



The Tortilla Factory



Use these questions with children 8 to 10 years old to discuss the following economic concepts in *The Tortilla Factory* by Gary Paulsen (ISBN: 978-0-15-201698-2): **natural resources**, **human resources**, **capital resources**, and **intermediate goods**.

- 1. Natural resources are things that occur naturally in and on the earth that are used to produce goods and services. For example, wheat, water, oil, trees, and coal are natural resources. What natural resources are mentioned in the book?**

Black earth, yellow seeds, corn, and hot sun

- 2. What is a natural resource needed to grow corn that isn't mentioned in the book?**

Water

- 3. Human resources are people who do mental and/or physical work to produce goods and services. Human resources are also known as labor. Name some human resources shown in the book.**

Farmers, farm workers, and factory workers (including bakers)

- 4. Capital resources are goods that have been produced and are used to produce other goods and services. They are used over and over again in the production process. They are also called capital goods and physical capital. Name some capital resources shown in the book that are used to make tortillas.**

Capital resources shown at the farm include hoes, a shovel, tractors, and silos. Capital resources shown at the factory include the building, aprons and hats for the workers, tables, racks, boxes, a ramp, and a dolly.

- 5. Intermediate goods are man-made goods that become part of another good or service. For example, thread and cloth are intermediate goods that become part of a jacket. What intermediate good does the book show the factory workers using to produce tortillas?**

The factory workers used flour (made from corn, a natural resource) to make the tortilla dough. The flour became part of the tortilla.