis is on the New Madrid fault line, and they were concerned: "What would happen if our bridges collapsed?" This concern prompted the development of a unit to study the economic importance of bridges in the Mid-South region of the United States. The key economic terms they were learning in class would really sink in when related to a real world problem with the potential to impact each student personally. The students researched bridge construction, made drawings of bridge designs, calculated the value of goods and services that crossed the bridges daily and determined other human, financial and economic problems that might occur if the bridges were closed. Two culminating projects were developed: design and build a bridge for a contest; and write an essay on the economic impact the interstate bridges have on the community. People tend to complain about big trucks hogging the roads and about traffic on the bridges. These students now have a different perspective and greater appreciation for the role bridges play in the movement of goods and services in our economy.

**Budgeting for College**  
**Hot Springs Middle School**  
**Hot Springs School District**

**Barry White**

Eighth graders have virtually no concept of budgeting, opportunity cost, the cost of college and the financial aid available to them for college. *Budgeting for College* introduced students to the

basics of budgeting in the context of budgeting for college expenses using real data available from colleges in Arkansas. They discussed the possibility of going to college after high school graduation and the financial resources available to them. They were presented with the information about the benefits of attending college: the knowledge they would acquire and the opportunities a college education provides. Information about the differences in earnings a college education could mean to them annually and over a lifetime were eye-opening. Ultimately, students determined that college is rewarding and attainable, financial aid is available, budgeting is necessary, decision making has consequences and immediate choices are important. After completion of the unit, 85% of the students expressed an interest to pursue college. They are on their way to becoming better educated, wise decision makers with a brighter future!

## **Veteran Category**

***Neverland***

***Jenny Humble***

**Grace Hill Elementary School  
Rogers School District**

*Neverland* was developed to introduce 28 fifth grade students to basic economic concepts: scarcity, opportunity cost, specialization, goods and services, producers and consumers and productive resources. The unit began with lessons from *Focus on Economics: Grades 3-5* published by the National Council on Economic Education (NCEE) that was used as the foundation for teaching the concepts. At the end of this section of the unit, a book was created to evaluate how well the students understood the concepts. The students wrote the text and drew pictures to illustrate their knowledge of each of the concepts. After developing an understanding of these concepts, students were able to apply them to personal finance concepts through lessons from *Financial Fitness for Life: 3-5*, also published by NCEE. Students enjoyed the lessons about earning income but were disappointed when Lesson 3 taught them about taxes and how they diminish take home pay. They were excited when subsequent lessons taught them about the positive impact setting goals and saving has on income. The students created goods to sell at a school wide market to close out this section of the project. The grand finale' was the production of a 5-minute video that showcased the economic knowledge of the students. Each student received a copy of the video and was extremely proud to host a private showing for family and friends.

***Open Wide for Economics***

***Terry Isringhouse***

**Lincoln Middle School  
Forrest City School District**

The loss of businesses in the area and its impact on the community prompted the development of *Open Wide for Economics*, a 6 week teaching unit on entrepreneurs for 6<sup>th</sup> grade Gifted and Talented students. The children's book, *Toothpaste Millionaire* by Jean Merrill, was used as the primary focus for the unit. It allowed students to see a young boy become a successful entrepreneur because he did not like the price of toothpaste and believed he could produce a better product at a lower cost. The goal of the project was to integrate the teaching of economics with other curriculum areas through grade-level appropriate activities. Higher level thinking was encouraged when students used the PACED decision making model. Reading skills were applied not only when reading the focus novel, but also as students researched Arkansas entrepreneurs and learned what it was like to be a risk taker and become an entrepreneur. Writing skills were used on a daily basis as students completed a 3.2.1. Reading comprehension activity which required them to state 3 things they found interesting, 2 things they struggled with and 1 question they still had. Math was integrated as students experienced the steps necessary to open and run their own business: calculating the unit price of a product, total cost of a product, total revenue and total profit. By the end of the unit, students had learned many valuable concepts and skills that will better prepare them for the real world.

**Toying Around with Economics\*\***

**Marsha Masters**

**Baker Elementary School  
Pulaski County Special School District**

Survey children and adults of any age and they can fondly recall their favorite toy or game. Perhaps they remember the commercial or marketing strategy that created demand and placed a toy on their economic want list, or the economic reality of limited income that made the acquisition of a desired toy difficult. Ms. Masters focused on the students' passion for toys to connect with students and developed a unit in which eighty-two 5<sup>th</sup> graders "toyed" around with economics, a semester long, integrated study of the toy industry. Reading, writing, technology, history, economics, oral communication...all these subjects were integrated as students played with and studied various toys and game. *Hula Hooping Through Supply and Demand* even offered an opportunity for physical education. Students entered the project knowing why they loved toys and games and left understanding the economics behind their passion and enthusiasm, making them all winners in the game of life...Economics!

**Economic Education for Eager Earners**

**William Peak**

**Eureka Springs High School  
Eureka Springs School District**

Six special needs students in Mr. Peak's Life-Skills class participated in *Economics for Eager Earners*. They were joined in the project by four special education students and six general curriculum students who were at risk of dropping out of school. His goal was to give the students real life experiences through repeated practice and hands-on experiences as he could provide to prepare them for the transition from school into lives to be led as independently as possible. To this end, he generated a plan for seven student-run businesses to be operated from September through May. The students ran a school store, a bakery, a laundry, a café for Thanksgiving dinner, a catering service, a button making business and a greenhouse nursery. Involvement in the student-run businesses allowed students to gain a basic understanding of how our economic system works: people work for money, we buy what we want with money; and most importantly, if you have something that others value or need, they will buy it! Through trial and error in a business setting, teamwork and good work ethics, the students discovered what they can do and how to solve problems independently. They have been exposed to economics at a very practical level.

**It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like...Economics!**

**Melisa Rutherford**

**Blytheville Kindergarten Center  
Blytheville School District**

In her position as the media center specialist at the Kindergarten Center, Ms. Rutherford had the opportunity to plan an economics unit that would be presented to all of the children in the school. As she prepared for the winter holiday season, she wanted to present a unit of study that combined economics with a variety of cultural celebrations that occur in relative proximity on the calendar. She chose six diverse holidays: Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Eid el Fitr (Ramadan), Diwali and Las Posada. Lessons began the first week of December and continued through the end of the semester. She researched each celebration, always looking for similarities and examples to reinforce the basic economic concepts she selected as her focus: economic wants, choice, scarcity, goods, services, consumers and producers. Using economic concepts as the base for exposing students to cultural celebrations allowed all students to participate but did not infringe on their personal beliefs. Through economics, kindergarten students could explore cultures without making value judgments or being overwhelmed by the differences. By exposing students to the rich cultural heritage found in our society, she was able to help them understand they each have something special and unique to offer. Economics became their common ground.

Receiving three grants in one school year is a dream situation for any teacher! This dream was a reality for Ms. Smallwood. She decided to create one unit of instruction for her 5<sup>th</sup> grade class that would utilize the grants while remaining true to the specific requirements of each grant she received. One grant, to plant a school garden, became the foundation on which to build economic and personal finance literacy; this would satisfy the terms of the remaining grants. She felt the integration of the units would be the perfect connection to keep students interested. This cross-curricular unit incorporated all subjects around the theme of gardening. Hands on economic lessons were taught using books with a gardening theme. Many of the personal finance lessons included math skills, as did figuring perimeter and area of the garden. Science was present throughout as the students researched and planted the garden. Students applied their new knowledge of economics and personal finance by participating in a market, setting up mock bank accounts, teaching lessons on goods, services and productive resources to younger students and opening a restaurant for teachers.

*\*\*The "Toying Around with Economics" is available for download as a sample of an excellent Moore awards entry project. Please visit [www.economicsarkansas.org](http://www.economicsarkansas.org) and look under the "Teacher Resources" tab.*