

Girl Scout Daisy Activities to Earn the “Making Choices” Badge

Activity Description

Determining the difference between wants and needs is simple, right? It must be because even students as young as kindergarten complete wants and needs worksheets, Smartboard exercises, or even card games. However, is classifying wants and needs really that cut and dried? When classifying wants and needs, students soon recognize that there is a great deal of generality when it comes to classifying needs. Making decisions based on wants and needs can be frustrating. It is better to help students recognize that choosing according to set goals will lead them to better outcomes. They should also recognize that choosing incorrectly leads to negative consequences that will help guide them to a better choice the next time.

In this lesson, students define goods and services. They listen to a brief story and then learn the difference between wants and needs. They discuss items mentioned in the story to try to determine which ones are wants and which ones are needs. They will discover that it is often difficult to determine the difference between a want and a need. An activity that asks them to select clothing will help them to learn how to make choices using criteria important to them when making decisions.

Girl Scout Program Level

Daisy

Concepts

Criteria
Goods and services
Wants and needs

Objectives

Girls will be able to

- explain why some goods are referred to as needs,
- define wants,
- define goods and services, and
- explain decisionmaking as choosing wants according to criteria.

Time required

40 minutes

Materials

- One poster board or sheet of poster paper
 - Handout 1: My Closet, one copy for each girl
 - Handout 2: My Choices, one copy for each girl, cut into a set of cards
 - Glue sticks
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Procedure

1. Ask the girls to talk about the difference between a need and a want. Prompt a brief discussion and accept all answers.
2. Explain that people often talk about the goods and services they want or need. Explain that **goods** are things that people use to make them happy. Some examples of goods are an apple, a car, or a schoolbook. These are all things people use. **Services** are activities that people do for one another. Examples of services are haircuts, manicures, and car washes. These are activities people do for each other.
3. Tell the girls you are going to read them a very short story. At the end of the story, you are going to ask them to give you examples of goods and a services mentioned in the story. Read the story.

Stella Goes to the Market

Just like every other Saturday, Stella and her mom are shopping for food at the supermarket. The supermarket has just about any kind of food Stella can think of, but it also has many things that are not food. As she looks around, she sees flowers and toys and school supplies and even clothing. Stella’s mom moves through the produce department and loads the cart with carrots, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, apples, and peaches. She and Stella move on to the seafood department. Her mom asks the man behind the counter to cook them some fish for tonight’s dinner. As Stella turns down aisle 10, she sees a bright blue T-shirt that says “Freaky Friday” in bright orange sequins. She excitedly turns to her mom and says, “Mom, that shirt would be perfect to wear to school on Friday.” Stella’s mom agrees that the shirt is really cute, and she places it in the cart. But wait! There is a matching hat. Stella’s mom places the hat in the cart too. Soon Stella and her mom are in the checkout line. Her mom pays for their purchases, and the cashier hands Stella’s mom a receipt. The bagger helps Stella’s mom place her groceries in the car.

4. Discuss the following:
 - What goods did Stella’s mom place in the cart while moving through the produce department? (*Carrots, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, apples, and peaches*)
 - What other goods did Stella see in the supermarket? (*Flowers, toys, school supplies, and clothing*)
 - What goods did Stella see in aisle 10 that she wanted to buy? (*A T-shirt and a hat*)
 - What activity did Stella’s mom ask the man in the seafood department to do for them? (*She asked him to cook fish.*)
 - What do we call activities that people do for one another? (*Services*)
 - What was another service in the story? (*The cashier added up the cost of the groceries. The bagger helped Stella’s mom place the groceries in the car.*)

5. Ask the girls to think about the difference between a need and a want. Explain that when people talk about a **need**, they are referring to three important goods that all people should have: food, clothing, and shelter. Food keeps people healthy and strong. Shelter and clothing keep people safe from rain, hot sun, and freezing cold. A want is a desire that can be satisfied by consuming goods and services. In other words, a **want** is a good or service that makes us happy. Sometimes when people think about the difference between a need and a want, they think of a want as something you would *like* to have but do not *need* to have.

6. Draw a two-column chart on the poster board and label one column “Needs” and the other “Wants.”

7. Ask the girls to think about the food in the story. Use the following questions to lead a discussion. Write each food in either the Needs or Wants column as you go:

FOOD

- Are carrots a need or a want? (*The girls will likely say carrots are a need because they are a healthy food.*)
- Is broccoli a need or a want? (*The girls will likely say broccoli is a need because it is a healthy food.*)
- Are Brussels sprouts a need or a want? (*The girls will likely say Brussels sprouts are a need because they are a healthy food.*)
- Raise your hand if you eat broccoli. Ask those who don’t eat broccoli if they should be eating it if it’s a need. (*Accept all answers, but the girls should begin to think about the classification of broccoli as a need.*)
- Raise your hand if you eat Brussels sprouts. Ask those who don’t eat Brussels sprouts if they should be eating them because they are a need. (*Accept all answers,*

but the girls should begin to think about the classification of Brussels sprouts as a need.)

- What other foods don't you like to eat? *(Answers will vary, but point out foods that are healthy and ask if they are needs.)*
- Are all foods needs? *(The girls may recognize that having some food is important to people's health but people do not need all foods.)*
- Do you want food? *(The girls will likely say that they want food.)*
- Why do you want food? *(Answers will vary, but may include because they get hungry, like the taste of some foods, or that food is good for them.)*

Repeat that a want is a desire that can be satisfied by consuming goods or services. For example, we desire food. Food is a want that satisfies hunger and makes us feel better.

8. Refer back to the Needs and Wants chart. Use the following questions to discuss the clothing in the story. Write each item in either the “Needs” or “Wants” column as you go:

CLOTHING

- What are three important goods people should have? *(Food, clothing, and shelter)*
- Why do people need clothing? *(Clothing keeps people safe from rain, hot sun, and freezing cold.)*
- What clothing did Stella's mom buy for Stella? *(A T-shirt and a hat.)*
- Should we place the T-shirt in the need column or the want column? *(Answers will vary, but the girls will likely identify clothing as a need and place the T-shirt in the needs column.)*
- Does Stella likely have other clothing? *(Yes)*
- Do you think she bought the T-shirt to keep her body warm and safe? *(Answers will vary, but the girls should recognize that Stella probably wasn't thinking about the T-shirt as protection.)*
- Do you think Stella bought the hat to keep her head dry and warm? *(Answers will vary, but the girls should recognize that Stella probably wasn't thinking about the hat as protection.)*
- Why did Stella want the T-shirt and the hat? *(She thought the T-shirt and hat were cute.)*

9. Again, explain that a want is a desire that can be satisfied by consuming goods and services. Discuss the following questions:
- What goods did Stella desire to have from aisle 10? *(A T-shirt and a hat)*

- How did those goods satisfy Stella’s desire? (*They were cute and would be fun to wear on Friday.*)
10. Explain that it is very difficult to always know what food is a need and what food is a want. It is also difficult to know what clothing is a need and what clothing is a want. The same is true for houses. Not all foods or clothing are needs, but all foods and clothing can be wants. It is important to learn how to choose your wants wisely to keep yourself healthy and happy.

Decisionmaking

11. Read the following to the girls:

Stella’s mom has given her an awesome responsibility. Stella will be responsible for choosing clothes for the school year. Stella lives in the Midwest, where school days in August and September can be very hot and school days in January, February, and March can be very cold. Sometimes the snow is eight inches deep in the winter, and it’s always super rainy in the springtime. Pretend you are given the same responsibility as Stella. What clothing would you choose?

12. Write the word “criteria” on the poster board. Explain that **criteria** are the things that are really important to think about when making a decision. For example, when choosing clothes for cold days, a criterion would be that the clothes be very warm. Ask the girls the following questions and write each criterion on the board (cool clothes, clothes that will keep you dry, and warm clothes).
- What type of clothes will you want to choose for very hot days? (*The girls may say cool clothes, such as shorts, sandals, and sleeveless shirts.*)
 - What type of clothes will you want to choose for rainy days? (*The girls may say rain jackets and rain boots.*)
 - What type of clothes will you want to choose for cold and snowy days? (*The girls may say clothes that will keep them warm and dry.*)
13. Distribute a copy of *Handout 1: My Closet*, a deck of cards from *Handout 2: My Choices*, and a glue stick to each girl. Explain that they should pretend they live in the same town as Stella, with the same hot days, cold days, snowy days, and rainy days, and must choose their wardrobe. They have 24 choices but may choose only 12 items for their closet. They should choose clothing according to their criteria, such as warm clothing for cold weather, rainwear for wet weather, and cool clothing for hot weather. They should make their choices and then glue them into their closet. Allow time for the girls to make their clothing choices.

14. After the girls have made their clothing choices, lead a discussion with the following questions:
- Do you have a coat that is warm enough for you to walk and play outside? *(Most girls will say yes because that was one of their criteria.)*
 - What will happen if you have chosen a coat that is too light? *(They will get cold, they will not be able to walk to school, and they won't be able to play outside.)*
 - Do you have long pants? *(Most girls will say yes because having warm clothes was one of their criteria.)*
 - What will happen if you have not chosen long pants? *(Your legs will get cold during the winter. You won't be able to play outside in cold weather.)*
 - Do you have shorts? *(Most girls will say yes because having clothes to wear on hot days was one of their criteria.)*
 - What will happen if you have not chosen shorts or enough pairs of shorts? *(Your legs will get hot on warm days. You will be uncomfortable.)*
 - Did you choose warm shoes? *(Most girls will say yes because having warm clothes was one of their criteria.)*
 - What will happen if you have not chosen warm shoes? *(Your feet will get cold in the winter. You won't be able to play in the snow. Your feet might get wet in the rain.)*
 - Did you choose something to keep your hands warm—gloves or mittens? *(Probably not) Why or why not? (Some may have wanted to protect their hands and some people may have wanted other items and didn't have enough room in their closet for the gloves or mittens.)*
 - When it gets cold, what might happen if you did not choose gloves? *(Your fingers will get cold. You won't be able to walk or play outside in the cold. You won't be able to play in the snow.)*
 - What happens when you don't choose the right clothes? *(Answers will vary, but all answers should reflect discomfort.)*
 - Why is it important to make the right decisions about your clothing? *(You want to be comfortable and protected from the weather.)*
15. Instruct the girls to walk around and view each other's closets and give them a few minutes to do so. After they have shared their closets, discuss the following questions:
- Did everyone choose the same number of shorts? *(Probably not) Why not? (Some people like to wear shorts even in cooler weather, while other people think shorts are too cold to wear in cooler weather.)*
 - Did everyone choose the same coat? *(Probably not) Why not? (Some people get cold easily and want the warmest coat they can find. Other people would get too hot in the warmest coat and prefer a lighter one.)*

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- Did everyone choose the same shoes? (*Probably not.*) Why not? (*Some people’s feet get too hot in boots and they prefer athletic shoes instead. People like different styles of shoes.*)
- Why didn’t everyone make the same decisions about the clothes? (*Because people like different things.*)

16. Explain the following:

- People do not choose the same things. They choose according to how they feel and what they like. If they choose wrong, they will be unhappy. If that happens, the next time they choose, they will choose more wisely.
- Deciding if something is a need can be very confusing because it can be difficult to know what someone truly needs. Some people might say that broccoli is a need because it is a healthy vegetable, but you might not like broccoli and so you might not choose it.
- It is more important to choose what you want according to the things that are important to you—your criteria. If you get cold easily, you should choose the warmest coat, the thickest boots, and the heaviest mittens. If wearing all of those things makes you way too hot, you should choose a lighter coat, thinner boots, and lighter gloves.

Closure

17. Discuss the following questions:

- What are goods? (*Goods are things that people use to make them happy.*)
- What are some examples of goods? (*Broccoli, apples, cars, houses, clothes, and so on*)
- What are services? (*Services are activities that people do for one another.*)
- What are some examples of services? (*Cooking food, giving a haircut, delivering groceries, being a Girl Scout leader, and so on*)
- What are needs? (*Food, clothing, and shelter*)
- Are all foods, clothing, and shelters needs? (*No*)
- Can food, clothing, and shelter be wants? (*Yes*)
- What are wants? (*Wants are goods and services that make us happy.*)
- How do we choose our wants? (*We choose our criteria and make decisions.*)
- When making a decision, why are criteria important? (*Criteria are the things that are really important to think about when making a decision.*)
- Do all people make the same choices? (*No*) Why not? (*People have different likes.*)

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- What happens if you choose the wrong clothes to wear on a cold day? (*You get cold.*)
- What would you do differently the next time you are getting dressed for a cold day? (*Choose warmer clothes*)
- What if you choose food at a restaurant and you don't like it? (*You choose something else the next time.*)
- How do people learn to make good decisions? (*They think about their criteria, and they learn to make better choices after they choose poorly.*)

Handout 1: My Closet

Handout 2: My Choices (page 1 of 2)



Handout 2: My Choices (page 2 of 2)

