



Headline News: Calling *The Caller* Consumers to Attention

The Last Newspaper Boy in America

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Lesson Description

In the book *The Last Newspaper Boy in America*, 12-year-old Wil David fights a publisher's decision to stop home delivery of the daily paper, *The Cooper County Caller*, to his small, out-of-the-way hometown. Wil ends up the local hero who preserves his paper route and unmasks a fraudster at the annual county fair at the same time. In this lesson, students will demonstrate their understanding of how consumers depend on an industry and an industry on consumers.

Grades 3-4

Concepts

- **Inderdependence:** Dependence on others for goods and services, occurs as a result of specialization.
- **Consumers:** People who buy goods and services to satisfy their wants.
- **Producers:** People who make goods and services.
- **Goods:** Objects that satisfy people's wants.
- **Services:** Activities that satisfy people's wants.

Standards

Arkansas Economics Standards

- E.5.3.2: Articulate ways entrepreneurs and businesses organize human, natural, and capital resources to produce goods and services in Arkansas D2.Eco.4, 7.3-5
- E.5.4.2 Articulate ways entrepreneurs and businesses in Arkansas and the United States organize human, natural, and capital resources to produce goods and services D2.Eco.4, 7.3-5

Common Core Standards

Grade 3

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view

with reasons

Grade 4

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify consumers from the story who are directly/indirectly affected by the newspaper's daily delivery as they participate in an interdependence activity
- Students will be able to understand the newspaper industry's dependence on consumers by participating in the interdependence activity and related debriefing

Time required

1 class periods, plus 30 minutes of preparation time

Materials required

- *The Last Newspaper Boy in America*, by Sue Corbett, 1 copy per student for home reading
- Activity 1
- Activity 2
- Hole punch
- String: 2 feet per name tag/quote
- Newspaper delivery bag or canvas tote or similar bag
- 12 pieces of yarn, 5-6 feet each

Teacher Preparation

- Prepare consumer cards.
 - Print and cut out each name tag and quote (Activities 1 and 2).
 - Glue the quote on the back of the corresponding name tag.
 - Hole punch the two upper corners of the card and insert string to create a sign for each of the participating students to wear.
- Tie each string of yarn to the newspaper delivery bag or tote bag.

Procedure

1. In class, review that *The Caller* made the decision to end home delivery to Steele as the book begins. Read the quote from page 17: "He said it was nothing personal. 'A business decision.'"
2. Explain that throughout the story we learn how different residents in Steele depend on the newspaper to satisfy their wants. The newspaper industry also depends on consumers. In this activity, students will play select characters from the book to express how they depend on the newspaper and how this "business decision" impacts them as a consumer of the newspaper.
3. Distribute the consumer cards to the students. Ask them to form a circle. Each of the characters will reveal how they depend on the newspaper.

4. Place the newspaper bag in the center of the circle. The newspaper bag represents *The Caller*.
5. Call on one of the students. Instruct them to identify the character they represent and share the quote from the book that shows their dependence on the newspaper. As they share, have them pick up a string attached to the newspaper bag.
6. Continue calling on each student until each has shared and is holding the string. Ask the students to share what they noticed happening as each shared. (The newspaper bag was lifted up as each picked up their string and stated their dependence.) Ask, “Did the characters in the book/the consumers in Steele depend on the newspaper?” (Yes.) Did the newspaper really depend on the consumers? (Yes, to pay their expenses and stay in business.)

Closure

Instruct the students to generate a list of producers and consumers at school.

Assessment

Ask the students to choose a person from the producers list and explain how they are interdependent with that producer.

Senor Lopez

Mrs. Stinson

Wil Davis

Mrs. Kelley

Ann Douglas

Mrs. Parsons

Manny

Dr. Feely

Mrs. Goggins

Judge SalZberg

Sonny David

Junior David

Magnolia David

Grandma Fleur

Unemployed Factory
Worker

Unemployed Factory
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Senor Lopez worked the crossword puzzle every morning. (p. 8, 35)

Mrs. Stinson read the sports section every day while she was working at the store. (p. 35)

Wil David had dreamed of being the newspaper delivery boy for as long as he remembered. He wanted to \$1,000 for a laptop. (p.37)

Mrs. Kelley clipped coupons from The Caller. (p.77)

Ann Douglas was a photographer. She loved having her photos printed in The Caller.

Ms. Parsons was the librarian. Often people came in to request copies of The Caller (past and present) to read or conduct research.

Manny brought the newspaper to Sonny and Wil to be delivered to the residents of Steele.
(p.132)

Dr. Feely was the local doctor. He read The Caller every morning. (p. 6)

Mrs. Goggins drove the yellow bus that picked kids up at the town green for the ride to Dweebville. (p.7)

Judge Salzberg reads the paper to keep up with the news.

Junior David had delivered the newspaper when he was a little boy. He owned the hairpin factory until they sold it to a rival last year. He was trying to interest a company in relocating to the factory to increase economic growth.

Magnolia David uses the paper to teach vocabulary. (p.12)

Sonny David received income for delivering the paper.

Grandma Fleur wrote letters to the editor.
(p 53)

Unemployed Hairpin Factory Worker uses The Caller to look for jobs listed in the Classified section of the paper. (p. 116)

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