

S T O R Y P A T H [®]

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Series:

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Main Street

Understanding Goods and Services

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ABOUT STORYPATH

THE STORYPATH STRATEGY

Storypath offers both a structure for organizing the social studies curriculum and an instructional strategy for teaching. The structure is a familiar one: the story. The strategy is grounded in a belief that students learn best when they are active participants in their own learning, and places students' own efforts to understand at the center of the educational enterprise. Together, the structure and the teaching strategy ensure that students feel strongly motivated and have meaningful and memorable learning experiences.

Originally developed in Scotland during the 1960s, Storypath draws support from decades of experience with teachers and students. The approach has its roots in these beliefs about students and learning:

- The world is complex and presents many layers of information. Students know a good deal about how the world works and have a reservoir of knowledge that is often untapped in the classroom.
- When students build on that knowledge through activities such as questioning and researching, new understandings are acquired. Because students construct their own knowledge and understanding of their world, their learning is more meaningful and memorable.
- Problem solving is a natural and powerful human endeavor. When students are engaged in problem solving, they take ownership for their learning.
- The story form integrates content and skills from many disciplines and provides a context for students to gain a deeper, more complex understanding of major concepts.

AN INQUIRY APPROACH

Questioning, by both teacher and students, is a key component of Storypath. Through the story structure and the discourse it creates, the teacher guides students in their search for meaning and understanding as they acquire new knowledge and skills. Your questions, and the discussions they engender, cause students to:

- ask their own questions and think critically about what they know;
- use their prior knowledge to make sense of new information;
- connect personally to important social studies concepts.

The story structure and inquiry guided by unit goals provide the framework for students to integrate skills and complex content through problems they encounter. As they do so, their understanding of important concepts is extended and key connections are made.

THE STORY STRUCTURE

For thousands of years, stories have helped us create order and make connections between events. Storypath’s narrative structure helps students understand concepts that they often find difficult to comprehend in the traditional social studies curriculum.

Each Storypath unit centers on a unique and engaging story that provides a concrete context for understanding the social science content. This story may be based on actual historical events, as developed in *Struggle for Independence*. Or the story might instead be based on typical community or business structures, as developed in *Families in Their Neighborhoods* or in *The Toy Company*. From all of these structures, students develop a meaningful context for developing understanding of the topic.

Typical structure of a Storypath unit

CREATING THE SETTING

Students create the setting by completing a frieze or mural of the place.

CREATING THE CHARACTERS

Students create characters for the story whose roles they will play during subsequent episodes.

BUILDING CONTEXT

Students are involved in activities such as reading and writing to stimulate them to think more deeply about the people and the place they have created.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Characters confront problems typical of those faced by people of that time and place.

CONCLUDING EVENT

Students plan and participate in an activity that brings closure to the story.

PLANNING THE UNIT

UNDERSTANDING GOODS AND SERVICES

MAKE KEY DECISIONS

Make classroom space for the Storypath. You will want to have adequate wall space to make the frieze of the business district as well as space to display the characters inside the classroom. Sometimes teachers are tempted to put the frieze and the characters in the hallway outside of the classroom; however, it is important to display these items inside the classroom where students can easily refer to them throughout the Storypath.

Organize students. It is suggested that students work with a partner to create a business for the story. Thus, the partners will work together throughout much of the unit. You could organize students into small groups, but it is easier for two students, rather than three or four, to negotiate the various decisions that will need to be made throughout the unit.

Arrange for role-plays. In Episode 6, you, another adult, or a teenager will play the role of a teenager who “hangs out” on Main Street. If more than one teenager can participate, that would be great. You will need to brief the person for the role, providing specific information based on how the story has developed.

Use the Student Portfolio to gather evidence of student learning. The Student Portfolio provides evidence of student understanding of goods and services and their role in the marketplace. In the Portfolio, students apply reading and writing skills to demonstrate learning. The Portfolio, along with a pocket folder that will hold additional items, can be saved as documentation of students’ learning.

CUSTOMIZE THE UNIT

Adapt the unit. There will likely be many times in this unit when you will want to modify the curriculum to suit your own needs and follow the logical progression of the story. For example, you may want to describe a business district or shopping mall similar to the one in your own community so that students can draw on their own experiences to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the marketplace. Alternative activities or special arrangements are suggested at various points during the unit to assist you in adapting the unit to meet your unique needs.

Frequently, students will provide an unanticipated twist to the Storypath, or important learning opportunities will arise. The Storypath allows for the accommodation of those special circumstances.

Use current events. There are times in the *Main Street* unit when students will role-play to understand a particular viewpoint. At other times students will reflect on the events of this unit out of role so that situations can be examined and understood from the students' own perspective. These are opportune times to help students connect their experiences to current events in the news. Frequently, similar problems—business districts losing money, teenagers loitering in shopping malls—are in the news, and discussing these problems extends students' understanding to real communities and ultimately makes the Storypath experience more powerful.

Connect to other Storypaths. The *Families in Their Neighborhoods* Storypath can be taught prior to or following this Storypath and will provide students with experiences that build on and relate to each other. Both Storypaths are set in the present and focus on local communities' efforts to work together to solve problems. For more Storypath topics go to www.teachstorypath.com.

INVOLVE OTHERS

Involve families. Students frequently discuss their Storypath experiences at home. They are usually eager to talk about the workers and businesses they have created. Ask family members to participate in discussions regarding owning or working in a business—invite them to your classroom.

In Episode 7, students celebrate the success of the business community. This is an ideal time to invite families. Students can write invitations to their celebration, and families can participate in the event.

Involve the business community. A walk through your local business district could serve as an important extension of the Storypath. Students could interview local businesspeople about their businesses. These activities should be carefully timed, however, and are best conducted at the conclusion of the unit. This allows students to knowledgeably compare and contrast the two experiences and makes for a more powerful learning experience.

Create a learning community. An open and supportive atmosphere is essential for students to engage in the discourse that is basic to the learning process of the Storypath approach. Students should understand the value of reflective discussions and the importance of collaborative work to deepening their understanding of complex ideas. Consequently, students should be expected to listen carefully and respond thoughtfully and respectfully to one another's ideas.

CREATING THE SETTING

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

INTRODUCING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

PAGE 15

Students listen to a description of a business community and discuss it.

Materials Teaching Master 1, *Business Community Descriptions*, TH* p. 46
Content Slide Set 1

Grouping Whole class

Schedule Approximately 30 minutes

CREATING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

PAGE 16

Students create a frieze of the business community.

Materials Portfolio 1, *Working Together: The Frieze*, p. 4
Portfolio 2, *Self-Assessment: Working Together*, p. 5
For the frieze:

- bulletin board space approximately 3' high and 6' long covered with white paper and easily within students' reach
- various colors of construction and tissue paper
- colored markers, crayons, glue, scissors, masking tape
- optional: craft materials such as wallpaper scraps, aluminum foil, yarn
- optional: tempera paints, brushes, water cans

Grouping Students work in pairs.

Schedule 2–3 hours. You will probably want to divide this time into two sessions.

CONCLUDING EPISODE 1

PAGE 17

Students reflect on and write about the business community.

Materials Portfolio 3, *Word Bank: The Business Community*, p. 6
Portfolio 4, *Writing: The Business Community*, p. 7
For the word bank: index cards, thick black marker
For the writing activity: lined newsprint, thick black marker
For the Portfolio folders: pocket folders or sturdy paper (one per student)

Grouping Whole class

Schedule Approximately 1 hour

EPISODE OBJECTIVES



- **Social Skills** *Use persuasion and compromise to resolve problems.*
- **Social Skills** *Organize, plan, and make decisions while creating a frieze with group members.*
- **Social Skills** *Determine an appropriate course of action to complete a frieze with the group.*
- **Critical Thinking** *Organize ideas from class discussion in new ways and apply those ideas to the frieze.*
- **Reading: Key Ideas and Details** *Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it.*
- **Writing: Text Types and Purposes** *Write explanatory sentences using descriptive words about the businesses created.*
- **Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration** *Prepare for and participate effectively in conversations and collaborations to create the setting.*
- **Language: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use** *Acquire and use accurately academic language related to the Main Street businesses.*

*TH = Teacher's Handbook

Name _____ Date _____

BUSINESS COMMUNITY DESCRIPTIONS

A SMALL-TOWN OR SUBURBAN MAIN STREET

The main street has many businesses, from a bank on one end to an old hotel with a restaurant on the ground floor on the other. In between are some of the other town businesses: a grocery store, a drugstore, a barbershop, a toy store, and a hardware store, to name a few. The old, two-story brick buildings have interesting designs at the top along the roof-line. There are also newer buildings that are made of gray stone blocks. Big, old trees, which were planted a long, long time ago, line the street. Cars and trucks are parked along this busy street as people go about their daily business.

A SHOPPING MALL

The indoor shopping mall has many businesses, including a bank, a department store, a grocery store, a drugstore, and several restaurants. The shopping mall has been here for many years. There is a fountain in the center of the mall with lots of green plants, flowers, and trees. Vendors sell coffee, soft drinks, and ice cream cones, and shoppers stop at benches throughout the mall to rest their feet and take a break. Sometimes people visit the mall just to meet people and look in the shops. The mall is a busy place with lots of people shopping.



What is a business community?

The location of a business is very important. Businesses want to be in a place where their customers will want to come and buy their goods and services. Businesses that are located near each other are called a business community. Shopping is easier for customers when businesses are close together.



▼ These businesses are located on this town's Main Street. It is the busiest street in the town.



1. Why might a business be located on a busy street? *(main idea/supporting details)*



SET 1

Slide 3



◀ This indoor mall offers a variety of stores for shoppers.

▶ A row of shops built around a parking lot is called a strip mall.



2. Why might people like to shop at an indoor mall? (connecting)



WORKING TOGETHER: THE FRIEZE

Talk with your partner about how you will work together.

- We will listen to each other's ideas.
- We will share the work.
- We will help each other.
- We will do careful work.
- We will work together to solve problems.

Other ideas:



SELF-ASSESSMENT: WORKING TOGETHER

	Not often/Never	Sometimes	Always
1. We listened to each other's ideas.			
2. We shared the work.			
3. We helped each other.			
4. We did careful work.			
5. We worked together to solve problems.			



WORD BANK: THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

On the left side, make a list of businesses the class created. On the right side, add words that describe the businesses.

Businesses	Describing words
candy store	colorful

Assessment: Businesses are named; describing words accurately reflect the business district.

