

Do you really need that?

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Big Ideas: Wants and Needs

Essential Question: Can exploring the past help us understand the differences between wants and needs?

Social Studies Standards

SS.K.6 Discover the basic needs of people.

SS.K.8 Distinguish between wants and needs.

SS.K.17 Explore time, places, people and events in relationship to student's own life.

SS.K.22 Compare and contrast past and present lifestyles of West Virginians.

English/Language Arts Standards

ELA.K.R.C3.3 With prompting and support, describe the relationship between illustrations and the informational text in which they appear (e.g., what person, place, thing or idea in the text an illustration depicts). (CCSS RI.K.7)

ELA.K.W.C.11.1 Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore several books by a favorite author and express opinions about them).

Visual Arts Standards

VA.O.K.5.01 Discuss the work that artists do by viewing or visiting displayed artwork (e.g., slides, museums, internet sites, digital media).

Exercise Part 1

Ask students the questions "What do you need in your life? What do you have that you absolutely cannot do without?" Students may need gentle prompting. On chart paper, write the list that the class is generating. Students will likely say items such as food and drink as a need but will add "wants." If students are having a

hard time brainstorming, do a "think-aloud" to model the process. "Hmmm....I woke up this morning and I had to have a cup of coffee. And when I was getting ready for school, I needed to find my travel mug to carry my coffee to school. I also have to have my good luck necklace on. I will definitely add those. What else?"

Review the list going over each item reminding students that these are things they think they need and cannot do without. Read from one or more of the following books that depicts the life on the frontier or prairie. The descriptions of homes are the same as the early homes in our state:

- *Dandelions* by Eve Bunting
- [The Little House on the Prairie Picture books for young readers](#)
- [Excerpt from *American Girl Book: Meet Kirsten*](#)
- *Little House in the Big Woods*

After reading, ask students to describe the homes featured in the book. Compare and contrast the style of the homes, the furnishings, the numbers of rooms, etc., with their home. Ask students about details about the family life using evidence from the text. Students should pay attention to details about chores and the rustic simplicity of the homes.

Read about the Frontier under K1

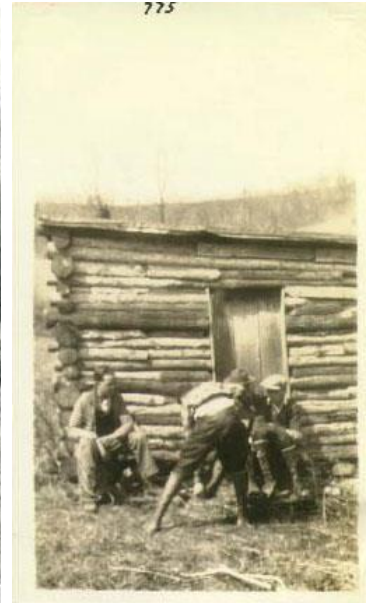
Refer back to the original list. Review the list and circle the items that the characters in the book had. Make a second list of the items that the characters did have. Ask students what surprised them. Guide students' thinking that their list consisted of things that are not needed to live or survive. The people that settled in West Virginia a long time ago had the bare essentials. They had to make most of the items they needed or grow and search for them. Things as simple as clothing had to be sewn and rugs and blankets needed to be woven.

Define wants and needs - Highlight food, water, shelter, and clothing as needs. "Wants" are things that are nice and fun to have but not necessary.

Exercise Part 2

Allow students plenty of time to observe the photographs. You may want to explain that many photos of these types of homes do not exist. Ask students why this may be. Discuss the size of the homes and how much room they had. Guide

students' thinking to arrive at the point that they only had room for what they needed.



[Explore Discovery Room 4-Frontier Life](#)

The past is abstract for early learners. Help students identify with the simplicity of the time by taping off a 12' X 12' rectangle on the floor using masking tape. Explain to students that this was a typical or average size of an early log home. Choose a few students to represent a family: a mother, a father, a sister, a brother and a baby. Ask where they would sleep, eat, etc. Again, guide the discussion that

their main goal was to simply survive. Ask students if they would like to live then or now. Eventually these homes were "added-on to" and you could elaborate on this if time allows.

Hand paper out to students with a rectangle pre-drawn on it. Have students design their house layout for their family. Who would sleep with whom? Where would the kitchen be? Students may illustrate.

Ask students to compare their homes to the homes of the past. What do we have now in our homes that are wants and what are needs?

Exercise Part 3

Have students work in pairs. Each group will use a T-Chart on chart paper to draw and/or write (dependent upon their level of reading and writing) a list of needs and wants that they have in their home. This can be an easy assessment to ascertain if students understand wants and needs.

Exercise Part 4

[Weaving](#) is a skill that was necessary. Things had to be made to help keep the occupants of early homes such as log cabins warm.

Weaving is a craft that students in kindergarten and first grade are able to do when taught in small groups in the beginning. Weaving is an activity which crosses the midsection thus improving students' executive functioning skills.

Simple weaving on cardboard is an excellent way to begin to weave in your classroom. The teacher needs pieces of rectangular cardboard approximately 5" X 7" or whatever size end weaving you want. The teacher prepares the cardboard with a number of uneven notches across the top and bottom. Use cotton string to wind around the board to make the loom. Tie in the back. Using a piece of yarn approximately 12 inches long or longer tied to one side, begin to weave over and under bringing the yarn back and forth. When out of one color, the teacher will need to help tie on more yarn. At the end, cut the weaving off from the back so that it looks like a rug with strings at either end. Tie the strings together to keep weaving intact.

Explain to students that the art of weaving is still practiced today in West Virginia and there are textile guilds that celebrate the art and history associated with them. Interesting fact, many of the weavers are men!



Figure 1: West Virginia Weaver, Dorothy Thompson

Exercise Materials

Online access to the West Virginia State Museum

A book or books about early settlers or life on the frontier

Markers and chart paper

Masking Tape or painter's tape

Drawing paper with rectangles pre drawn

Loomed created from cardboard for each child

Yarn