



Lesson 3: Weighing Needs and Wants

TOPIC: Needs and Wants

Time:
45 minutes

Supplies:

- Chart paper, markers, pencils
- Projector (for teacher presentation slides)
- Stuffed animal and play objects for animal's wants and needs (optional)
- Access to the Internet (optional)
- Suggested books (optional):
 - *Lily Learns About Wants and Needs* by Lisa Bullard (Pre-K–2)
 - *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff (grades 1–2)
 - *Bunny Money* by Rosemary Wells (Pre-K–2)
 - *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn
 - *Almost Zero* by Nikki Grimes

Preparation:

- Make copies of student handout
- Set up projector with presentation slides

Glossary with key vocabulary 10

OVERVIEW:

Dig into the difference between **needs and wants** in this lesson with engaging storybooks and math activities. Students will think critically to differentiate between and prioritize needs and wants as they sort, craft mini-books, and collaborate on class games. A variety of independent and small group activities are provided to extend students' exploration of needs and wants throughout the school year.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Define needs and wants
2. Differentiate between needs and wants
3. Compare and prioritize needs and wants

HANDOUTS:

- Needs and Wants
- My Needs and Wants Mini-Book

TEACHER PRESENTATION SLIDES:

- Definitions: Needs and Wants
- Chart: Needs and Wants
- Story Problems: Weighing Needs and Wants

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- What are needs and wants?
- How do I choose between my needs and wants?

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES:

Pre-Assessment:

- **Activity:** What Are Needs and Wants?

Post-Assessment:

- **Handout:** Needs and Wants
- **Handout:** My Needs and Wants Mini-Book
- **Story Problems:** Weighing Needs and Wants slide
- **Activity:** Class Reflection

TEACHER TIPS:

- Look for grade level modifications throughout this lesson for ways to adapt activities for your students.
- Focus on the concept of needs and wants. Connect this concept to daily classroom activities. Give students time to practice prioritizing needs and wants.
- Make time to explore the literature and technology resources mentioned in the guided and extended exploration sections

Instruction Steps

WARM UP

What Are Needs and Wants?

10 MINUTES

DEFINITIONS: Needs and Wants 10

Needs are something you must have in order to live a healthy life.



Shelter Food Water Clothes

Wants are something you would like to have but could live without.



Ice Cream Toys Candy Video Games

Money Smart for Young People Grades Pre-K–2

CHART: Needs and Wants 11

Things We NEED for Our Classroom	Things We WANT for Our Classroom
Pencils Paper	Markers Stickers

Money Smart for Young People Grades Pre-K–2

Begin by sharing the Definitions: **Needs and Wants**, and **Chart: Needs and Wants** slides. Read the definition of a need and want and look at the example items in each category. Use the slides to create a class chart or, alternatively, create a T-Chart on poster or chart paper.

As a class, title one side “Things we need for our classroom” (for example: pencils, paper, desks), and title the other side “Things we want for our classroom” (for example: markers, stickers, toys).

Share with students that a need is something we must have to successfully complete our school day. A want is something that would be nice to have. Ask students to look around the room and see if they can spy one item that would fit into each category. Record students’ responses on the chart.

MONEY SMART TIP!

After discussing classroom needs and wants, it can be helpful to discuss with students strategies for making sure everyone has the supplies he or she needs and that classroom materials are well cared for.

GUIDED EXPLORATION

The Difference Between Needs and Wants

20 MINUTES

Facilitate a deeper discussion about needs and wants through the exploration of picture books. Begin by introducing a related story. Two possible selections include: *Lily Learns About Wants and Needs* by Lisa Bullard (**Pre-K–2**) and *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Numeroff (**Grades 1–2**).

After introducing the book selection, ask students to guess or predict what the main characters may need in the story and what they want.



Ask students whether it is always possible to get what we want. Share that sometimes we may need to choose between our needs and wants, or even choose between two things we want. Discuss as a group what choices the characters in the story made. As a whole class, reflect on three items the main character in the story wanted.

Ask students:

- *How would you decide between the choices if you were the main character?*
- *Which would be your first, second, or third choice?*
- *What affected your choices and prioritization?*

After discussing the story, have students practice sorting needs by completing the **Needs and Wants** handout or by playing a Pet Needs Classification game. To play the game, choose a pretend pet and have students identify and sort possible needs and wants for the animal.

Grade Level Modifications:

Pre-K–K: For the handout, students may match each item to needs or wants as a whole group and then color the activity sheet.

For the game, provide students with a stuffed animal and play objects representing needs and wants (blanket, food bowl, treats, toys, etc.). Have students sort the objects into needs and wants.

Grades 1–2: For the handout, students may extend the activity sheet by numbering the three wants pictured to assign their personal rank.

For the game, break students into small groups and provide each group with an image of a type of pet. Have them brainstorm and draw possible needs and wants.

Prioritizing Needs and Wants

10 MINUTES

Ask students to imagine someone who is going shopping for school supplies. **Ask:**

- *What items might she need to buy?*
- *What things might she want but not need for school?*

Discuss how a student might make choices on the shopping trip.

Introduce the **My Needs and Wants Mini-Book** handout. Read the mini-book pages aloud and model how to complete each page and assemble the book.

Grade Level Modifications:

Pre-K–K: Assist children by cutting out the pages of their books beforehand and then assembling their books for them. They may draw or paste pictures on pages instead of writing. Students may complete the **My Needs and Wants Mini-Book** by using stickers or magazine images or drawing pictures of items they need and want instead of writing the words. The mini-book can also be



completed as a whole class at circle time, modeling reading the pages, coloring needs, and circling wants, and creating a list of class wants and needs. Individual copies can then be sent home for families to create.

Grades 1–2: Students may add an estimated cost for the items they choose as needs and wants. After completing their book, they may read them together in pairs.

WRAP UP Class Reflection

5 MINUTES

Ask students: *What are needs and wants? How do you choose between things you need and want?* Invite them to share their responses. Check for understanding and possibly introduce free exploration centers for exploring the topic further.

Extended Exploration

Note: Use the following activities to extend the lesson topic throughout the year. Activities can be completed as a class, in small groups, or during center time. Duration of activities will vary.

LITERACY CENTER

Possible Book Selections:

Note: Read books with your class that focus on the lesson’s financial literacy topic. Below are suggestions, but you may find other selections in your library that can be used to generate a similar discussion. For pre-literate students, read books aloud or have students do a picture walk – examining imagery and detail to preview the story before introducing text.

- **Pre-K–K:** *Bunny Money* by Rosemary Wells: Max and Ruby are on a mission to find the best birthday present for their grandma. But, when emergencies arise, they have to spend their carefully saved money.

Discussion Questions: *Do Max and Ruby need to buy their grandma a birthday present? List some of the items Max and Ruby needed to buy and some things they wanted to buy. If you didn’t have any money to buy a present, what could you do instead?*

- *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn: Sam is now old enough to spend his lucky Chinese New Year money any way he wants, but Sam doesn’t have enough money. Sam learns lessons in making choices and spending money, and discovers that there are some things money can’t buy.

Discussion Questions: *What would you buy if you were given an envelope full of money? Have you ever had a money gift and had to choose how to spend it? What would you most want to buy? What is one thing you think you would need to buy?*



- *Almost Zero* by Nikki Grimes: Dyamonde is a little girl who really wants a pair of red high-top sneakers, but they are so expensive! Dyamonde’s mom teaches her all about wants, needs, and making wise money choices.

Discussion Questions: Have you ever wanted something as much as Dyamonde wants her red sneakers? How do you choose between a want and a need?

Speaking, Listening, and Writing Prompts:

Explore the following prompts through a themed show-and-tell, circle time discussions, partner pair-share discussions, or writing.

Grade Level Modifications:

Pre-K–K: Provide students with a visual or real-world object to support exploration of the prompt. Pre-literate students may discuss pictures and objects while having their stories recorded through modeled or guided writing as a small group or with the class.

Topics: *What is something you need for your classroom or room at home? What is something you want for your classroom or room at home?*

Grades 1–2: Students may explore the following writing prompts by journaling or as independent writing assignments.

Topics: *What are three things you want and three things you need? If you can only get one of the items you want, how will you decide which to choose?*

MATH CENTER

Math Station:

Using the materials below, students can explore the following math station activities independently or as part of a small group. These could be used during classroom centers or as a choice for students who finish assignments early.

Grade Level Modifications:

Pre-K–K: Materials: Two large bags (one labeled “Needs,” one labeled “Wants”), a large box of items (that can be found in the classroom such as crayons, stuffed animals, milk carton, etc.) or images to represent needs and wants, words, or sentence frames.

Instructions: Have students sort objects into two piles: one for needs and one for wants. Place the bags and items for sorting out. The children will rummage through the box and place needs in the “Needs” bag and wants in the “Wants” bag. To develop early writing skills, the students may trace or copy the name of a need and a want, or a simple sentence, and turn it in to show they have completed the task.



Grades 1–2: Materials: Poster board or large paper, glue, markers, scissors, and magazines.

Instructions: Have students draw a line down the middle of their papers. On one side have them write “Needs” and on the other have them write “Wants.” Children will cut out and glue pictures of needs and wants on their posters.

At the bottom of their poster, have students create a number sentence ____Needs + ____Wants = ____Total.

STORY PROBLEMS:
Weighing Needs and Wants

12

CHALLENGE 1

Liam has \$5 to spend. He *needs* to buy lunch for school but *wants* a toy car.

a) Draw a picture of the thing Liam needs, and write the word “needs” under the picture.
b) Draw a picture of the thing Liam wants, and write the word “wants” under the picture.
c) Liam wants to buy lunch for school. Lunch costs \$3 and the toy car costs \$2. Is Liam going to have enough money for lunch and the toy car?

Money Smart for Young People • Grades Pre-K – 2

Story Problems:

Display the **Story Problems: Weighing Needs and Wants** slide. Problems can be printed or projected then explored and solved as a whole class, a small collaborative group, or individually. The first problem listed, Challenge 1, is more appropriate for young students. Challenge 2 will provide more difficulty.

Grade Level Modifications:

Pre-K–K: Solve step-by-step problems developing students’ critical thinking and deductive reasoning during circle time or as a small group. Each challenge involves using or creating a visual with students and discussing small steps to solve a problem. Students may use play money to act out the math problem as they solve it.

Grades 1–2: Provide physical objects (that can be found in the classroom, such as crayons, stuffed animals, milk carton, etc.) and play money for students to act out the math challenge. Using the provided challenges as inspiration, create personal story problems and exchange them with classmates to solve.

TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Games and Online Activities:

- **3-2-1 Snack!** Everyone needs to eat. Help cat get his snacks by finding the right amount of food and counting some crazy chickens. The game can be used to reinforce the concept of needs as well as basic counting and number skills. Set up the game and have learners rotate through the station in teams of two.

<http://pbskids.org/peg/games/3-2-1-snack>

SOCIAL STUDIES CENTER

A class store can be created to sell items at the school or can be organized for students within the class to shop with class tokens, tickets, or other classroom currency.

When preparing to celebrate holidays and birthdays, students can discuss needs and wants while exploring thoughts in the decision-making process.

ARTS & DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER

Dramatic Play:

Students can explore needs and wants through a range of dramatic play themes such as a grocery store or shopping center.

Art Project:

Provide grocery store advertisements for students to circle needs and highlight wants.





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NEEDS AND WANTS

Name: _____

Fido has a list of things he needs and wants. Help him choose what is a need and what is a want. Draw a line from each item to the correct box.

The thought bubble contains the following items:

- FOOD (bag)
- WATER (bowl)
- TREAT (bone)
- Collar
- Ball of twine
- Ball of bones

Below the dog are two boxes:

- NEEDS
- WANTS



Lesson 3: Weighting Needs and Wants

MY NEEDS AND WANTS MINI-BOOK

Name: _____

Color and cut out the pages along the dotted lines, then fold them to make your mini-book. Write or draw pictures of your answers on each page.



MY NEEDS AND WANTS

Mini-Book

BY

1

Making Sense of Needs and Wants



4





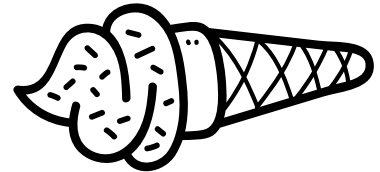
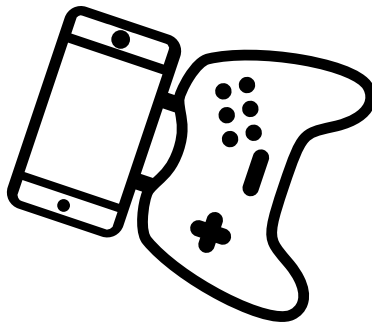
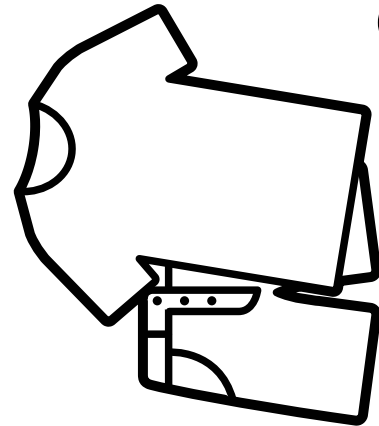
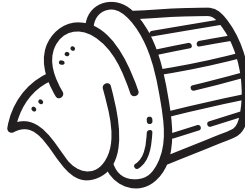
Lesson 3: Weighting Needs and Wants

MY NEEDS AND WANTS MINI-BOOK CONTINUED

Color and cut out the pages along the dotted lines, then fold them to make your mini-book. Write or draw pictures of your answers on each page.



Color in the needs.
Circle one want.



3

I need...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I want...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2



Lesson 3: Weighting Needs and Wants

NEEDS AND WANTS

Answer Key

Name: _____

Fido has a list of things he needs and wants. Help him choose what is a need and what is a want. Draw a line from each item to the correct box.

FOOD

WATER

TREAT

NEEDS

WANTS

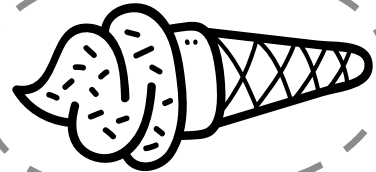
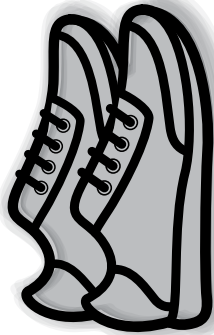
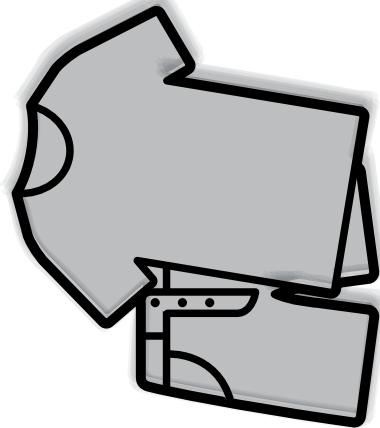
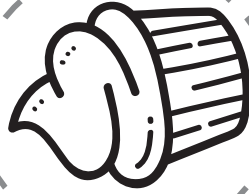
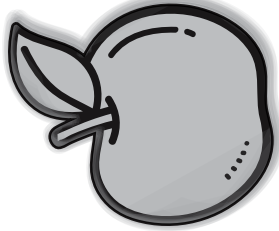


MY NEEDS AND WANTS MINI-BOOK

Color and cut out the pages along the dotted lines, then fold them to make your mini-book. Write or draw pictures of your answers on each page.



Color in the needs.
Circle one want.



3

I need...

I want...

1.

2.

3.

1.

2.

3.

2