

Life Skills in Sales and Handling Money

This project turned out to be a wonderful success. Gains in money skills alone were well worth it, but, also, the students' self-esteem seemed to really soar. All of the students showed pride in our store and took their jobs very seriously. All of the students would have worked every day if permitted. One or two students stopped by daily to see if we needed additional help. This project turned out to be a wonderful learning experience, as well as fun and motivating for the children. We have observed many more benefits in our students than ever anticipated in just one semester.

Curriculum/State Standard

Texas Essential Knowledge of Skills (TEKS) for Mathematics grades K-6, as developmentally appropriate for my special education students.

Overview

The students set up and operated a school store selling school supply type items. The students decided what items to order, filled out purchasing requisitions, took inventory, and helped balance the books during math class. The students added the sales, took the customer's money, and made change (a teacher was always there to oversee and help as needed).

Objectives

- The student will set up a store and sell school related type materials, learning life skills such as filling out purchasing requisitions and setting prices to make a profit, assessed by teacher observation and classroom participation.
- The student will gain further understanding of the value of coins and bills, counting change, making or filling out tables and charts, using logical reasoning, solving problems connected to everyday experiences, estimating reasonable results, and using numbers to name quantities (as developmentally appropriate and assessed on the Brigance test).
- The student will practice social skills learned in the classroom related to customer service and satisfaction, assessed by teacher observation.

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K-6

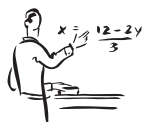
GRADE LEVEL



ARTS



LANGUAGE



MATH

Misc

MISCELLANEOUS



SCIENCE



HISTORY



SOCIAL STUDIES

On-Going

MONTHS

\$990

TOTAL BUDGET

“Life Skills and Sales” project continued...

Materials

A portable store was purchased and a cash register that held real money. It had a calculator built into it to help if needed in the purchase of multiple items. Stock items were purchased and inventory taken by the students in a ledger book. Initial cash for the register to make change was also necessary. Name badges, a calendar to schedule workers, and reminder notes sent home the day before were helpful. We also had charts to fill out that showed the amount of money of each denomination in the register at the opening, closing, and the profit for the day.

Readiness Activity

Mr. Louie Lobo from a nearby Sav-On office supply was invited to come and speak to the students about the different aspects of a retail business. The children learned what “integrity” meant and the importance of all aspects of integrity in the operating of a real school store. He instilled the importance of being honest, hard working, dependable, courteous, and helpful in the store. The kids really took this to heart in their work. He talked about stock and making a profit. Supply and demand was discussed, and the kids were involved in his presentation. They asked questions and answered questions that he asked.

The kids made the decision as to what they would sell (within guidelines set by the teachers) and stock was purchased, along with the portable store and cash register.

Strategies/Activities

Letters explaining the store and permission slips were sent home to parents to allow their child to participate in the school store.

A calendar was set up and the children signed up to work as their permission slips were returned. Reminder notes were sent home the day before each child was signed up to work in the store, with the time to be at school. We opened 30 minutes before school began.

The students voted on and named the school store “Mustang Market” and made posters advertising the store to display around the school.

The students helped fill out purchasing requisitions to get supplies ordered.

The students helped catalog the stock items in a ledger book and set reasonable prices (with a lot of discussion and teacher guidance).

Towards the end of the semester, the students had a sale of 50% off gel pens; seeing that many more than usual were sold but not a lot of profit was gained.

The students conducted inventory throughout the semester by counting items left in stock and reporting to the teacher to put in the ledger. New items were purchased accordingly.

The store opening was announced over the morning announcements the day before the grand opening.

Lessons on money were taught during math class, and reinforcement games were played.

The school store opened, with the employees being a little apprehensive at first but not for long. The customers were numerous and the lines long, so everyone was quite busy at first. (Sales began at \$35-\$40 daily during 30 minutes. This was for items that ranged from \$0.15 to \$1.25, with average sales being \$0.50.) Our general stock included pens, gel pens, pretty pencils, cute pencil top erasers, mechanical pencils, pop-a-point pencils, bookmarks, crayons, rulers, folders, paper, spiral notebooks, highlighters, and how-to-draw books. We had other items of interest occasionally and were never lacking for customers. Parents also patronized our store on occasion.

As items were purchased and customers paid for items, the students made change for the customer.

At the end of the semester, the students decided to have a pizza party and play math Bingo games to earn prizes. This was paid for with the profit earned for the semester. (\$289) The initial investment and remainder of the profit will be put back into the store.

As we gained new students in our classes throughout the semester, they were incorporated into the store.

Continued ...

“Life Skills and Sales” project continued...

Culminating Activity

Profit from the semester was figured and the store employees voted on a pizza party, playing math Bingo games to earn prizes. The students were all pulled from their classes and had the party together from grades K-6. The older kids became very tolerant and really helped the younger ones throughout the semester, so they were able to also assist them in the Bingo games at the party. Pizzas and sodas were enjoyed, along with cupcakes. Prizes included some of the favorite items in our store—gel pens, cool erasers, fancy pencils, mechanical pencils, tablets, notebook paper, etc.

Evaluation

The students were evaluated using the Brigance test U-1, U-2, U-3, U-4. These tests are in reference to money recognition U-1, value U-2, counting money U-3, and making change U-4. Beginning scores and ending scores were compared and great gains were made in each area, (as developmentally appropriate). My sixth grade students knew basically how to count groups of coins in the beginning, but could not make change from a given amount in the pre-test (scores averaged 20%). In the posttest, scores averaged 82% in counting back change. The fourth and fifth graders showed similar gains. The third grade students showed gains from 21% to 70% in counting groups of coins, and from 0% to 50% in counting change. The younger students (K-3) showed similar gains in counting groups of coins (from 67% to 87%), and in counting groups of objects. They were the ones that counted stock and helped customers get what they needed. They also could help younger customers determine if they had enough money for a particular item or point out items for the amount a student wanted to spend. Different classes counted the money from the register daily and put the correct amount in the register for the next day. Gross sales were figured daily.