




PLAYING AT TRADING

Age group	Primary School, Grades 6 – 9		
Competency features	Proactive approach and creativity 	Personality make-up 	Ability to accept risk 
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to understand trading under unequal conditions ▪ to boost the information-acquiring ability ▪ to boost problem-solving skills ▪ to develop communication skills ▪ to develop cooperation 		
Timing	60 – 120 minutes (depending on grade, pupils' ability to concentrate, cooperation, dexterity, and what the teacher is after in this exercise)		
Location	indoors		
Resources & materials	A suitable room with trading posts (see the Playing at Trading I Worksheet.), poster showing shapes, dimensions and prices (see the Playing at Trading II Worksheet; equipment may be used – data projector), A4 sheets of paper, pencils, scissors, compasses, rulers, rubber stamp (typesetting), stamp inkpad, banknotes of 5 and 10 denominational units made of strips of paper, envelopes for A4 sheets, bell and/or whistle (computer sound effect may be used). All according to Worksheet No. 1.		
Description			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Teacher must be well prepared. Based on headcount, he needs to form a corresponding number of groups – trading posts. On every desk, there will be a large (opaque) envelope. However, the envelopes will not have identical contents; Worksheet No. 1 Playing at Trading I provides a list of what each envelope contains. The classroom must be made ready before the pupils turn up. It helps if they have no other tools and/or materials at their disposal. 2) Trading posts belong to various nations that should fall into three groups: 1. nations with advanced technologies and plenty of capital, but without natural resources (most of industrial countries); 2. nations originally without technologies or capital, but with plenty of natural resources (Arab countries producing oil but lacking technology); 3. nations currently without significant natural resources, capital and technologies (most of developing countries). 			

- 3) Pupils are split into four-strong groups and let into classroom. They take up trading posts at random (they have no knowledge of what is going to happen, what is in the envelopes, etc.)
- 4) Teacher sets out the tasks.
- 5) He explains that each group will represent a country that will be producing some goods. He, the teacher, will be buying from them, and is interested in (he shows them a poster with shapes and prices – may use data projector). He insists on only buying quality stuff. The traders are allowed to sell at least 5 items at a time, no less (3 off only = no trade).
- 6) The teacher can assist them in trading – they can buy from him. He does not let on any more; pupils will be able to get more information as the game unfolds.
 - Trading starts when the bell is rung, and it shall finish to the same sound.
 - Nothing illegal may happen (theft; violence, etc.)
 - Anything that is not banned is allowed.
 - The goal is to make as much money as possible.
- 7) Teacher rings the bell, and lets the pupils discover what is in the envelope so they can start working. Since the teacher will soon have his hands full, trading, he needs an assistant (another teacher, ideally) to observe what is happening in the classroom.
- 8) Teacher leaves his charges in peace, observing how they are doing; he buys their wares and sells them what they want.
- 9) Some of the groups may be clueless, in which case the teacher can intervene. To spur the trading exchange on, he may covertly provide some advantageous information to one or two groups, making their transactions more profitable. E.g., should the item carry a stamp, its price goes up twenty-fold; this will make the group strive to buy a rubber stamp, quite likely for a niggardly price since another group will have no use for it. Also, paper of different colour may represent a much better material, and the final product made of it will command a higher price in the market.
- 10) Teacher may also tell a group about a natural resource and where to find it, or he can simply provide them with it. On the other hand, his actions need not only be beneficial: he may decide to confiscate the scissors of a group (simulating industrial action), or ban its members from using their better hand. He could take away the workers for a while, etc. Also, he may keep changing prices during the game, e.g., reduce them when a group hoards some items with no intention to sell). He can assist the clueless by offering them cooperation; some will have realized anyway that there are advantages to be had if natural resources-rich countries get together with those simply rich, i.e. developed. Inferior, misshapen goods will be purchased at inferior prices.
- 11) Ringing the bell ends the game; results are announced, as is the winner.
- 12) Analysing and discussing the game, and dealing with terminology (terms: supply, demand, market, market price, natural resources, workforce, know-how, strike, etc.)

Risks and recommendations	<p>If the class is riddled with conflict between pupils, it has helped letting them form the groups they would like. The better pupils are assigned desks of poor nations. The clueless are nudged along through teacher's advice, private information conducive to business, etc.</p> <p>Pupils may experience strong emotions during the game, notably injustice. That can be made good use of while analyzing the exercise; one way or another, they will feel the need to vent their anger and frustration.</p> <p>Due to their overwhelming emotions, some pupils will have lost any desire to trundle on. Willpower, resilience, stamina, adversity and overcoming obstacles would be good points to raise while analyzing the game.</p>
Feedback	<p><u>Questions for discussion:</u></p> <p>What were the pupils' feelings like at the beginning? How did their emotions develop? Who was creative, and thought hard how to resolve problems? Who had misgivings, felt sceptical, and wanted to give up? Did everyone have an equal opportunity to succeed? Why did the conditions differ from group to group? What was the cause? Was there a way how to overcome the handicap of some groups? How could it be done? Was it possible to obtain additional information? Was it possible to trade anything? (E.g.: Could information be sold? Was information precious? Did they manage to sell it, and if so, was the price right?) What did the individual items represent? (paper, scissors, ruler, people, information ...) Were there ways to speed up production and/or facilitate it? Is there a name for it?</p>
Application in classes	<p>Civic education (economics 101; supply and demand principles); geography; global education, media and communication.</p> <p>This exercise may be used elsewhere, too, for revision. Instead of a stamp, there could be a multiple of some number on the squares, or names of parts of the digestive tract, works by a famous novelist; on the triangles, a suitable choice of equations, parts of the breathing tract, works of a famous poet, etc.</p>
Inspired by	<p>Pike, G., Selby, D. <i>Cvičení a hry pro globální výchovu 2</i>. Praha: Portál 2000</p>
Notes	

Worksheet

PLAYING AT TRADING (I)

Envelope No. 1:

2 sheets of paper, pencil sharpener, banknote of 10 units

Envelope No. 2:

3 sheets of paper, scissors, broken pencil, banknotes worth 10 units

Envelope No. 3:

15 sheets of paper, ruler, pencil, banknotes worth 20 units

Envelope No. 4:

10 sheets of paper, 2 pairs of scissors, protractor, a pair of compasses, banknotes worth 60 units

Envelope No. 5:

2 sheets of paper, 2 pairs of scissors, 3 rulers, 2 pairs of compasses, 3 pencils, banknotes worth 80 units

Envelope No. 6:

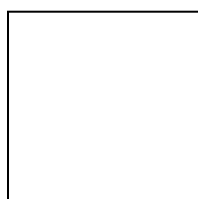
2 sheets of paper, 3 pairs of scissors, 3 rulers, 3 pairs of compasses, 5 pencils, banknotes worth 100 units

Worksheet

PLAYING AT TRADING (II)

Shape dimensions and prices:

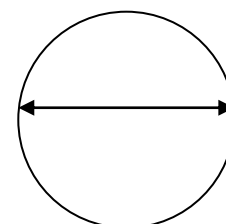
10 x 10 cm



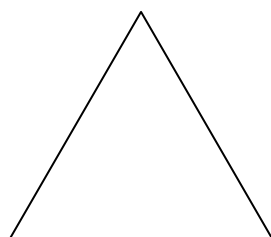
10 x 15 cm



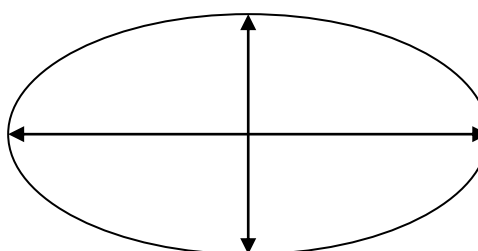
d = 12.5 cm



15 x 15 x 15 cm



12.5 x 17 cm



Resource costs:

Paper (1 sheet)	5
Scissors	15
Ruler	25
Compasses	50