
Economics: goods, services, barter

Language Arts: creative writing

Synopsis: Helga, a troll, ventures into the world of people to earn her dowry to marry Lars, but things do not work out as she hopes.

Materials: writing supplies

- Procedure:**
1. Have students identify items they have traded. (*pieces of gum, baseball cards, desserts at lunch, video games*) Explain these items are called goods. **Goods** are things we can use, touch and see.
 2. Have students describe favors they have traded. (*switching chores with a friend or brother/sister*) Explain they are trading services. **Services** are activities people do for one another.
 3. Have students discuss why they made these trades. (*no money to buy the item they wanted, expected to benefit from the trade*) Define **barter** as trading goods and services without money.
 4. Explain you are going to read the class a story called *Helga's Dowry--A Troll Love Story*. It is about a troll who barter goods and services to earn her dowry. Define a dowry as money, goods, and land that a woman brings to her husband when she marries.
 5. Read the story and discuss. Write responses on the board.
 - a. What did Helga barter to earn her dowry? (*washing and ironing clothes, beauty cream, cutting trees and splitting logs*)
 - b. What did she receive in trade? (*35 cows, gold and land*)
 - c. Which of the things that Helga bartered were goods? (*beauty cream*)
 - d. Which were services? (*washing and ironing clothes, cutting trees and splitting logs*)

- e. Why did the farmer's wife, villagers, and rich man trade with Helga? (*They all expected to benefit. Both the farmer's wife and the rich man were sure Helga would not be able to do what she promised.*)
 - f. What makes you think this is a make-believe story? (*Things happened in the story that couldn't happen in real life.*)
 - g. What were some of the things that happened in the story that would never happen in real life? (*washing and ironing so many clothes in one day, chopping down all the trees in one day*)
6. Explain some stories that describe events that could not really happen are called fairy tales. Fairy tales often have a moral or teach a lesson. Discuss:
- a. What was the moral of *Helga's Dowry*? (*You should accept people for what they are and not for what they own or how much money they have.*)
 - b. What did Helga, Inge, and Lars learn from their experiences? (*Helga learned she could earn a dowry. Inge learned not to underestimate others. Lars learned that it is more important to love someone for who they are than for what they have.*)
7. Remind students that Helga thought about how people behave when she was deciding on goods and services to barter. She hummed the following phrase.

"Some people are *lazy*, some people *vain*,
Some people are *greedy*; it's all Helga's gain!"

Write the following phrase on the board and ask students to explain how it is different from the book.

"Some people are *lazy*, some people *vain*,
Some people *eat too much*; it's all Helga's gain!"

Instruct students to write a short story about what Helga might now barter to meet these people's wants.