

# The Berenstain Bears Get the Gimmies

By Stan and Jan Berenstain / ISBN: 978-0-394-80566-5

---

## Lesson Author

Erin A. Yetter, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis—Louisville Branch

---

## Standards and Benchmarks (see page 10)

---

## Lesson Description

In this lesson, students hear a story about Brother and Sister Bear, who seem to want everything. The little cubs learn that they must make choices because they cannot have everything they want. Students follow along with the story by completing an activity listing all of the goods that will satisfy the cubs' wants. The students then take part in an activity to construct a word web and graphic organizer (table) to identify goods that will satisfy a want. They will make a choice, identify the problem of scarcity, and recognize their opportunity cost.

---

## Grade Level

3-4

---

## Concepts

Alternative  
Choice  
Good  
Opportunity cost  
Scarcity  
Want

---

## Objectives

Students should be able to

- define a want and explain that our wants are unlimited,
- define a good and explain that goods help us satisfy our wants,

- define scarcity and explain why we cannot have everything we want,
  - identify alternatives and explain how they help us make choices, and
  - define opportunity cost and recognize that when we make a choice, we are giving up something else.
- 

## Time Required

Approximately 60 minutes

---

## Materials

- *The Berenstain Bears Get the Gimmies* by Stan and Jan Berenstain (ISBN: 978-0-394-80566-5)
  - Visual 1
  - Handout 1, copied and cut into cards so there is one card for each pair of students (There are 10 cards per sheet.)
  - Handout 2, one copy for each student
  - A sheet of paper for each pair of students
- 

## Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by telling the students you are thirsty and want something to drink. Ask the class how you can satisfy this want. List the different types of drinks they name on the board.
2. Write the word **want** on the board. Explain that a want is a desire that can be satisfied by consuming a good or a service. Ask the class "What was my want?" (*Something to drink*)
3. Write the word **good** on the board. Explain that a good is an object that satisfies a person's wants. Ask the class "What good could satisfy my want?" (*Any of the drinks named*)
4. Tell the students they are going to hear a story about two little bears that had several wants. Read the story *The Berenstain Bears Get the Gimmies* once with the students just listening to the story.
5. After the story, list the following on the board and ask the students to listen for the listed wants when you read the story again:

**Wants**

Candy  
 Entertainment  
 Toys  
 Presents  
 Rewards for good behavior

6. Read the story again.
7. After the story, write the column heading "Goods" to the right of "Wants" on the board. Ask students to name the goods in the story that satisfied each want and write them on the board. Answers are as follows:

<b>Wants</b>	<b>Goods</b>
Candy	<i>Gummy Gumballs, Chewy Chompers</i>
Entertainment	<i>Ride on the Bucking Frog</i>
Toys	<i>Rubber cat toy</i>
Presents	<i>Puzzle, top</i>
Rewards for good behavior	<i>Book about dinosaurs, box of crayons</i>

8. Divide students into pairs. Give each pair a sheet of paper and a card from *Handout 1: Want Cards*. Display *Visual 1: Making a Word Web*.
9. Instruct the pairs to do the following, allowing time for students to complete each step before moving to the next:
  - Draw a circle in the center of the paper and write the want on their card in the circle. (Point to Step 1 on Visual 1 as an example.)
  - Around the circle, write examples of goods that could satisfy the want. (Point to Step 2 on Visual 1 as an example.)
  - Connect the goods to the want, making a word web. (Point to Step 3 on Visual 1 as an example.)
  - Share the completed word web with the class.
10. Ask students if they can have everything they want? (*No*). Why not? (*There is not enough time, money, or goods.*) Tell students that this problem is called **scarcity**. Scarcity means we can't have everything we want. Write the word scarcity on the board.
11. Read the following scenarios and questions regarding scarcity to the students:

- Stella has one hour of free time before dinner to either watch TV or play outside with friends.
    1. What is Stella's problem? (*She has only one hour of free time.*)
    2. What is scarce? (*Time*)
  - Malaki has one piece of paper to use for a craft project. He wants to either make a paper airplane or draw a picture for his mother.
    1. What is Malaki's problem? (*He has only one piece of paper.*)
    2. What is scarce? (*Paper*)
12. Tell the students that because their wants are unlimited they have to make **choices**. Write the word choice on the board. Define the word choice as a decision made between two or more alternatives. Tell the students that an **alternative** is a possible choice you can make. Write the word alternative on the board.
13. Read the following scenarios and questions about alternatives to the students:
- Stella has one hour of free time before dinner to either watch TV or play outside with friends.
    1. What are Stella's alternatives? (*She can watch TV or play outside with friends.*)
    2. What should Stella choose? (*Either alternative is fine.*)
  - Malaki has one piece of paper to use for a craft project. He wants to either make a paper airplane or draw a picture for his mother.
    1. What are Malaki's alternatives? (*Malaki can make a paper airplane or draw a picture for his mother.*)
    2. What should Malaki choose? (*Either alternative is fine.*)
14. Return to the word webs the students made. Tell students they can't have all the goods they listed to satisfy their want because of scarcity. Explain that the goods listed represent their alternatives. Tell them they must make a choice among the many alternatives; they will have to choose one good to satisfy their want. Instruct the pairs to review their alternatives and choose one alternative as their first choice and another alternative as their second choice.
15. Have pairs turn their webs over and make a graphic organizer (table) with the following headings:

Want	First choice	Second choice
------	--------------	---------------

Instruct the pairs to write their want in the first column and their first and second choices in the other columns.

16. Call on some student pairs to provide their first and second choices. Record their answers on the board by creating a graphic organizer (table) like this one:

Partners	Want	First choice	Second choice
Ting and George	Dessert	Ice cream	Cake
Sarah and Jose	Vacation	Disney World	The beach

17. Once several responses are listed on the board, erase the heading "Second choice" and write the word "Cost." Ask the class why you relabeled the third column "Cost"? (*In order to get your first choice, you have to give up your second choice.*)
18. Add the word "Opportunity" before the "Cost" in the title of the third column of the table so that it looks like this:
- Opportunity Cost**  
Cake  
The beach
19. Tell the students that **opportunity cost** is whatever must be given up in order to obtain something else. In other words, it is your second choice.
20. Using examples from the board, point out some of the student pairs' actual opportunity costs. (For example, "The opportunity cost of Ting and George choosing ice cream for dessert was the cake.") Then, call on individual students and ask them what the opportunity cost is for a given pair of students on the board. (For example, "What is Sarah and Jose's opportunity cost for the vacation to Disney World?" [*A vacation to the beach.*])
- 

## Closure

21. Review the important points in the lesson by discussing the following:
- What do you call a desire or wish to have something? (*A want*)
  - What do we use to satisfy our wants? (*Goods*)
  - Because resources are scarce, what must we do? (*We have to decide what we want; we must make choices.*)
  - When you choose one thing over another, what is given up is a cost to you. What is this type of cost called? (*Opportunity cost*)

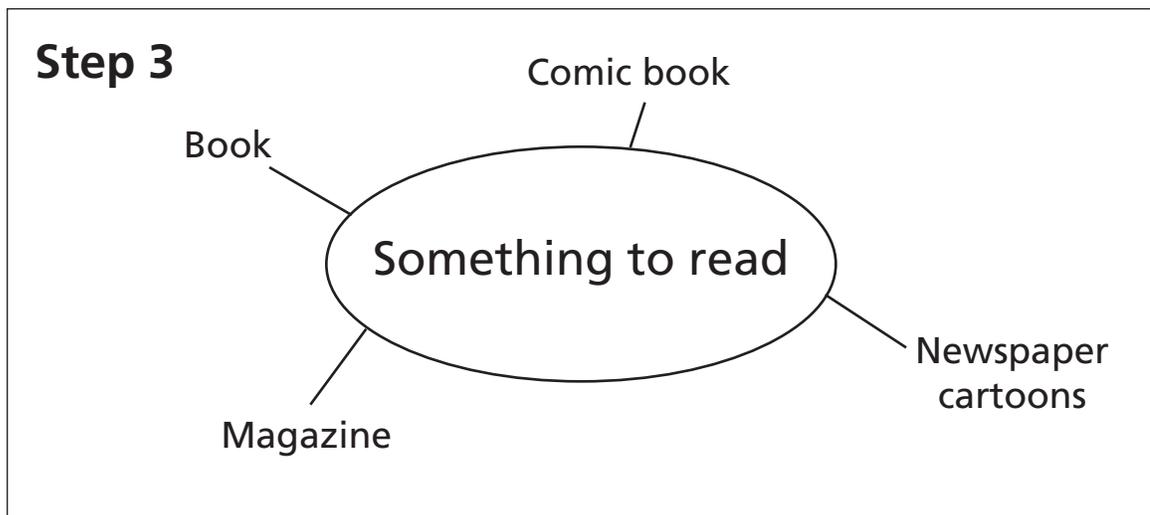
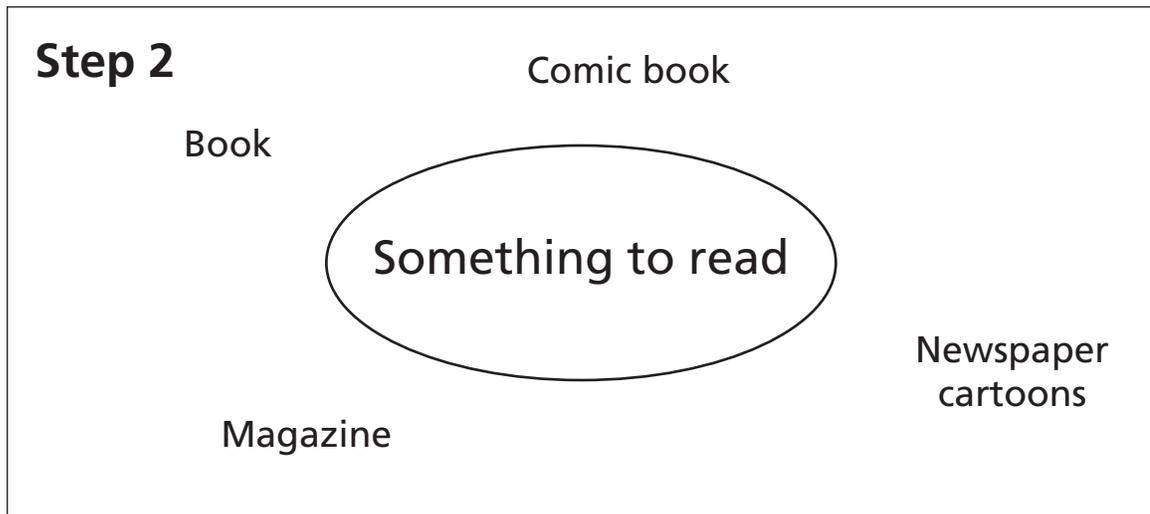
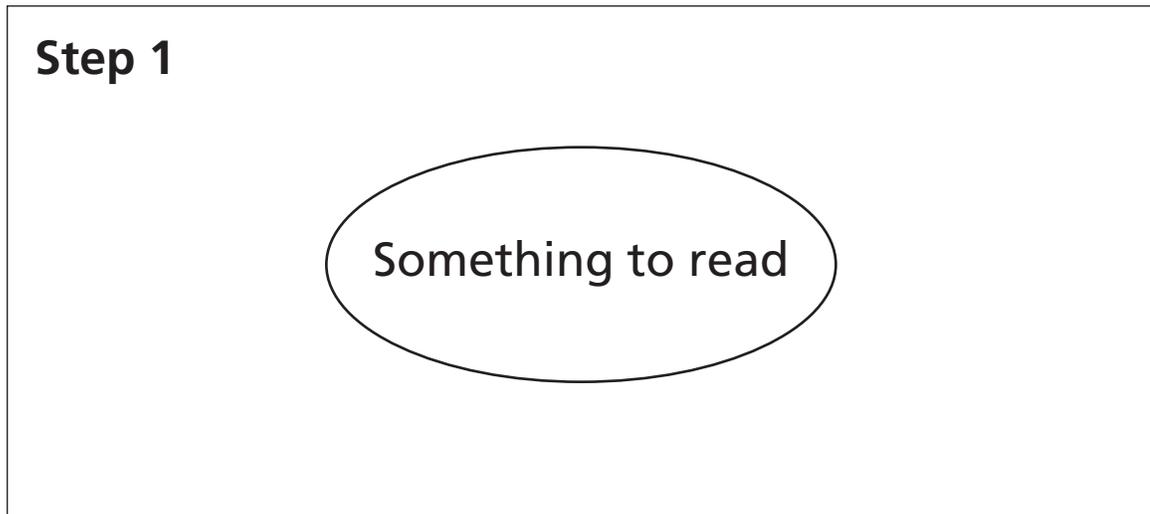
**Assessment**

22. Distribute copies of *Handout 2: Assessment* to each student. Instruct the students to circle the picture that correctly answers each question. Once completed, call on students to share their answers to ensure their understanding of the lesson concepts.

**Handout 2: Assessment—Answer Key**

1. Banana
2. Slippers
- 3a. Ingredients
- 3b. Pie

Visual 1: Making a Word Web



## Handout 1: Want Cards

<b>Dessert</b>	<b>Vacation</b>
<b>Pet</b>	<b>Game</b>
<b>Toy</b>	<b>Shoes</b>
<b>Clothing</b>	<b>Entertainment</b>
<b>Drink</b>	<b>Food</b>

## Handout 2: Assessment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Based on the prompt provided, circle the picture of the correct answer.

1. Mary is hungry. Which good can satisfy her want?



2. Tom's feet are cold. Which good can satisfy his want?



- 3a. Jada and her mother want to make a dessert. They have only enough ingredients to make either a cake or a pie. Which picture shows their scarcity problem?



- 3b. If Jada and her mother choose to make a cake, what is their opportunity cost?



## 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 2, Grade 4:** Economic wants are desires that can be satisfied by consuming a good (an object), a service (an action), or a leisure activity.
- **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 an activity is the value of the best alternative that would have been chosen instead. It includes what would have been done with the money spent and the time and other resources used in undertaking the activity.

**Standard 2:** Effective decision making requires comparing the additional costs of alternatives with the additional benefits. Many choices involve doing a little more or a little less of something: few choices are "all or nothing" decisions.

- **Benchmark 1, Grade 4:** Choices involve getting more of one thing by giving up something else.

### 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.

#### Speaking & Listening

- **Comprehension and Collaboration**

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.