

Arkansas Entrepreneurs

Paula Benton

Riverview-Judsonia Elementary School, Riverview School District

Arkansas Entrepreneurs provided an opportunity to engross fifth and sixth grade students in a study of economics, enabling them to see that investing in their human capital equips them with the capability to transfigure their lives. Fundamental economic concepts such as entrepreneurship, goods, services, producers, consumers, supply, demand, competition and human resources were the focus of the lessons presented. Technology was an integral part as students selected an Arkansas entrepreneur, researched, interviewed and gathered information to present to their fellow classmates and entire school population. A teacher grant allowed students a priceless opportunity to inspect the economic workings of successful local entrepreneurs such as RoZark Hills Coffee Roasterie, Ranger Boat Company and Leland's Trout Magnet. This unit allowed students to gain knowledge of Arkansas entrepreneurs and the determination and skills necessary to become successful in the business world.

This is Your Business

Loretta Burgess

Greenbrier High School, Greenbrier School District

This project was designed to teach high school students how to write a business plan for a sole proprietorship startup business of their choice. Students selected a business sector based on interests, hobbies, self-assessments and aptitude tests. Naming their business, creating a logo and printing business cards and letterhead were the next steps in experiencing the world of entrepreneurship. Recognizing the need for market research, each student created a market research survey and surveyed at least 50 target customers to determine if there was a demand for the type of business they were proposing to start in their location. Students identified their startup costs and projected their revenue and expenses for twelve months. From this information, each entrepreneur created a pro forma cash flow statement, income statement and balance sheet. Dressed in business attire, students presented PowerPoint presentations to classmates, loan officers from local banks, business owners and administration personnel emphasizing their market research findings and projected financial goals.

Dream BIG

Tonya Caldwell Colen

Scoggins-May-Hall Gifted and Talented Center, Pine Bluff School District

Dream BIG introduced economic concepts and practices through children's literature, hands-on activities, and real life experiences to third through fifth grade students. Working from the premise that "If they Dream it, they can Achieve it," student learning focused on topics of money, resources, banking and careers. Each week, students participated in many fun projects while learning economics and integrating science, math, language arts and technology. Guest speakers from the community brought a real world perspective to each topic. Ms. Colen reflected on the effectiveness, impact and educational benefits of the project and summarized, "This unit helped my students understand that they make decisions daily that influence our economy, and that those decisions (financial or not) will in turn impact the future of society- their future in society."

Going to Bat for Economics

Pamela Powell Conner

Elmdale Elementary School, Springdale School District

Going to Bat for Economics was a unit designed to educate students about the economic impact of the Northwest Arkansas Naturals baseball team and ARVEST Ballpark on the local economy. Specialization, income, natural resources, consumer, supply, demand, profit, price and trade were a few of the economic connections students experienced. Lessons to encourage economic decision making, guest speakers, a tour of ARVEST Ballpark and an outing to see the Naturals play brought economics to life! Students partnered with ballpark employees to determine the local businesses that benefited from their income spending. Students collected data and completed flowcharts to track and assess employees' spending. During these activities, the value and empowerment of earning a salary became very clear to students. The final analysis proved that the economic contributions of the ballpark are a great asset to their community.

Trip of a Lifetime

Holly Elsea

Siloam Springs Middle School, Siloam Springs School District

Searching for a fun, exciting, and relevant way to cover economic frameworks led Ms. Elsea to develop a simulated trip to Washington, D.C. Project goals included teaching students about their classroom mini-economy system, budgeting, saving, decision making skills, choice and opportunity cost. A variety of literature and video connections were springboards to economic activities. Students planned their trip given a budget that involved travel, sightseeing and time constraints. The art room was transformed into a plane with first class, coach and stowaway seating based on budgeting choices. The flight was complete with an onboard showing of *National Treasure*. As a result of this project, these sixth grade students were able to see that economics is fun, useful and real life as they experienced a *Trip of a Lifetime!*

Taking Charge of Your Finances

Barbara L. Faggett

Marion High School, Marion School District

Studies indicate the need for financial literacy education is rapidly increasing among teenagers as the number of money management alternatives increase. It is essential in our fast moving society to have some working knowledge of the fundamentals of basic financial planning. *Taking Charge of Your Finances* was a semester long course designed to increase students' economic and financial literacy and prepare them to successfully manage their personal and family financial resources as knowledgeable consumers who effectively navigate the marketplace. Throughout the course, students participated in hands-on applications that required them to consider their future financial and career goals and how their current management practices would impact those goals. Upon completion, students had an awareness of how financial decisions impacted all aspects of their lives.

A First Year Stock Market Game Experience

Dorothy Sue Groves Hill

Hellstern Middle School, Springdale School District

The Stock Market Game™ was the vehicle chosen to introduce these Springdale middle school students to economics. The word “game” immediately caught their attention. Little did they know how much learning would take place over the weeks of their participation in this simulation! Students read and interpreted financial charts, researched companies and applied the decision making process in selecting stocks to purchase for their portfolios. Ms. Hill’s goals were to catch her students’ interest, get them hooked on investment possibilities and then groom them to continually pursue financial opportunities in the future. The experience was deemed a success as students reflected on their increase in knowledge and one stated, “I can truly say that the skills that I have learned will always remain with me throughout life.”

Money Math

Deborah Kiestler

Greene County Tech High School, Greene County Tech School District

Feedback from business leaders revealed the community’s perceptions that students lack money skills needed in today’s workplace such as counting change, balancing a money drawer, making deposits and maintaining petty cash. As a business teacher, Ms. Kiestler created a plan to change those perceptions and develop financially literate high school students who are prepared to make wise decisions with their finances. In addition, students were challenged to improve reading, writing, summarizing and math skills. Through participation in a variety of hands-on activities, role playing and simulations, students began to view economics from both a producer and consumer role. Pre and post test data revealed *Money Math* to be a remarkable success!

Spanish Works: The Economics Behind Global Communication

Lynn Massey

Harp Elementary/Lee Elementary, Springdale School District

Spanish Works was an economic unit developed to integrate economic vocabulary and concepts with the study of Spanish. Developing human capital to be prepared to meet the economic challenges in the future and to communicate in the global marketplace was the emphasis of the unit. While investing in their human capital of learning a second language, these second through fourth grade students also gained an appreciation for people from other countries as they studied culture and economic systems of Spanish speaking countries. Pre and post test results revealed gains in economic understanding as well as Spanish vocabulary. The unit culminated in a student produced showcase of their human capital, specialization and cooperation including skits, songs, and a game show.

Dog-Gone Economics and Compound Interest

Jim Newman

Central Junior High School, Springdale School District

Dog-Gone Economics and Compound Interest combined the economic principle of compound interest with the algebraic concept of exponential functions. Beginning with the premise that saving means “not spending,” Mr. Newman explained to his eighth grade students the role of banks in relation to money that consumers place into savings accounts. After a brief explanation of how simple interest works, the students were introduced to the concept of compound interest. Addressing the state frameworks for algebra allowed the integration of calculating compound interest using the exponential function. The lesson was deemed a “win-win” as students mastered an algebraic concept and better understood the concept of saving consistently by earning interest on interest and watching their money grow!

Spice for Life

Barbara Saviers

Ballman Elementary School, Fort Smith School District

Spice for Life evolved to help second grade students understand economics, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy. All subjects were integrated into this unit with a focus on the concepts of goods, services, producers, consumers, specialization, price, marketing and entrepreneurship. The second grade students specialized in groups to measure, mix and fill jars with a delicious mixture of nine spices at the school spice factory. Students determined a fair price based on expenses and marketed and sold 100 jars of spice rub to parents, teachers and students within ten days. Earning a profit of \$539, students voted to donate all their money to The Community Clearing House Backpack Program which provides nutritious snacks to children and families who are struggling financially. A field trip to deliver the profit and fill backpacks was a perfect ending to this unit as students experienced the joy of philanthropy.

EBooks

Mandy Zipfel

Nettleton Intermediate Center, Nettleton School District

The fourth grade students at Nettleton Intermediate Center participated in the *Students Go to Work* program in the fall of the school year sponsored by the Jonesboro Chamber of Commerce. As a follow up and extension to this curriculum, Ms. Zipfel selected six literature pieces and developed lessons to surround students with economic concepts correlated to state standards and frameworks. After reading *How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World*, students categorized productive resources, applied geography mapping skills and produced apple pies. *EBooks* also spotlighted *Kermit the Hermit*, *Abuela’s Weave*, *The Giving Tree*, *The Doorbell Rang* and *Everybody Cooks Rice* offering engaging activities to introduce, reinforce, and apply economic concepts.

Arkansas Farming Economy

Sarah Glenn

Huntsville Intermediate School, Huntsville School District

Arkansas Farming Economy was an integrated thematic unit that blended economic concepts with a study of Arkansas agriculture. Major Arkansas farm products including cotton, rice, soybeans, poultry, swine, beef and dairy cattle were the focus of study. Students tracked crops from the field to the shelf and then took a walking field trip to the local pizza restaurant to consume pizzas made from Arkansas products. Art connections allowed students to produce Arkansas sun catchers and mosaics representing the six natural regions of the state. Math, science and literature connections were integrated throughout the project. Field trips to Hobbs State Park and the University of Arkansas Farm allowed students to see economics in action. Grants from Economics Arkansas and Farm Bureau permitted students to create an Arkansas shaped garden and plant crops grown in the state's six natural regions. There's no doubt that these fourth grade students have gained a tremendous appreciation for Arkansas, farming and economics!

Reading into Economics

Lindsay Griffin

Greenbrier Eastside Elementary School, Greenbrier School District

As a literacy teacher, Ms. Griffin had a problem. She wanted to incorporate economics into her fifth grade curriculum while still teaching the literacy frameworks. The solution? Incorporate children's literature with economic themes into her lessons. Using selections such as *Lawn Boy*, *Lunch Money* and *The Sign of the Beaver*, students were able to improve both their literature skills and their economic literacy. Each session utilized lessons from *Play Dough Economics* curriculum to apply learning. Never doubt the excitement of using play dough, even with fifth graders! Guest speakers from local banks brought a real world perspective to student learning. End of the year projects combined both economic content and story elements from each book as students incorporated technology to create display boards and PowerPoint presentations to showcase their learning.

Economics is a "Natural"

Sheila Humphrey

Woods Elementary School, Fort Smith School District

Economics was a "natural" for seventy-five first grade students when the Northwest Arkansas Naturals baseball team made Springdale their new home. Throughout this ten-lesson unit, the economics of a baseball organization was illustrated through numerous hands-on, relevant learning activities. A wealth of children's literature also reinforced basic economic concepts such as choice, wants, goods, services, opportunity cost, resources, entrepreneurship, loan, profit and interdependence. A desire to see a **real** baseball game led students to become entrepreneurs. With the profit they earned, the first graders were able to attend an Arkansas Naturals game and see the economics they had been studying. The culminating activity for the unit, "The Tenth Inning," was a family night at school. The event proved to be a valuable assessment of the learning that had taken place as the students became specialists and taught economic concepts to their families.

Made by Hand**Rhonda S. Kobylinski**

Grace Hill Elementary School, Rogers School District

The main goal of *Made by Hand* was to teach the necessary Arkansas Economic Learning Standards to fourth grade students in a fun and interesting way. Utilizing literature, Mrs. Kobylinski taught economic concepts with real world, hands-on lessons. As students produced a variety of seasonal crafts to sell, they explored ways to make, design and market the goods to the public. They learned the value of specialization, interdependence and decision making. Students used math skills to determine prices and calculate profit, writing skills to create advertising and marketing plans, reading skills to follow directions and participate in literature study groups and social studies to learn economics and the essential social skills of working with others. The profits earned were shared with two charities: The Humane Society and The African Well Fund. Mrs. Kobylinski best summarized the project's success by stating that her students had learned the basics of life- ECONOMICS.

Career Explorations**Lavada Pierce**

Pulaski Academy

Career Explorations was designed to encourage high school students to apply economic reasoning skills when making career decisions. Students learned how to identify a problem, collect information, list alternatives, analyze incentives and compare benefits with costs when making a decision. Technology and current event articles were integrated in the unit as students researched career options and studied the effects of economic and social factors on annual incomes of real people from across the United States. All activities for this unit were designed to hone communication skills, presentation skills and cooperative learning skills of participating students. The project included a simulation activity centered on the economic principles involved in salary negotiations. These students now have valuable tools needed when exploring careers.

Civecon University: The University that Economically Prepares Our Future**Shelina M. Warren**

Jack Robey Junior High School, Pine Bluff School District

This teacher-created university offered an apprentice degree program with economic courses that were divided into student priority (student choices based on interest), school priority (required by university-basic economic knowledge) and profession priority (required to be successful in students' future profession). Students earned professional development points based on the number of credit hours successfully completed in their specified specialty area. These areas included consumer education, entrepreneurship, financial literacy and stock market. The university's mission was to help prepare future professionals with necessary skills to become productive citizens that positively impact society. Math, reading and money management skills were incorporated into each specialty area. The comprehensive examination for the degree-seeking student was the successful creation and maintenance of a business that would positively impact society by applying skills learned at Civecon University.