

# The Trading Game

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## Standards of Learning

Social Studies K.7, 1.8, 2.8, 2.9, 3.8, 3.9, CE.9

English 1.1, 2.1, 3.1

## Objective

Students will:

- Barter to get desired goods
- Model and understand the concepts of scarcity, specialization, and interdependence
- Make economic choices

## Materials

- Brown paper lunch bags – one per student
- Labeled pictures of agricultural products (and other products) imported and exported from the United States

## Background Knowledge

Bartering is a medium in which goods or services are directly exchanged for other goods and/or services without a common unit of exchange (without the use of money). Bartering is like buying something with money but instead of getting money you get something that you want like crops or land. Economic specialization is when a producer makes something that they are best at or have the most amounts of resources for. They make what they best at and then they can trade it with someone who really wants they have for something that they really want. This is one of the ways that the barter system has become so popular. Economic interdependence is a consequence of specialization because companies start to rely on one another to produce a certain commodity, and if those producers do not come through then other companies who rely on them are in trouble, as well. For example, if producer A is failing and producer B & C rely on him then they will be failing too and vice versa.

Before conducting this activity in your classroom you will need to prepare the bags.

1. Sort the bags into two groups (each group will represent a different country – one being the United States)
2. Place a producer card on each bag and pictures of the products produced inside the bag (one group will get the United States cards and the other group will get the cards representing another country)

## Procedure

1. Divide the students into two groups.
2. Allow students to select what country they would like to represent (*One group must represent the United States and the other group should select from the list of export markets on page 16 in the Farm Facts booklet*).
3. Give each student a bag and explain that they are going to pretend to be farmers in their country. Inside of their bag is a description of what type of farming they currently do and some of the things they need to continue to be successful in the agricultural industry.



4. Have students read the description on their bag and determine (1) what they produce as a farmer (2) what products or goods they need to continue a successful business in the agriculture industry.
5. Allow everyone to share the goods they produce with the class and explain how people would use the goods.
6. Have students rate their satisfaction with the goods they produce based on if they could survive only having those goods to live off of (1=not satisfied to 10=completely satisfied).
7. Have students add up their satisfaction ratings in their groups and record on the score card.
8. Discuss with children the practice of trading / bartering to get what we might need or want but can't produce ourselves.
9. Instruct the children that this time they will be able to trade / barter with others in their country. Their goal is to try and get everything they need to continue to be successful in the industry.
10. Allow for trading and then have the children rate their level of satisfaction based on if they have everything they need to be successful in the agriculture industry.
11. Ask the children if they were able to get a product or good that they needed to continue in the industry. *Did a lot of other people in your country have that product or where you only able to get it from certain people?*
12. Discuss economic specialization and economic interdependence.
13. Survey the class to see how many people were able to trade / barter and get everything they needed. *At this point no one should have everything they need based on the description on the producer card.*
14. Discuss how we trade with other countries and provide examples of what we might rely on other countries for.
15. Allow the students to trade / barter with the other country (group) and try to get everything they need to continue in the industry.
16. Again, rate their level of satisfaction in regards to having everything they need to continue to be successful in the agriculture industry.
17. Finish activity by asking the following questions and analyzing the chart created during the activity.
  - What happened to the satisfactions levels in each group?
  - What are the benefits of trading locally and worldwide?
  - What are some barriers to trade?



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**Trading Game Score Card**

1= no satisfaction

10 = very, very satisfied

Country Name	Round One	Round Two	Round Three



Producer Cards – United States

<p>You are a <i>vegetable</i> farmer on the Eastern Shore of Virginia who runs a produce stand. You have a lot of Native Americans come to your produce stand looking for <i>bananas</i> so you need to stock up on this fruit. Because you're a farmer, they also ask you where they can get <i>animal hides and skins</i>. You want to be able to provide them with these so they will continue to shop at your produce stand.</p>	<p>You are a <i>tobacco</i> farmer in Virginia. The government is encouraging you to stop growing tobacco and instead grow <i>wheat</i> and raise <i>alpaca</i>.</p>
<p>You are a <i>peach</i> farmer in Georgia. You make a good living during peach season, but want to try and grow a variety of vegetables including <i>lettuce</i> in the off season. Just for the challenge, you also want to try and grow some <i>cocoa plants</i>.</p>	<p>You are a <i>lettuce</i> farmer in California who also runs a local grocery store. Your biggest selling items are <i>spices</i>, but you are running very low. You also need a shipment of fresh <i>peaches</i>.</p>
<p>You are a <i>wheat</i> farmer in Oklahoma. You have heard a lot about an up and coming crop – <i>soybeans</i>. You are very interested in growing soybeans, but need some soybean seeds to get started. You also interested in getting some <i>draft horses</i> to help you do the work on your farm.</p>	<p>You are a <i>cattle</i> farmer in Montana that raises cattle for their hides and skins. You have had a lot of your cows give birth to calves and need more <i>food for the herd</i>. You want to expand the variety of cattle you raise on your farm and are looking to purchase some <i>working cattle</i>.</p>
<p>You are a <i>cotton</i> farmer in Alabama. A lot of your cotton is processed into clothing. You want to expand your market and start growing <i>tobacco</i>. In addition to needed tobacco plants, you will need some <i>working cattle</i> to help with the work on the farm.</p>	<p>You are a <i>soybean</i> farmer in Illinois. You are helping a new farmer begin in the agriculture business. This new farmer wants to grow <i>cotton</i>. You will need to help him find cotton seeds to plant and he'll need <i>grains and feed for the cattle</i> he'll also be raising.</p>
<p>You are a <i>chicken</i> farmer in Mississippi. You are looking for a new type of <i>feed for your chickens</i> that might help them grow to be stronger and meatier. You also have a family that absolutely loves <i>goat milk</i>. Goat milk is hard to find at your local grocery store.</p>	<p>You are a farmer who grows crops that will be turned into <i>feed for various animals</i>. You need some <i>chickens</i> to keep around the farm and test your feed on. Based on the success of your crops last year, you made enough money to take a trip to Japan. In Japan, you had some amazing tea. The holidays are coming and you want to give your family some of those <i>teas</i>.</p>



Producer Cards – Other Country

<p>You are an <i>alpaca</i> farmer. You are running low on <i>grains</i> to feed your alpaca so you'll need to get more before your supply runs out completely. You know how prized alpaca fur is and you have heard that <i>animal hides and skins</i> are also very valuable. You want to try and get some animal hides and skins to sell along with your alpaca fur.</p>	<p>You are a <i>grain</i> farmer that grows grain for animal feed. You want to have some animals on your grain farm to test the grain with. You like the idea of having <i>goats and chickens</i> because they will also provide you with things you love – goat milk and eggs!</p>
<p>You are a <i>horse</i> farmer that raises horses for use on a farm. Your horses love to eat vegetables of all kinds. You will need to get some <i>veggies</i> soon because the food supply for the horses is running low. You have also considering raising some <i>working cattle</i>. This will certainly help increase your market.</p>	<p>You are a farmer that raises <i>working cattle</i>. You are interested in trying your hand at raising <i>draft horses</i> as well. Of course, you will also need <i>feed for the new horses</i> you're bringing to your farm.</p>
<p>You are a <i>cocoa plant</i> farmer. You know that the chocolate made from your cocoa goes great with different fruits. To increase your market, you're looking to purchase some <i>peach</i> plants and <i>banana</i> trees.</p>	<p>You are a <i>banana</i> farmer. Your banana sales are doing okay but you want to try growing some other crops. The clothing industry is doing great in your country so you decide to grow <i>cotton</i> to sell to the factories that make clothes. You also know that <i>tea</i> is a popular drink in your country and you want to try and grow various teas on your farm.</p>
<p>You are a farmer that grows various spices. Your spices are used in a lot of recipes. You have noticed that there is a growing market for wheat and cocoa in your country and want to take advantage of the opportunity to sell these things</p>	<p>You are a <i>goat</i> farmer that raises goats for their milk. You also want to raise some <i>alpaca</i> because their fur is so valuable and if you sell the fur at market you can make a lot of money. You will need to find an alpaca farmer but also a farmer that can provide you with food for your goats and alpaca. You have heard that <i>soybeans</i> are used in a lot of animal feeds so that is what you want to feed your animals.</p>
<p>You are a <i>tea</i> farmer. Tea is very popular in your country as are <i>spices</i> and <i>tobacco</i> products. You want to get some spices and tobacco to sell in the tea shop you run from your farm.</p>	

