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SST 309 – 01

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Economic Mysteries – Activity 9

Part 1:

The 25 students in room 103 are a great group. They cooperate with Ms. Jackson, their teacher, they never run in the halls, and they treat one another with courtesy. Conscious of the environment, they recycle all their paper.

Four weeks ago, when the drinking foundation for the class went haywire, Ms. Jackson provided plastic cups so that her students could get drinks of water from the nearby restroom. Since then, on average, the students have been using 200 plastic cups per week!

Why would a class of 25 environmentally friend kids use up so many plastic cups?

True or False:

1. Ms. Jackson's class learned how to do a magic trick: making plastic cups disappear FALSE – They instead just used the cups
2. The students in Room 103 are thoughtless about the environment FALSE – It states that they were conscious
3. The students owned the cups Ms. Jackson bought FALSE – They were given by her
4. Owning things is like a reward TRUE
5. Ms. Jackson's cups were "free" to the students TRUE

Solution

The problem with the drinking fountain was a big dilemma. Ms. Jackson had to make a choice to have students use plastic cups. By choosing to have the students use the plastic cups, she was refusing to have them use the drinking fountain. In order for her students to start to conserve the amount of plastic cups they use, she may want to involve some incentives. She can ask students to conserve the plastic cup they use, and continue to use the same cup throughout the day. This would drop the number down to 125 plastic cups a week. This will lower the cost and the amount of waste. She can highlight that these are resources not to waste, and keep rules in the classroom to remind other classmates to keep their cup throughout the day.

Part 2:

Grand Valley provides a great service by running buses between the Allendale campus and the Pew campus downtown. These buses run every 5 minutes and take about 40 minutes to travel between the locations. It takes a while to wait for a bus that has an open seat so you are not guaranteed to get a seat on the first or second or even third bus. This being said, students could wait outside for a bus for up to 20 minutes in the cold.

Abbey has all of her business classes located at the downtown Pew campus. In order to reserve a spot on the bus and to get downtown in time, she must leave at least an hour in advance. However, if she takes her car downtown, she can get there in 30 minute. This requires her to spend money on gas. By driving her car, she cuts an hour of drive total there and back. However, on the bus she can study for class.

Focus Question: *Is it worth it for Abbey to drive downtown to class?*

Hand Dandy Guide

1. People choose to do the things they think are best for them.
2. People's choices have costs.
3. People choose to do things for which they are rewarded.
4. People create rules that affect our choices and how we act.
5. People gain when we they freely decide to trade with one another.
6. People's choices today have future results.

True and False Clues

1. Abbey is required to drive downtown. (False)
2. It costs Abbey less money to take the bus. (True)
3. Grand Valley State University does not want Abbey to driver her car. (False)
4. Doing homework while driving a car is okay to do. (False)
5. It is more efficient to take the bus. (True)
6. Waiting for the bus is very short. (False).

The Solution

Abbey weighs her options for driving her car or riding the bus to class. She realizes the different choices she must make and the costs that are involved. Seats on the bus are limited and are scarce. However, economically, she must use more money by traveling by car. Therefore, the most economically responsible thing to do she realizes is take the extra time to take the bus. This helps her save her money and also is better for the environment, cutting down toxic gases in the atmosphere. The school offers these services from specialized individuals to assist all students in getting from one location to another in a helpful way. Abbey can see the consequences of her choice to ride the bus after a little while and re-evaluate the costs and benefits if she has a problem.

