



POWELL CENTER FOR
ECONOMIC LITERACY

Lesson Plan

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Last Modified: April 17, 2007

Beatrice's Goat

Time Required

15 Minutes

Grade Level and Subject

Primary Grades; Children's Literature

Keystone Principles

Principle # 8 – Quantity and Quality of Resources Impact Living Standards

Economic Concepts

Giving - *disposing of property by voluntary transfer without receiving monetary value in return.*

Human Resources – *The health, education, experience, training, skills and values off people.*

Income – *Payments earned by households for selling their productive resources. It may include salaries, wages, interest and dividends.*

Investing – *Putting resources into an enterprise with the hope of future gain (often financial).*

Multiplier Effect – *Broadly defined (and as used in this story) it refers to an increase in resources which, having a ripple effect, causes multiple levels of increase in other resources.*

Natural Resources – *The gifts of nature that can be used to produce goods and services.*

Saving – *Money set aside for future use that is easily accessed and fairly stable (such as checking or savings accounts, or certificates of deposit).*

Spending – *The consumption of goods and services.*

Keystone Principle

Principle #8 – The Quantity and Quality of Resources Impact Living Standards.

To a lesser extent, other principles are embedded in the story as follows:

- Principle #2, TANSTAAFL (There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch)
- Principle #5, Incentives produce “predictable” responses.

Overview

Beatrice's Goat is the true story of a young Ugandan girl and her family whose lives are impacted by the gift of a female goat from Heifer International. When Beatrice's mother entrusts the goat's care to her, she learns it can provide milk for both the family's own consumption and for sale to the community. The value of the gift is multiplied as the goat bears two offspring. Beatrice carefully saves the money she earns from selling the goat's milk until it is enough to realize her long-held dream of attending school.

According to the book's *Afterword* by Hillary Clinton, “It is a heartwarming reminder that families, wherever they live, can change their lives for the better. To do it, they need three things: resources, training, and community support.” The book illustrates how the gift of just one additional resource is multiplied by a family's hard work, and provides much-needed nutrition and a new source of income.

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify capital and human resources.
- Students will understand how living standards can improve by increasing capital resources and/or improving human resources.
- Students will realize that they can be instrumental in helping others to improve their living standards

Materials and Handouts

- *Beatrice's Goat* by Page McBrier, Aladdin Paperbacks, 2001
- Handout #1, “Capital and Human Resources”
- Handout #2, “How A New Resource Can Raise Living Standards”

Teaching Activity

1. Review/teach the above concepts.
2. Using the handout, have students list the natural resources they find in the story. *The goat, the two kids, chickens, the [cassava plants](#), the stream, banana trees, elephant grass, pigeon trees, lab lab vines, goat's milk.*
3. Using the handout, have students list the human resources they find in the story. *Beatrice, her mother, the school teacher, Beatrice's friend Bunane.*
4. Money is scarce for Beatrice's family. Ask students to identify what sorts of non-monetary investment Beatrice's family makes in the goat. *They invest their time, energy, and their natural resources to keep their livestock healthy and help them grow.*
5. Complete Handout #2 with the students. Ask the students to list the ways the goats help the family?
 - *Mugisa, the mother goat, improved the family's nutrition by providing goat's milk for the family. She also helped them generate income by producing enough milk to sell and birthing two kids. One of the kids could be sold for*

money to buy a new house with a steel roof that won't leak during the rains.

- How was Beatrice able to go to school? *She saved what she earned from the sale of the goat's milk.* Ask students to imagine what else she could have done with the money instead of saving it. *Answers will vary depending on the student's imaginations.* Did she make a wise choice? When she decided to save the money, did she know it would enable her to go to school? *No, she thought she was saving to buy a new shirt for Moses and a warm blanket for her bed.*
 - Have the students think about how the whole family might benefit from Beatrice's opportunity to go to school and learn to read and "figure sums".
6. Very few countries in Africa offer 'free' public education. Discuss with students the opportunities their own education affords them. Is education in the US really "free"? *No. Private education is paid by the individuals receiving the education and public education is paid by people's taxes.*
 7. Ask the students how Beatrice's family was able to obtain their new goat. *"Kindhearted" people in another land gave money to Heifer International, which used the money to buy a goat to give to a family in need.*
 8. Ask students why they think some people are willing to give money away. How would they feel if they could help a family in this way? *Discuss how important it is to be as wise in our giving as it is in our spending, saving and investing.*
 9. Introduce the [Heifer International](#) organization and share how they work toward giving people self-reliance and dignity instead of dependence. We talk in our class about how great we feel when we generate our own income from our classroom business and that other people would love to have the opportunity to provide for their needs and wants as well.
 10. List some of the needs and wants that Beatrice and her family have before the goat arrives and discuss how the goat is able to generate income – *milk to sell and baby goats to sell.*
 11. Identify what Beatrice's family is able to do with the income from the goat. Discuss why giving the money for the goat has more impact than just giving money. *In economic terms we talk about the multiplier effect – like a stone thrown in water, the ripples grow and spread outward. In this case, the family's living standard grows by having the goat with its attendant milk, offspring, and perhaps meat. It directly leads to Beatrice being able to go to school, and her education will undoubtedly have its own multiplier effect and further improve the family's living standard.*

Additional Ideas

1. If you have a classroom economy, ask if there is a parent or community donor who would be willing to match the classroom money that your students are willing to donate toward an organization that helps empower people to be self-reliant like the Heifer International or [World Vision](#).
2. Ask your students if they would like to form a class business and donate the proceeds to a charitable organization that could help someone the way that Beatrice's family was helped. (There are [several](#) Powell lesson plans that will help you set up a school business.)
3. Research charitable organizations in your own community that are working to help people become self-sufficient.

BEATRICE'S GOAT
Human and Capital Resources

Human Resources	Capital Resources

BEATRICE'S GOAT

How a New Resource Can Raise Living Standards

List the benefits Mugisa brought to the family	What was the impact on the family?