

## Lesson: Social Studies Grades 4-6 Economics: Supply and Demand



# More or Less?

## Introduction

### Objective

The students will recognize the relationship between supply and demand on Farmer McGregor's Farm.

### Academic Content Standards

*Ohio social studies academic content standards, benchmarks and grade-level indicators are currently in draft form. The suggested alignment to social studies strands for this lesson is subject to change as the draft standards are revised.*

- ❖ Possible alignments: Ohio Academic Content Standards for Social Studies: Economics Standard
- ❖ National Council for the Social Studies: Social Studies Programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people organize for the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.

## Getting Started

### Materials

- Counters

### Technology

Graphing software, such as *Graph Master* or spreadsheet software to graph Farmer McGregor's income and outcome.

### Vocabulary

- Supply
- Demand
- Yield
- Surplus
- Scarcity

## Lesson

### Orientation Activity:

Farmer McGregor grows vegetables on his farm to earn a living. Counters are distributed to students. Students will arrange the counters in groups of twenty-five to create a "garden" on their desks. Each counter represents one carrot plant. Each carrot plant yields one carrot, so Farmer McGregor has twenty-five carrots to sell (his supply) at the store. Ask the question, "How much should Farmer McGregor charge per carrot?" Emphasize to the students that this is how Farmer McGregor makes a living (creates income). Next, ask the question, "What are some of the things that Farmer McGregor will need to purchase?" Students will estimate the cost of McGregor's living expenses.

The teacher will assume the role of Peter Rabbit, and visit gardens to "eat" some of the counters/carrots for lunch. Ask the questions, "Now what is the supply of carrots?" "How much income

will Farmer McGregor make selling these carrots at the store for the same price as before?" "How will Farmer McGregor pay his bills if he makes less?" Now there are fewer carrots (supply is low) and demand for the carrots is still the same. Ask the question, "How will Farmer McGregor decide the price of his carrots?"

### Learning Activity

Farmer McGregor goes to market to sell his carrots and finds that Farmer Smith has brought fifty carrots to the market to sell. Supply for carrots is high (surplus) and demand is low. Ask the question, "What will happen to the price of carrots?"

Present this scenario for discussion. All carrot crops in the Midwest are ruined by drought. Farmer McGregor has the only carrots to sell. The carrots are a rare vegetable and the demand for is high (scarcity). Ask the question, "What would happen to the price?" Ask students display thumbs-up if they think the price will go up or thumbs-down if they think the price will go down.

Present the following scenarios for additional problem solving: After the winter holidays, prices for tinsel, wrapping paper, and ornaments, etc., go up or down? Every kid wants a new video game, but most of the stores are out of stock. The price for the video game goes up or down? Wal-Mart has too many leftover bags of candy after Halloween; the price goes up or down? A brand new car hits the market in January; the price for the car is high or low?

## **Evaluation and Follow-Up**

### Assessment Tools and Methods

Participation in class discussions.

### Interdisciplinary Connections

Mathematics and the study of percentages, ratios, and decimals with regards to pricing consumable items.