

The Fishing Trip*

Objective

This activity will get your child to reflect on the concept of a “need” and how goods and services can be used to meet needs. Your child will also learn to distinguish between essential and non-essential goods.

Preparation

Before starting the activity, make sure your child understands the difference between a good and a service and that we consume both:

- A good is a physical thing we can use or consume, for example, a television.
- A service is an action or help received in exchange for money, for example, a repair by a plumber.

Next, ask your child if they can explain what a need is. To help, you can explain, for example, that plants need air, water, food and light to survive and thrive, or that dogs need air, water, food, exercise and affection to grow up healthy. Ask your child:

- What would happen if a plant didn't have enough water, food or light? What would happen if the plant had too much of these? How would the situation be different with a dog?
- Do you think a human being's needs are the same as those of a plant or dog? What needs do they share? How are their needs different?

* This activity is inspired by the educational activity guide *D'un commerce agréable et équitable*, published by Établissement vert Brundtland.

Steps

1. Work with your child to draw up a list of the needs they must meet to stay healthy: air, water, food, clothing, shelter, affection, safety, play, learning, etc.

Explain that there are different ways to meet these needs. For each need on the list, ask your child to name goods or services that can satisfy that need.

Point out that, sometimes, people own more things than they really need. For example, many have far more clothing than required by the climate in which they live.

Ask your child: What do people do with goods that they own but that are not essential to meeting their needs? Remind them that non-essential food, clothing or other items, which are more a want than a need, often end up in the trash.

2. Ask your child to name the items they would need to go fishing. Then take a look at the comic strip below, which tells the story of Léa and Cédric's fishing trip, and answer the questions that follow.



- ▷ What are Léa and Cédric doing? What are they carrying in their backpacks? Where are they going?
- ▷ Why have Léa and Cédric not yet reached the lake to fish?

3. Now ask your child to strike off any items on the list below that are unnecessary for a fishing trip.

Electric radio, sleeping bag, electric clock, tent, shovel, axe, stuffed bear, fishing pole, first-aid kit, fishing basket, electronic gaming device, ball, tackle box, a change of clothes, photo album, life vest, skateboard, camping dish, sandwiches, juice, fishing net

Ask your child: Do you think Cédric would have made it all the way to the lake had he brought only the necessary items? Probably!

Conclusion

To see if your child has properly understood the concept of “need,” ask them to empty the contents of their pencil case on a table. Explain that things in a pencil case usually meet the need to learn because they allow students to learn in school.

Help your child realize that some objects in their pencil case are unrelated or only partly related to this need. For example, there’s a difference between a basic eraser and a scented, animal-shaped eraser.

Ask your child to place all the items they consider essential to their learning needs on one side of the table and to place all non-essential ones on the other side. To help them distinguish between these two categories, remind your child that Cédric was carrying a lot more things than were necessary for the fishing trip. All these non-essential items could have been left behind. As a result, his backpack was so heavy he couldn’t carry it any farther.