

## “A REAL ‘TRASHY’ STORY”



### Lesson Description:

It may be hard to believe, but our trash tells a story. As consumers, trash is a reflection of what we value, what has lost its value, and what might have potential value for the aspiring entrepreneur. By collecting household trash for one day, students will examine the contributor’s choices, wants, needs, decision making, costs, and use higher level thinking skills to become an entrepreneur inventor by creating a new product from what appears to be waste!

**Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Arkansas Standards and Benchmarks:

E.7.6.1 Examine how the economic wants and needs of all people may or may not be fulfilled.

E.7.6.2 Demonstrate an understanding that choices have both present and future consequences.

E.7.6.4 Explain that all decision making involves opportunity costs.

E.8.6.1 Analyze the impact of entrepreneurship in the development of the economy of the U.S.

### Student Learning Objectives:

The students will:

- ✓ Identify products as wants and needs.
- ✓ Sort potential waste into recyclable and non-recyclable products.
- ✓ Write a creative story describing the owner of their bag of trash.
- ✓ Select two items from their bag of trash and work cooperatively with their classmates to create a new product and select a method to advertise the new invention.

**Time Required:** 150 minutes (Three 50 minute class periods)

### Materials Needed:

One plastic shopping bag per student

One “Trash Guideline” handout per student

Newspaper to cover work tables

Computers with word processing program

Supplies to complete final group products: scissors, masking tape, glue, yarn or string, poster board for display base

### Procedure:

- 1) Prior to class, prepare one handout per student to outline acceptable/non-acceptable trash items for students to share with the class. Attach the handout to a clean plastic shopping bag (Walmart, Kroger, etc.). All plastic bags should be the same size and store brand to ensure anonymity.

- 2) Review the activity procedure which is printed on the instructional handout. Limited instructions will be provided to the students related to the upcoming writing assignment since we want to get a true representation of their discarded trash items and not encourage them to be selective in what they bring to share with the class.
- 3) Since trash for only one day will be collected, students must complete this at home activity in order to participate in the required session. The teacher may want to have one or two filled bags available in case a student fails to bring items to class.
- 4) Entering the classroom, students are given a random number and instructed to place their bags on a centrally located table. Students sit in seats according to the number they receive. Ideally, students will have a large work space on which to spread the bags to ensure that each student has a bag that is not their own.
- 5) Bags are matched with student numbers (student with card #1 receives bag #1, student with card #2 receives bag #2, etc.). Contents are spread on the work table and categorized into wants and needs and recyclable items from non-recyclables. Students must make a list of items that are found in the bag and how these items were sorted. Students are instructed to select one item that will be contributed to a final group creation. All remaining items are discarded.
- 6) Students are given one class period to identify and sort items and prepare their lists.
- 7) As the first session ends, students are encouraged to brainstorm ideas for their story which will be written the following class period. They are instructed that the story format will be at least five paragraphs (introduction/hook, description/embellishment and conclusion/prediction).
- 8) Session 2- Students using computer word processing programs to write and edit their story. Each story is printed to share with the class.
- 9) Session 3- Students will evaluate the materials contributed for the group product. They are supplied the supplemental materials and instructed to work together to create one new product, work of art, statue, collage, ....that will be displayed for their classmates. The group will decide on a name and description for their item that will be identified on a tent-fold page located by the product.

**Closure:**

- Students will individually share their story and explain the terms: consumer, producer, wants and needs as related to their writing. They will identify items that they consider wants, needs, recyclable and non-recyclable.
- Students will describe their group creation and discuss the marketability of the item.

**Assessment:**

Students will write their definition of consumer, wants, needs, recyclable and non-recyclable in their class notebook. They will write a review of what they learned from this activity.