

My Rows and Piles of Coins by Tololwa M. Mollel (Clarion Books, a Houghton Mifflin Company imprint, New York: 1999) ISBN 0-395-75186-1

Literature Annotation: A Tanzanian boy saves his coins to buy a bicycle so that he can help his parents carry goods to market, but then he discovers that in spite of all he saved he does not have enough money.

Grade Level: Grade 2

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Economic Concepts: Consumption

Maryland State Curriculum

Economics Standard: Students will identify the economic principles and processes that are helpful to producers and consumers when making good decisions. (PreK-3 Standard)

4.A.1. Explain why people have to make economic choices about goods and services.

4.B.1. Describe different types of markets

Objective

Students will compare the economic choices made by a Tanzanian boy at a local farmers' market to choices they make with their income.

Vocabulary

market: an arrangement wherein buyers and sellers can exchange resources, goods, and services. A market may be a physical place such as a store or an auction gallery, or it may occur through other arrangements such as a telephone and Internet transactions; a market is said to exist whenever or wherever a buyer and seller enter into an exchange.

goods: things that people make or grow that satisfy economic wants; things desired by consumers and supplied by producers

services: community jobs; actions (jobs) that people do for each other

Additional vocabulary:

errands, maize, harvest, shillings, motorbike, income

Teacher Preparation

At least 3 days before teaching this lesson, introduce the idea of "work tickets." The teacher will award these tickets for services that students do to help around the classroom or school. With the students, generate a list of ways they might be able to earn work tickets, e.g. washing the chalkboard, cleaning up a work area, helping another student, leading the line, being a recess helper. Tell students they will have the choice of cashing in each ticket they earn immediately for a piece of candy or saving the tickets for prizes (goods) in a few days.

Teacher Materials

- Read-aloud copy of the book *My Rows and Piles of Coins*
- Picture of a bicycle
- Resource Sheet 1: *Work Tickets* (or the coupon-type sold in stores)
- Transparency of Resource Sheet 2: *Decision Tree*
- Individually wrapped candies, to be offered for the value of one work ticket
- Small prize items: e.g., erasers, pencils, small toys. Assign a number of work ticket values greater than 1 ticket to each prize.
- Atlas or large wall map of Africa

Student Materials

- Resource Sheet 3: *Making Economic Choices with Money*

Teacher Background

People use money to buy goods and services. Income is the money people earn by working or from other sources. People make decisions about how to spend their limited income. Sometimes people save the money to be spent later. Every decision about how to spend money has an opportunity cost.

The United Republic of Tanzania is located in central East Africa bordered on the north by Kenya and Uganda, on the west by Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and on the south by Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. The Indian Ocean borders Tanzania to the east. The story of *My Rows and Piles of Coins* is set in Tanzania of the 1960s. Tanzanian coins are described in the Author's Note at the end of the book.

Motivation

Remind the students that some of them have been earning work tickets for the last few days. Have students share ways that they earned a ticket and explain what choices they made about redeeming their tickets. Reinforce the idea that the choice of saving the ticket delays the purchase of a good or service until a later time. Tell them they will have an opportunity to cash in more of their work tickets at the end of this lesson.

Ask the students to describe ways in which they get money at home (earn it, get an allowance, gifts, etc.) Explain that money they get to spend is called income. Ask students to share ways that they spend their incomes. List a few ways on the board.

Display the picture of a bicycle. Remark that a bicycle costs more money than many of the students might get in an allowance or other income. Ask how they might be able to purchase a bicycle using their income.

Development

1. Locate Tanzania on a map of Africa. Tell the students they will be hearing a story of a boy named Saruni who lived in Tanzania about 50 years ago. Ask the students to listen for ways that Saruni got money and for the decisions Saruni made about how to use his money. Read aloud the first 2 pages of the book *My Rows and Piles of Coins* to the students, stopping at the part where Saruni identifies the many market goods he could buy with his coins.
2. Display a transparency of Resource Sheet 2: *Decision Tree*. Explain that a decision tree is a way of helping a consumer make a wise choice when spending money. The consumer selects two top choices, writes the choices on opposite sides of the decision tree, and identifies the good and bad points of making each of these choices. Based on that discussion, the consumer selects one of the choices for the purchase. The second choice, the one not selected, becomes the **opportunity cost** of making that decision.
3. Discuss with the students some of the goods that were available to Saruni as he walked through the market in the story. Have several students take turns saying what their first and second choices would be if they could buy something at Saruni's market. Follow the steps listed above for filling in the decision tree. Reinforce the idea of opportunity cost with each student's example. Say, "When you make a decision to spend your coins on one of the goods, you give up the opportunity to spend your money on something else. The second choice, or the good you give up, is called your opportunity cost." Ask the students to predict what Saruni will do with his coins.
4. Continue with the Read-Aloud to complete the story.
5. Discuss the story events using some of the following questions, including a review of the vocabulary words errands, maize, harvest, shillings, and motorbike as needed:
 - a) What goods did Yeyo and Saruni take to the market to sell? (Early in the growing season they took dried beans, maize, pumpkins, squash, bananas, firewood, and eggs. After the harvest in June they took peas, sweet potatoes, vegetables, and fruits.)
 - b) How did his mother Yeyo reward Saruni for helping her at the market? (She gave Saruni coins to spend.) Explain that Saruni now had some **income** of his own. He would need to make **choices** about how to use his income.
 - c) Saruni had coins in his pocket to spend at the market. What **goods** did Saruni see there? (He saw roasted peanuts, chapatti bread, rice cakes, sambusa dough pouches, wooden toy trucks, kites, slingshots, and marbles.)

- d) What did Saruni decide to do with his money? (He saved all of his coins in a moneybox. He wanted to **save** for a new bicycle of his own.)
 - e) What did Saruni give up when he decided to save his coins for a bike? (He gave up the opportunity to buy the other goods for sale at the market. His next best choice would be called his **opportunity cost**.)
 - f) When the weather was bad and Yeyo and Saruni could not go to market, how did Saruni work at home? (He did house chores, and helped his father Murete on the coffee farm. He pruned coffee trees, and placed leaves and twigs around the coffee stems.)
 - g) How did Saruni show that he was responsible enough to own a bike? What other character traits could be used to describe Saruni?
 - h) The bicycle cost more than Saruni was able to save in one growing season. How was he able to have a bicycle of his own?
 - i) What do you think Saruni will do with the money Yeyo gave back to him? What choices does he have?
 - j) How is the market that Saruni visited similar or different from the places where you shop?
6. Work ticket activity: Remind students that you have been distributing “work tickets” during the past few days to “pay” students for services they provided to the class. Announce that they will now have the opportunity to cash in their work tickets for goods. They may also choose to not cash in their tickets and save them toward something they will purchase later in the week when they have earned more tickets. Follow up with another opportunity for work ticket redemption later in the week.

Assessment

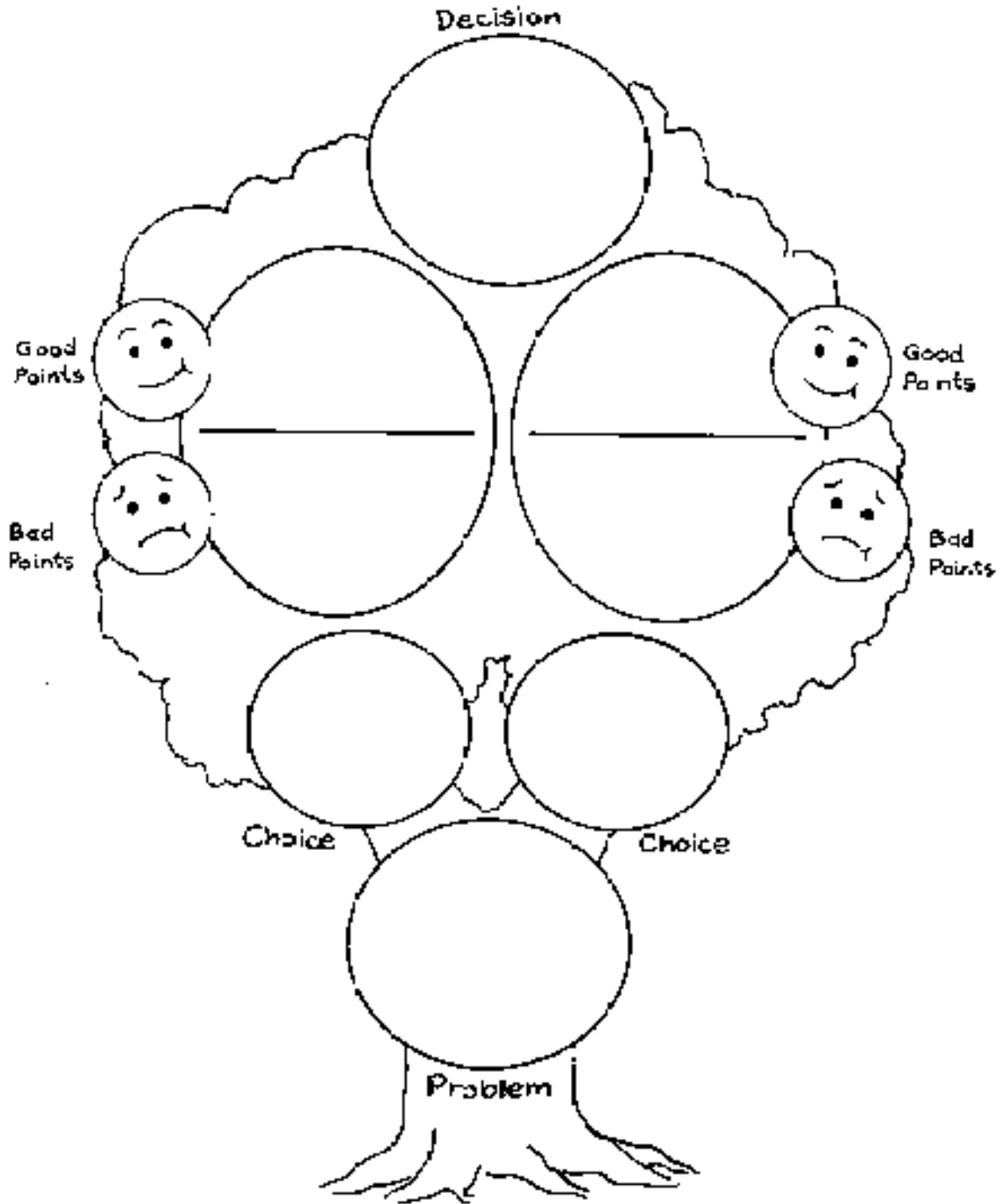
Distribute Resource Sheet 3: *Making Economic Choices with Money*. With the students, complete the section of the chart for Saruni. Then have the students complete the section of the chart for their own work income and spending. (If students say they don't have any income of their own, be prepared to share a sample, such as the one, below for assessment purposes:

Madeleine earned 50 cents folding laundry for her mom. Then she cleaned out her dresser drawer and found 75 cents. She added this money to her allowance of \$2.00. Madeleine wanted to buy a bracelet for \$1.75 but decided instead to save the money to spend at the school fair next week.

Work Tickets

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Decision Tree



Making Economic Choices with Money

Saruni's Choices	My Choices
<p>How did Saruni earn his money?</p>	<p>How do I earn money?</p>
<p>Name some goods that Saruni could choose to buy at the market.</p> <p>bicycle</p> <p>Circle in red the good that Saruni wanted the most.</p> <p>Circle in blue the good that you think might be Saruni's next best choice.</p>	<p>Name some goods you could choose to buy with your income.</p> <p>Circle in red the good that you would say is your first choice.</p> <p>Circle in blue the good that you think might be your next best choice.</p>
<p>Saruni chose to save his money for</p> <p>_____.</p> <p>What was Saruni's opportunity cost?</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Name the good that you chose to buy:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>What is your opportunity cost?</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Why was saving money important to Saruni?</p>	<p>Why might saving money be important to you?</p>