

So Few of Me

By Peter H. Reynolds / ISBN: 076362623-6

Lesson Author

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Standards and Benchmarks (see page 20)

Lesson Description

In this lesson, students learn about scarcity, alternatives, choices, and opportunity costs by reading *So Few of Me* by Peter H. Reynolds. The class participates in an activity to help Perdita figure out her morning schedule at summer camp. The students identify Perdita's alternatives, choose activities for her, and identify the opportunity costs of those choices. Students then work in groups to make choices and identify opportunity costs for Juan's after-school schedule.

Grade Level

1-3

Economics Concepts

Alternatives
Choice
Opportunity cost
Scarcity

Language Arts Concepts

Noting details
Sequencing
Distinguishing fiction from nonfiction

Objectives

Students will be able to

- define scarcity and choice,
 - identify alternatives,
 - define opportunity cost,
 - explain why choices must be made, and
 - identify the opportunity cost when a choice is made.
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Time Required

60-90 minutes

Materials

- *So Few of Me* by Peter H. Reynolds (ISBN: 076362623-6)
 - Visual 1
 - Handout 1, one copy, preferably printed on colored paper, cut apart, folded, and glued as described in the Preparation section
 - Handout 2, one copy, preferably printed on a different colored paper from Handout 1 and cut apart as described in the Preparation section
 - Handout 3, one copy, preferably printed on a different colored paper from Handouts 1 and 2 and cut apart as described in the Preparation section
 - Handout 4, one copy for each group of six students
 - Handout 5, one copy for each student
 - Scrap paper, one piece for each student
 - One glue stick
 - Tape or pushpins
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Preparation

1. Print one copy each of *Handout 1: Camp Schedule Decision Cards*, *Handout 2: Time Slot Cards*, and *Handout 3: Column Heading Cards*, preferably each on different colored paper. Cut out each card on Handout 1 along the solid lines, fold each along the dashed line, and glue the two sides together. Cut out each card from Handouts 2 and 3. After you have cut out and glued all the cards, you may want to laminate them so they can be used again.

2. On the board, use the cards from Handouts 2 and 3 and tape (or use pushpins) to construct a table that looks like the one below by attaching the cards to the board and drawing the dividing lines with chalk or a marker.

Time Slot	Choice	Opportunity Cost
8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.		
9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.		
10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.		
11:00 a.m.–noon		

Procedure

- Distribute a sheet of scrap paper to each student. Ask the students to list everything they would like to do during their summer vacation. Give them three minutes to work on their list. Then, discuss the following:
 - Have you listed everything you want to do during your summer vacation? (*Most students will probably say they ran out of time to list everything they want to do this summer.*)
 - Are you usually able to do everything you want to do each day? (*Most students will say they do not get to do everything they want to do each day.*)
 - Why don't you get to do everything you would like to do each day? (*There is not enough time and not enough money to do everything you want to do.*)
- Tell the students that you are going to read a story to them about a boy named Leo. Instruct them to listen carefully for Leo's problem and how he tries to deal with that problem. Explain that stories can be either fiction (make-believe) or nonfiction (true). Tell them to listen carefully to determine whether they think this story is fiction or non-fiction.
- Read *So Few of Me* to the class. As each new Leo appears in the story, have a student come to the front to put a tally mark on the board.
- Discuss the following:
 - What was Leo's problem? (*No matter how hard Leo worked, there was always more to do.*)
 - To deal with the fact that there was always more to do, Leo made a list. What did Leo find out when he made a list? (*Leo's list of things to do grew and grew. He still had too much to do.*)

- What wish did Leo make on his list? (*Leo wished that there were two of him; "So few of me and so much to do. If only there were TWO of me."*)
 - What did Leo think would happen to everything on the list once there were two of him? (*Leo thought he would get everything done with two of him.*)
 - What happened once there were two Leos? (*The new Leo found even more to do. They still weren't able to complete everything on the list, so a third, fourth, and fifth Leo appeared.*)
 - What happened once there were five Leos? (*The five Leos still weren't able to get everything done, so they brought in a sixth Leo.*)
 - What happened when the sixth Leo arrived? (*The sixth Leo came to organize the rest of them. They had a meeting of all the Leos and decided they needed a seventh Leo.*)
 - What was the maximum number of Leos in the story at any one time? (10)
 - With 10 Leos, were they able to get everything done? (No.)
 - What did Leo do once there were 10 Leos? (*Leo fell asleep and began to dream. Once the other nine Leos caught Leo sleeping, they woke him up and then disappeared.*)
 - Do you think maybe Leo was dreaming all along and there never were 10 Leos? (*Answers will vary.*)
 - What did Leo decide after all the other Leos disappeared? (*Leo decided it was better to do less and make sure he did his best on the things he chose to do.*)
 - Do you think this story is fiction or nonfiction? (*Most will say fiction.*) Why is this story fiction? (*It is not possible for multiple Leos to arrive to help the real Leo.*)
5. Display *Visual 1: Key Concepts*. Explain the following to the students:
- People often face the same problem Leo faced; they don't have enough time to do everything they want to do.
 - If you don't have enough time to do everything you want to do, you have to make a **choice**. A choice is a decision you make between two or more possibilities, or alternatives.
 - **Alternatives** are the different possibilities you can choose from in a situation. Explain that whenever a choice is made, something is given up.
 - **Opportunity cost** is what you give up when you make a choice.
 - **Scarcity** exists because we can't have everything we want. Time is scarce because we can't do everything we want to do.
6. Explain that people often develop a schedule for themselves to make sure they get things done that are important to them. For instance, in school there is a schedule to make sure that all the classes cover all the subjects they are expected to cover. Tell the

students they are going to work on an activity with a pretend friend named Perdita who has trouble making decisions. Perdita will be going to summer camp and has received her daily camp schedule decision form. Perdita has asked the students to help her decide which camp activities she is going to do each morning this summer.

7. Show the students the table on the board. Show the students the card for the 8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. time slot. Show them that “Swimming” is on one side of the card and “Arts and Crafts” is on the other. Explain that for this time slot, Perdita can take either swimming or arts and crafts, but she can’t take both. Have the students consider for a minute what they think Perdita should do during the time slot. Discuss the following while showing the appropriate side of the card:
 - What are Perdita’s alternatives? (*Swimming and arts and crafts*) Flip the card from side to side, showing the students the two alternatives.
 - If Perdita chooses swimming, what will her opportunity cost be? (*Arts and crafts*)
 - If Perdita chooses arts and crafts, what will her opportunity cost be? (*Swimming*)
 - Ask the students to raise their hands if they think that Perdita should take swimming. Then ask them to raise their hands if they think that Perdita should take arts and crafts. Tape the card with the activity that the majority chooses in the Choice column in the row corresponding to the 8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. time slot.
 - What is the opportunity cost of the choice you have made for Perdita? (*The opportunity cost is either swimming or arts and crafts, depending on the choice the class made.*) Record the opportunity cost in the Opportunity Cost column in the row corresponding to the 8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. time slot.
8. Show the students the card for the 9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m. time slot. Show them that “Soccer” is on one side of the card and “Hiking” is on the other side. Explain that for this time slot, Perdita can take either soccer or hiking, but she can’t take both. Have the students consider for a minute what they think Perdita should do.
9. Repeat the questions in Step 7 above. Substitute “Soccer” and “Hiking” for “Swimming” and “Arts and Crafts.”
10. Show students the card for the 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. time slot. Show them that “Softball” is on one side of the card and “Drama” is on the other side. Explain that for this time slot, Perdita can take either drama or softball, but she can’t take both. Have the students consider what they think Perdita should do.
11. Repeat the questions in Step 7 above. Substitute “Softball” and “Drama” for “Swimming” and “Arts and Crafts.”
12. Show the students the card for the 11:00 a.m.–noon time slot. Show them that “Pottery” is on one side of the card and “Cooking” is on the other side. Explain that

for this time slot, Perdita can do one or the other, but not both. Have the students consider what they think Perdita should do.

13. Repeat the questions in Step 7 above. Substitute “Pottery” and “Cooking” for “Swimming” and “Arts and Crafts.”
14. Divide the class into groups of six students for a new activity. Give each group one copy of *Handout 4: Juan’s After-School Schedule for Next Tuesday*. Review the directions for the activity with the students. Instruct them to take turns choosing from the two alternatives in each time slot. Each student should get a chance to choose what Juan should do in one of the time slots. If you have fewer than six students per group, one or more students will have to make a choice in more than one of the time slots. The name of the student who makes the choice in each time slot should be recorded in the first column. The student should circle his or her choice for Juan and put a line through the opportunity cost of that choice. Give the groups time to work on the activity.
 - Ask each group to report on its choices for Juan for each of the time slots. Display the groups’ after-school schedules for Juan on a bulletin board in your classroom.
15. Discuss the following:
 - In each time slot, how many alternatives did you have to choose between for Juan? (*Two*)
 - Did any of you find it difficult to make a choice for Juan? (*Answers will vary, but some of the students will say “yes.”*) Why? (*Both alternatives were likely something Juan [or the student] would want to do.*)
 - Why can’t Juan do everything that he wants to do? (*Time is scarce.*)
 - When you have more than one thing that you want to do, what happens? (*You have to make a choice or your parent(s) or other adult might make a choice for you.*)
 - In real life, do you often have more than two things you want to do at the same time? (*Most will likely say “yes.”*)

Closure

16. Review the important content in the lesson by asking the following questions:
 - What is a choice? (*A choice is a decision you make between two or more possibilities, or alternatives.*)
 - What are alternatives? (*Alternatives are the different possibilities you can choose from in a situation.*)

- What do you call the thing that you give up when you make a choice? (*Opportunity cost*)
- What do we call it when we can't have everything we want? (*Scarcity*)
- People make choices about how to use their time. What other choices do you make? (*Answers will vary but may include what to buy for lunch or what toy or game to buy.*)
- Why must you make these choices? (*You can't have everything you want.*)
- Why must people make choices about how to spend their time? (*We don't have enough time to do everything we would like to do.*)
- Why must people make choices about how to spend their money? (*We don't have enough money to buy all of the things we want.*)

Assessment

17. Distribute one copy of *Handout 5: Assessment* to each student. Review the instructions on page 1 with the students and explain that they should fill in the blanks on page 2. Allow time for the students to complete their work, or assign the activity as homework. Go over the answers below with the students.

Handout 5: Assessment—Answer Key

Page 1

Answers will vary for each student.

Page 2

1. What were Tillman's two alternatives? (*An ice cream cone and a cat toy*)
2. What did Tillman choose? (*An ice cream cone*)
3. What was the opportunity cost of Tillman's choice? (*The cat toy*)
4. *Scarcity* exists because we can't have everything we want.
5. Your *opportunity cost* is what you give up when you make a choice.
6. *Alternatives* are the different possibilities you can choose from in a situation.
7. A *choice* is a decision you make between two or more possibilities, or alternatives.

Visual 1: Key Concepts

- A **choice** is a decision you make between two or more possibilities, or alternatives.
- **Alternatives** are the different possibilities you can choose from in a situation.
- **Opportunity cost** is what you give up when you make a choice.
- **Scarcity** exists because we can't have everything we want.

Handout 1: Camp Schedule Decision Cards (page 1 of 4)

8:00 a.m.--9:00 a.m.

Swimming

8:00 a.m.--9:00 a.m.

Arts and Crafts

Handout 1: Camp Schedule Decision Cards (page 2 of 4)

9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

Soccer

9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

Hiking

Handout 1: Camp Schedule Decision Cards (page 3 of 4)

10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Drama

10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Softball

Handout 1: Camp Schedule Decision Cards (page 4 of 4)

11:00 a.m.—noon

Pottery

Cooking

11:00 a.m.—noon

Handout 2: Time Slot Cards (page 1 of 2)

8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

Handout 2: Time Slot Cards (page 2 of 2)

10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m.–noon

Handout 3: Column Heading Cards (page 1 of 2)

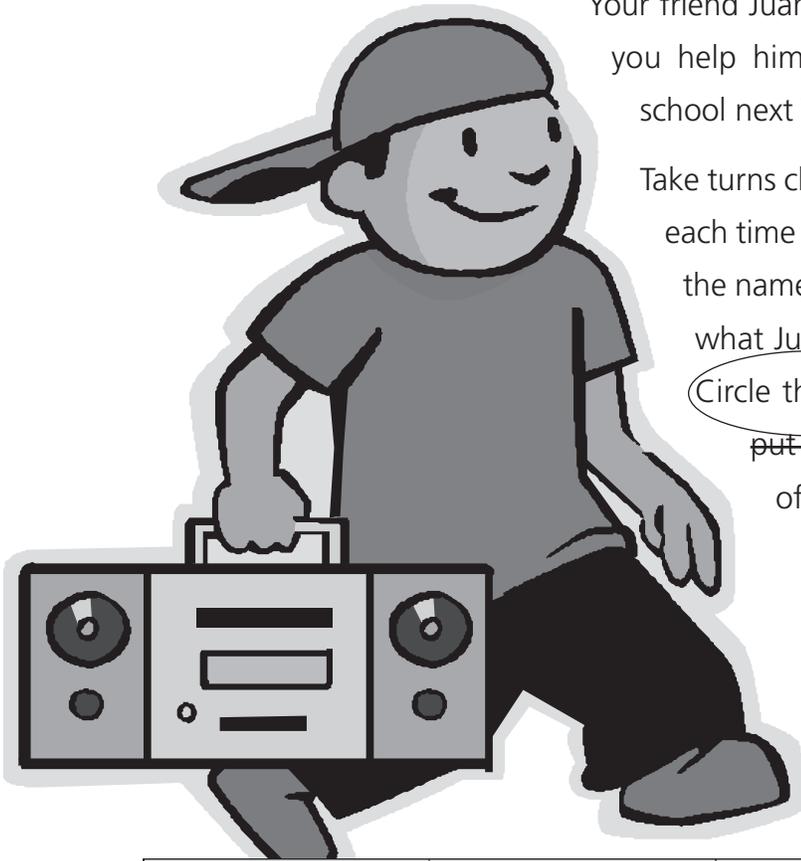
Time Slot

Choice

Handout 3: Column Heading Cards (page 2 of 2)

Opportunity Cost

Handout 4: Juan's After-School Schedule for Next Tuesday



Your friend Juan has asked you for some help. Can you help him decide what he should do after school next Tuesday?

Take turns choosing what Juan should do during each time slot on his Tuesday schedule. Record the name of the group member who decides what Juan will do in each of the time slots. Circle the activity you choose for Juan and put a line through the opportunity cost of that choice.

Juan's After-School Schedule for Next Tuesday

Which group member chose?	Time slot	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
	3:30–4:00 p.m.	Attend dance class	Play a board game
	4:00–4:30 p.m.	Play video games	Clean room
	4:30–5:00 p.m.	Walk the dog	Eat a snack
	5:00–5:30 p.m.	Practice the piano	Do homework
	5:30–6:00 p.m.	Play with friends	Talk on the phone
	6:00–6:30 p.m.	Go to karate class	Watch TV

Handout 5: Assessment (page 1 of 2)

Your friend Sarah has asked you for some help. Can you help her decide what she should do next Saturday morning?

Decide what Sarah should do during each time slot on Saturday morning.

Circle the activity you choose for Sarah and put a line through the opportunity cost of that choice.

**Sarah's Schedule for Next Saturday Morning**

Time slot	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
7:00–8:00 a.m.	Sleep	Clean her room
8:00–9:00 a.m.	Read a book	Watch TV
9:00–10:00 a.m.	Walk the dog	Go shopping with Mom or Dad
10:00–11:00 a.m.	Practice the violin	Do homework
11:00 p.m.–noon	Play with friends	Practice soccer

Handout 5: Assessment (page 2 of 2)

Directions: Read the paragraph in the box below. Answer the questions below the box by filling in the blanks.

Last Thursday night, Tillman had a problem when he went to Super-Store with Jacqueline. Tillman wanted to buy his cat, Mateo, a toy and buy himself an ice cream cone, but he didn't have enough money to do both. So, Tillman bought himself an ice cream cone.

1. What were Tillman's alternatives?
_____ and _____
2. What did Tillman choose? _____
3. What was the opportunity cost of Tillman's choice?

4. _____ exists because we can't have everything we want.
5. Your _____ is what you give up when you make a choice.
6. _____ are the different possibilities you can choose from in a situation.
7. A _____ is a decision you make between two or more possibilities, or alternatives.

Standards and Benchmarks

National Standards in Economics

Standard 1: Productive resources are limited. Therefore, people cannot have all the goods and services they want; as a result, they must choose some things and give up others.

- **Benchmark 1, Grade 4:** People make choices because they can't have everything they want.
- **Benchmark 4, Grade 4:** Whenever a choice is made, something is given up because resources are limited.
- **Benchmark 5, Grade 4:** The opportunity cost of a choice is the value of the best alternative that would have been chosen instead. It includes what would have been done with the money spend and the time and other resources used in undertaking the activity.

Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts, Grade 2

Reading: Literature

- **Key Ideas and Details**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.1: Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3: Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

- **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.7: Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.

- **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.10: By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grades 2–3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Speaking and Listening

- **Comprehension and Collaboration**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1a: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1b: Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.1c: Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.2: Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

- **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.4: Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.2.6: Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.