

## *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg*

### ~Opportunity Cost~

**Book Content:** Henry is a naturalist; when he agrees to travel to Fitchburg his choice of transportation is hiking. His friend chooses a very different method of travel, the train. Along his way Henry collects flowers, observes nature, locates a bird nest, avoids being attacked by bees and gathers blackberries. Meanwhile his friend does odd jobs around town to earn enough money for the train fare to Fitchburg. Based on an entry from the journal of Henry David Thoreau, this story illustrates how different choices can be made to solve a common goal.

**Suggested Grade Levels:** K-3

**Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning:**

- 1.9** The student will recognize that people save money for the future to purchase goods and services.
- 2.8** The student will distinguish between the use of barter and the use of money in the exchange for goods and services.
- 3.9** The student will identify examples of making an economic choice and will explain the idea of opportunity cost (what is given up when making a choice).

**Time Required:** 20-30 Minutes

**Materials:**

- Book - *Henry Hikes to Fitchburg* by D.B. Johnson (Houghton Mifflin, 2000)
- Visual – Making a Choice
- Activity sheets – Making a Choice
- Opportunity Cost Cards
- Envelopes for Opportunity Cost Cards

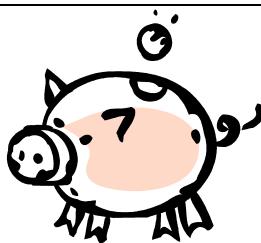
**Procedure:**

1. Prepare the visual, and opportunity cost cards ahead of time. The cards work well when run off on card stock. Card sets may be placed in envelopes to facilitate ease of passing them out and keeping sets together.
2. Read the book prior to lesson (allocate 7-10 minutes)
3. Display the visual. Read the introduction to the students. Then ask them to vote, using show of hands, as to what they think Henry's friend will do with his newly discovered twenty-five cents. Tally the results and record them on the transparency. Stress to the students that the most voted on option is Henry's friend's choice and that the option that came in second is his **opportunity cost**. Define **opportunity cost** as *what is given up when a choice is made. When deciding how to spend a resource it is one's second best alternative; the alternative given up.* In other words, this is the thing he would choose to do if he could not do the one that came in first.
4. Pass out prepared activity sheets and opportunity cost cards. Students may work independently or in pairs.
5. Review information required for the completion of the activity sheets. Instruct students to open their envelopes, read the information on the cards and select the card that they think is the most appropriate. The students are then to fill out the activity sheets.
6. Check for understanding, stressing the economic concept of opportunity cost and acknowledging answers that will vary.

Visual-

### Making a Choice

Henry's Friend has agreed to travel to Fitchburg when he earns the train fare. What do you think he would do if he found a quarter (twenty-five cents) in the pocket of his vest?

| Choice   | Tally |
|--|-------|
|  <p>Use it to help pay for his 90¢ Train Ticket</p>                               |       |
|  <p>Buy a bag of penny candy to share with Henry when they meet in Fitchburg</p> |       |
|  <p>Put it in his piggy bank and save it for the future</p>                     |       |

Opportunity Cost Cards-

*Making a Choice Activity Cards*

What could Henry do if he saw a big bug?

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| What could Henry do if he saw a big bug?<br> | What could Henry do if he saw a big bug?<br> | What could Henry do if he saw a big bug?<br> |
| Walk around it  | Study it with his magnifying glass  | Scream and run away   |

What could Henry do if he was hungry?

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| What could Henry do if he was hungry?<br> | What could Henry do if he was hungry?<br> | What could Henry do if he was hungry?<br> |
| Go into the woods and find some berries to pick  | Go to the store and buy some fresh fruit   | Ask his friend if he would share his lunch with him  |

What could Henry do with the big tree behind his cabin?

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| What could Henry do with the big tree behind his cabin?<br> | What could Henry do with the big tree behind his cabin?<br> | What could Henry do with the big tree behind his cabin?<br> |
| Take a nap under it  | Cut it down and use it for fire wood   | Build a tree house in it   |

Activity-

Name:

Date:

## Making a Choice Opportunity Cost

Write the question that is on the card:

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The choice you think Henry might make is:

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What do you think his opportunity cost would be?

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*(Opportunity cost is the next best alternative that is given up when a choice is made.)*

**Extra credit:** Can you think of another decision Henry could have made concerning the question on your card?

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Date:

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