

Section 1: Innovative Thinking

Marketplace for



Educating Emerging Entrepreneurs

**Help Your Students Plan Their
Innovative Thinking Project Today!**

Pages 1-1 to 1-12

www.MarketplaceForKids.org

Section 1: Innovative Thinking

Section 1: Innovative Thinking

Marketplace for Kids is a gathering of young people who want to become the next generation of innovators, inventors, and entrepreneurs. This section of our Learning Guide provides sample activities you can use to introduce your students to innovative thinking in the areas of product development, education, and community service. These activities can serve as:

1. An introduction to your own innovative and creative thinking activities.
2. An original research and production project your students may display at a Marketplace for Kids Education Day.



Content Standards:

The **innovative teacher** can employ these activities to cover a range of grade levels:

- **Science Standards** – Relate to science inquiry methods, the connection between science and technology, and how we use technology to address economic, personal, and social concerns.
- **Social Studies Standards** – Relate to economic systems and the role of the citizens.
- **Language Arts Standards** – Relate to the gathering, organizing and reporting of information.
- **Math Standards** – Relate to the techniques used to analyze data.

Introduction:

Innovators are always looking for opportunities to make something better, more useful, more profitable, or more effective. Innovative thinkers respond to:

- New consumer demands
- Shrinking budgets
- Technological advances
- Shifting demographics

Innovators play a part in every walk of life. Just a few examples are:

- **Business Innovators** – want to improve products; they look at goods and services and see how they can be made better, more profitable or more effective.
- **Educational Innovators** – want to be more productive in the classroom; they try to provide their students with the information, training and skills needed to implement positive outcomes.
- **Citizen Innovators** – want to improve community life; they might do this by volunteering, becoming a member of a community improvement club, or by joining other local organizations.



New ideas come about in many different ways in response to many different situations. **Our classrooms are home to natural innovators who set the dress, behavior, and communication trends among their peers.**

TEACHER PAGE

Innovative Thinking

Activity 1 – Design vs. Function, Wants vs. Needs

Purpose:

This activity provides an opportunity to introduce vocabulary related to entrepreneurship and introduces students to an opportunity of becoming an innovator/inventor. This activity will prepare them to create an innovative project to present at a regional **Marketplace for Kids Education Day**. Students are also introduced to concepts that make them more aware of marketing techniques, design and innovations and how they relate to products.

This activity may also provide an excellent opportunity for family budgeting concerns to be discussed at home as well as other parental involvement in positive school activities.

Time:

Two class periods, additional after-school time.

Glossary:

Advertisement
Design
Marketing
Profit

Budget
Function
Wants / Needs
Target Market

Demographic
Innovation
Patents
Improvements (useful)

Materials:

Student School Supplies

Introduction:

Teachers provide and review with students the basic list of school supplies requested for the current school year.

Activity:

Students can sort their personal school supplies into the categories as per the requested supply list. The students can compare their groups of supplies with the school list (**needs**) as compared to the number of items not shown on the school list (**wants**).



TEACHER PAGE Continued...

Innovative Thinking ~ Activity 1 – Design vs. Function, Wants vs. Needs

Next, students can look at individual items and see if they were purchasing useful items or were swayed by advertisements or design improvements.

- Students can discuss the demographics of the **‘Target Market’** (students, in this case)
 - *How are their school supplies specifically appealing to this market?*
 - *Are the goods appealing to any other groups?*
 - *How are these goods intrinsic to this specific market?*

This should lead to a discussion of ‘needs’ vs. ‘wants.’ Students should be encouraged to discuss prices for basic items and the prices of the ‘design innovations’ aimed at the target market of students. Discuss the prices paid for design improvements and whether they really are improvements. For instance:

- *What is their real value compared to other more basic designs?*
- *Do they lead to distractions in the classroom?*
- *Do they work better than the non-design supply?*

Students can be encouraged to visit the local store and compare the variety of items that are aimed at this target market.

- *What advertising techniques were used to sell this product, including packaging and the naming of the product?*
- *How many different notebooks or organizers are available for purchase?*
- *What are the differences between these choices?*

Students can document the difference in cost of the basic supplies and compare that with the total cost of their personal items of choice. This may be an ideal place to discuss basic budgeting with the students.

Students can be encouraged to discuss **marketing techniques**, **design innovations**, the **usefulness** of different innovative products and patents.

Extension Activities:

1. Students can invent their own version of a design improvement or useful improvement for school supplies.
2. Students can research advertisement techniques used to increase sales of school supplies.
3. Students can document the “distraction” effect of individual items as related to items lost, broken or missing, playing with items and being distracted from instruction time.
4. Students can create inventions that lessen the effects of #3 above.
5. Students can inform a younger or more impressionable class about their findings and help students with getting their school supply budget lowered.
6. Students can find suitable alternatives to the school supply list and work with school personnel in promoting economic and/or environmental considerations.
7. Students can research or design activities for recycling or appropriate disposal of used school supplies.



Design vs. Function, Wants vs. Needs

STUDENT PAGE

Directions: Working individually or in a small group, choose a category of school supply items to study. List the characteristics of a basic item and then compare and contrast that with an innovative version.

Vocabulary: Compare = finding similarities between items. (*Example: Both pencils have #2 lead.*)
 Contrast = finding differences between items. (*Example: The basic pencil is painted yellow but the other one is green with sparkles.*)

Describe Basic Item	Describe Innovation	Reason for Change	Useful or Not Useful

What conclusions can you make from this research? _____

Extension Activities:

1. Design and create a new item to add to your school supply list that will be useful. Create a prototype of this item and complete other research on the history of this type of item. This may be your invention to present at your regional **Marketplace for Kids Education Day**.
2. Choose a different type of item and complete the research and design of an innovative version (for example: shoes, clothing, a item used in food preparation or in your shop, a new garden or lawn tool).

TEACHER PAGE

Activity # 2 – Recreational Area Activity: Innovations for Services

Purpose:

In this activity, students will learn to distinguish between goods and services by analyzing and documenting goods and services that are currently available in their local area.

Students will conduct research on tourist information available to the public. Based on this information, students will identify target markets, innovations, publicity techniques, services, service agencies and demographic information for different areas of North Dakota.

Students will then create an innovative improvement to an existing recreational area or create a new concept for economic development, with each being an opportunity not only for students to present their project at a **Marketplace for Kids Education Day**, but also to an agency or board for implementation in their community.

Standards related to:

Analysis and synthesis
Communication through print and speech
Data documentation
Geography/History
North Dakota Studies
Research using a variety of media

Time:

Two class periods; periodic updating as students continue their research.

Glossary:

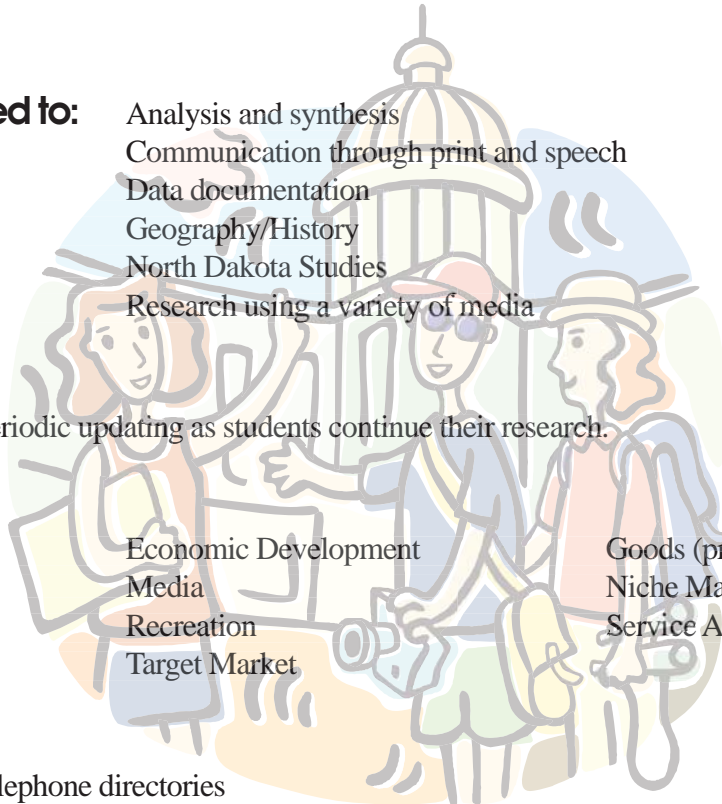
Demographics
Innovations
Publicity
Services

Economic Development
Media
Recreation
Target Market

Goods (products)
Niche Market
Service Agencies

Resources:

Local and regional telephone directories
A variety of tourist brochures
A tour guide or other person to be a class presenter or to be interviewed



Activity # 2 – Recreational Area Activity: Innovations for Services, Continued...

Introduction:

Day 1: **Introduction:** Begin with a discussion of what recreational opportunities are available in your area.

What recreational opportunities appeal to:

- Local youth
- General public
- Tourists from other areas
- All these groups

Students can then identify what is unique about these opportunities that appeal to that market and identify local and broader demographic information.

Providers of **services** are always looking for new ways to attract customers by improving the appeal and usefulness of their services. Introduce the term **innovation** to describe these changes. Discuss **publicity** and the use of a variety of **media** as a means of getting these innovations known to **target markets**.

Assignment: Complete the introduction and assign students the task of bringing in a local telephone directory. These will be used to complete the research into identifying goods and services available in their local area. These will also serve as one resource in helping identify service agencies and tourist information contacts.

Day 2: Students working as part of a small group can browse through their directories to identify **goods** and **services** listed. Suggest that students use the yellow pages and categorize goods and services using those categories. To facilitate students getting a variety of categories, each student or group can be assigned a different segment of the yellow pages to study.

Students can:

- Tally the number of businesses that offer goods or services in that category.
- Draw conclusions from this data and relate it to local **demographics**.
- Identify services aimed at a specific **niche market**.
- Discuss new and unique opportunities that could be developed in their local area.

Have students choose a local recreational area such as a city park or swimming pool and design an innovative improvement based on their research information.

Have the students:

- Check with local authorities about all safety requirements needed to implement their innovation.
- Think of ways they could use this information at a **Marketplace for Kids Education Day.**

Study how to present this information to a local city council or park board for consideration and implementation. This brings the students into the “real world” of what it actually takes to get changes such as these completed.

Activity # 2 – Recreational Area Activity: Innovations for Services, Continued...

Assignment: Have students write to different Chambers of Commerce or tourist agencies for brochures regarding recreational opportunities from different areas of North Dakota. Students should be encouraged to compare information available in the different media, the ease of locating this information and the types of information available in the different media.



Enrichment Opportunities:

1. Students may find a mentor in a service business and learn first-hand what it takes to operate a service venture.
2. Students may set up a service business to provide a service to the elderly or shut-ins and complete a volunteerism project either as a small group, a class or school-wide project.
3. Students can do some creative problem solving in response to the common comment of “there is nothing to do.” This could lead to an actual change or improvement in their local community by presenting their project to the appropriate boards or getting community backing for implementation.
4. Students can research the economic impact of either the service industry or the recreational industry in their area. This can lead to the development of other service or recreational industries based on local geography and/or natural resources.

Activity # 2 – Recreational Area Activity: Innovations for Services STUDENT PAGE

Directions:

1. You will choose several recreational areas (i.e. tourist location, swimming area, local museum, etc.) and identify the following:
 - Target Markets
 - Publicity Techniques
 - Services
 - Demographic Information

2. Create an innovative improvement or a new concept for the existing recreational area.

Recreational Area	Change / New Concept	Reason for Change

3. Why did you choose these specific recreational areas? Are they related in any way?
How can you as an individual citizen possibly bring this change or new concept into reality?

Extension Activity:

1. Take one of your changes or concepts above and research one possible way you could make it a reality. Include any drawings or research you found. **This may be your innovative project to present at the Marketplace for Kids Education Day.**

Invention & Creativity Quotes

**These quotes will make good
bulletin board themes and discussion generators.**

“All the really good ideas I ever had came to me while I was milking a cow.”
Grant Wood, Painter

“A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.”
Albert Einstein

“Who wants to hear actors talk?”
Harry M. Warner, President of Warner Brothers Pictures, 1927

“The horse is here to stay, but the automobile is only a novelty—a fad.”
**President of the Michigan State Bank advising Henry Ford’s lawyer
not to invest in the Ford Motor Company**

“Heavier than air flying machines are impossible.”
Lord Kelvin, 1895

*“Video won’t be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months.
People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.”*
Daryl Zanuck, head of 20th Century Fox, commenting on television in 1946

*“If one advances in the direction of his dreams,
one will meet with success unexpected in common hours.”*
Henry David Thoreau

“Everything that can be invented has been invented.”
Charles H. Duell, Director of the U.S. Patent Office, 1899