



POWELL CENTER FOR  
ECONOMIC LITERACY

*Lesson Plan*

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## Little Nino's Pizzeria: Making Decisions

### Time Required

15 Minutes

### Grade Level and Subject

Primary Grades; Children's Literature

### Keystone Principle

Principle #1 – We All Make Choices

Principle #2 – There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch

Principle #3 – All Choices Have Consequences

### Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics

Standard #1 - [Scarcity](#)

Standard #2 – [Marginal Cost/Benefit](#)

Standard #4 – [Role of Incentives](#)

Standard #14 – [Profit and the Entrepreneur](#)

### Economic Concepts

**Choice** – *What someone must make when faced with two or more alternative uses of a resource.*

**Consequences** – *The results of our actions, whether positive or negative.*

**Consumer** – *People who satisfy their wants by using goods and services.*

**Cost** – *Something that is given up in exchange for something else being received.*

**Goods** – *Something people want that you can touch and hold.*

**Producer** – *People who make goods or provide services.*

**Profit** – *Money left over from selling goods after the costs of making them and getting them to market have been subtracted.*

**Services** – *Something that one person does for someone else.*

## Overview

This lesson was developed as a complement to the book *Little Nino's Pizzeria* by Karen Barbour. It is the story of a young boy who helps in his father's pizza business, and describes the different tasks involved in running the business. As the store opens in a larger location and expands its business, Nino and his son, Tony, find they miss the personal touch of the smaller store. The lesson focuses on using the economic concepts of choice, cost and consequence to make decisions. A companion lesson has been developed to focus on the way in which improving the quality and quantity of our resources fosters increased production. This lesson asks students to consider how decisions are reached based on the difference between costs and benefits.

## Objectives

- Students will begin to evaluate benefits and costs.
- Students will begin to make decisions by weighing costs and benefits.
- Students will understand that businesses can grow by identifying and meeting consumers' wants.

## Materials and Handouts

- *Little Nino's Pizzeria* by Karen Barbour. Harcourt Brace & Company, c. 1987
- Handout – Decision Grid

## Teaching Activity

1. Ask students to identify the producers in this story. (*Nino and his son*) Who are the consumers? (*the customers*) How do we know the consumers like the pizza Nino makes? (*They are willing to wait in long lines.*)
2. Explain to the students the economic definition of profit.
3. Ask the following questions:
  - How does Nino earn a profit? (*He charges more money for his pizza than he spends to produce it.*)
  - What are some of the costs to Nino of operating his pizzeria? (*possible answers – pizza ingredients, equipment, drinks, rent, phone bill, electric bill, taxes, wages for people to work there*)
  - What does Nino do with his profits? (*He takes care of his family, provides food for the homeless people in the alley, buys a bigger restaurant, and hires wait staff.*)
4. Ask students why they think Nino decided to close his small Pizzeria and open a bigger one. (*Nino says he wants to make more money. Might there be other reasons?*) Who is happy that Nino opened a bigger restaurant? (*his customers*) Besides Nino and Tony, who is unhappy about this

decision? (*the homeless people he fed*)

5. Show the students how to make a decision grid or to use a decision apron if you have one. Use Nino's decision to open a bigger restaurant to illustrate the decision grid.
6. Ask the class what changed for Tony after the new restaurant opened? (*His help was no longer needed.*) What changed for Nino? (*There was too much paperwork and he missed the pleasure of making the pizza himself.*) Explain that these results are called consequences. Ask the students whether they think the consequences could have been foreseen.
7. Ask the class to imagine they are Nino. Make a new decision grid to help him decide what to do by asking the following questions:
  - What did Nino and Tony like about their small pizzeria? These are the benefits. *Nino enjoyed the food preparation and was proud that he could make good pizza that people liked; Tony liked working with his father, he felt useful, he enjoyed feeding the homeless people.*
  - What did they dislike about their small pizzeria? These are the costs. *Nino did not make as much money as he would like.*
  - What did they like about their big pizzeria? (Benefits) *Nino could make more money*
  - What did they dislike about the big pizzeria? (Costs) *Nino was tired of paperwork and talking about money. He missed having Tony for his helper. Nino was too busy to enjoy his new restaurant.*
  - Ask the students if they would have made the same decision Nino did.
8. Explain to the students that costs are not always about money. In this situation, the joy of creating a good product and working with family was far more important than having more money.
9. Ask the students why they think Nino renamed his pizzeria. (*Answers will vary.*)

Defining the Problem: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Little Nino's Pizzeria

Big Nino's Restaurant

Benefits	Costs	Benefits	Costs

My Decision: \_\_\_\_\_