

# Services



Artist: Casey Carnohan • 1st Grade • Battlefield Park Elementary School • Hanover County

## SERVICES

Services are activities performed by other people that satisfy our wants and needs. Unlike goods, they are physically intangible - we cannot hold them, pick them up, or put them in our car. Examples include haircutting, teeth cleaning, and dry cleaning.

## SERVICES

### Definition/Background

Services are actions that can satisfy people's wants. Some examples of services include, washing cars, teaching economics, coaching football and acting in a movie. Goods can also satisfy people's wants. The difference between goods and services is that services are actions while goods are objects. Services, like goods, must be produced. It's important for students to understand that they don't just appear. They are produced using productive resources (natural, human, and capital.) Since productive resources are limited (scarce), people cannot have all the goods and services they want; as a result, they must choose some and give up others.

### Teaching Ideas

1. Instruct the students to divide a piece of paper in half. Label one side "Ten Summer Services" and the other side "Ten Summer Goods." With the help of a partner, they are to draw or create the list of goods and services unique to the summer season. Tell them to be prepared to share their ideas with the class.
2. Display things such as scissors, combs, spoons, paintbrushes and keys and ask "What service can be produced using these items?" Create a list of all acceptable responses.
3. Demonstrate the proper format for addressing an envelope and writing a thank-you letter. Instruct the students to design a personalized thank-you card and send it to a person who provides them with a service that they value.
4. Explain to the students that an inexpensive gift to give a parent or sibling would be a coupon book containing various services the student could perform for the recipient. For example: "This coupon is good for raking the lawn." Encourage students to make their own coupon books.
5. Develop interview questions and allow students to interview people at school who provide services.
6. Play charades to act out various services with which the children are familiar.

### Lessons & Resources

#### Print Lessons

**Choices and Changes: Grades 2-4**, Lesson 7: Goods and Services, Work and Workers (elementary)

**Master Curriculum Guides in Economics: 3-4**, Lesson 2: Service with a Smile (elementary)

#### Online Lessons

**Goods and Services** (elementary)

<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.cfm?lesson=EM642&page=teacher>

**Community Helpers are at Your Service** (elementary)

<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.cfm?lesson=EM454&page=teacher>

**Goods and Services: Some are Private, Some are Not** (middle)

<http://www.ncee.net/ei/lessons/OldMac/lesson2/>

#### Fed Resources

**Piggy Bank Primer** (elementary)

<http://www.stlouisfed.org/education/resourcetools>

#### Literature

• **The Top Job** by Elizabeth Cody Kimmel. Dutton Children's Books, 2007. Career Day at school reveals the **service** jobs performed by the students' parents. However, the "top job" goes to the father who is the light bulb changer at the top of the Empire State Building. [Grades K-3]

• **Lawn Boy** by Gary Paulsen. Wendy Lamb Books, 2007. A 12-year-old boy quickly discovers that mowing lawns in his neighborhood is a much needed, very lucrative **service**. [Grades 4-7]

## VIRGINIA COUNCIL ON ECONOMIC EDUCATION

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### VCEE Network Contacts

#### VCEE

Sarah Hopkins Finley  
(804) 828-1627 [shfinley@vcu.edu](mailto:shfinley@vcu.edu)

#### Christopher Newport University

Gemma Kotula  
(757) 594-7404 [econedu@cnu.edu](mailto:econedu@cnu.edu)

#### George Mason University

Rachel Powell  
(703) 314-0226 [gmupowell@yahoo.com](mailto:gmupowell@yahoo.com)

#### James Madison University

Lynne F. Stover  
(540) 568-3248 [stoverlf@jmu.edu](mailto:stoverlf@jmu.edu)

#### Longwood University

Diana Shores  
(434) 395-2461 [shoresdc@longwood.edu](mailto:shoresdc@longwood.edu)

#### Lynchburg College

Cheryl Ayers  
(434) 544-8791 [ayers.c@lynchburg.edu](mailto:ayers.c@lynchburg.edu)

#### Old Dominion University

Ruth Cookson  
(757) 683-5570 [rcookson@odu.edu](mailto:rcookson@odu.edu)

#### Radford University

Barbara Taylor  
(540) 831-5887 [btaylor2@radford.edu](mailto:btaylor2@radford.edu)

#### University of Virginia's College at Wise

Gary Stratton  
(276) 328-0223 [grs6j@uvawise.edu](mailto:grs6j@uvawise.edu)

#### Virginia Commonwealth University

Suzanne Gallagher  
(804) 828-1628 [sgallagher@vcu.edu](mailto:sgallagher@vcu.edu)

#### Virginia Tech

Michael Ellerbrock  
(540) 231-7722 [mebrock@vt.edu](mailto:mebrook@vt.edu)



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#### Lis Turner

Economic Education Specialist  
[Lis.Turner@rich.frb.org](mailto:Lis.Turner@rich.frb.org)  
(800) 526-2031  
(804) 697-8135

#### Amanda Gibson

Economic Education Specialist  
[Amanda.Gibson@rich.frb.org](mailto:Amanda.Gibson@rich.frb.org)  
(800) 526-2031  
(804) 697-8107

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