What Makes Me Become We?

Supporting Questions

1. How do people meet their needs and wants?
2. What challenges do people face in meeting their needs and wants?
3. How can people work together to overcome the challenges of meeting their needs and wants?
## What Makes Me Become We?

**New York State Social Studies Framework Key Ideas & Practices**

- **2.8:** Communities face different challenges in meeting their needs and wants.
- **2.9:** A community requires the interdependence of many people performing a variety of jobs and services to provide for basic needs and wants.

**Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence**

**Chronological Reasoning and Causation**

**Civic Participation**

### Staging the Compelling Question

Discuss the meaning of the phrase “two heads are better than one.”

### Supporting Question 1

How do people meet their needs and wants?

**Formative Performance Task**

Brainstorm categories of workers, businesses, and organizations that meet communities’ needs and wants and why they are important.

**Featured Sources**

- **Source A:** “Farmers Grow Corn”
- **Source B:** “First in Her Family to Own a Home”
- **Source C:** “Oranges from Tree to You”

### Supporting Question 2

What challenges do people face in meeting their needs and wants?

**Formative Performance Task**

Complete a three-part T-chart describing the challenges communities may experience due to scarcity.

**Featured Sources**

- **Source A:** “Poor People Cannot Find Fresh and Healthy Food”
- **Source B:** “Winter Usually Brings Snow and Water to California, but It’s Still Dry”

### Supporting Question 3

How can people work together to overcome the challenges of meeting their needs and wants?

**Formative Performance Task**

Write a claim to answer the supporting question and use examples to support it.

**Featured Sources**

- **Source A:** “A Fruit Farm in a City”
- **Source B:** “A Playground Problem”
- **Source C:** Alex’s Lemonade Stand

### Summative Performance Task

**ARGUMENT** What makes me become we? Write an argument that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and evidence from sources that discuss the relationship between individuals and groups of people.

**EXTENSION** Create a collage that shows people working together to solve a problem.

### Taking Informed Action

**UNDERSTAND** Brainstorm a list of economic challenges in the local community.

**ASSESS** Choose a challenge to address and brainstorm ways to overcome it.

**ACT** Write a letter to a local government official that suggests a new approach to overcoming the challenge and explains the reasoning behind that suggestion.
Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry is an initial exploration into the concept of interdependence through the lens of community economics and the idea of an economy as a diverse, mutually supportive web of needs and wants, workers and consumers, and problems and solutions. The compelling question “What makes me become we?” challenges students to consider interdependence among individuals and groups and think about how a community is not just a bunch of individual “mes” living in a shared space but also a collective “we” that interacts, grows and contracts, and tries to solve issues. This inquiry builds on students’ first-grade knowledge and challenges them to understand that through businesses, town organizations, and local governments, a community meets the needs and wants of its people, finding strength in collective efforts to address problems.

In addition to the Key Ideas expressed earlier, this inquiry covers the following Conceptual Understandings:

- (2.8c) Scarcity, the price of goods and services, and choice all influence economic decisions made by individuals and communities.
- (2.9c) At times, neighboring communities share resources and workers to support multiple communities.

NOTE: This inquiry is expected to take four to six 30-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame might expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries to meet the requirements and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “What makes me become we?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources in order to construct an argument with evidence and counterevidence from a variety of sources.

Staging the Compelling Question

Because this inquiry focuses on the relationship between individual and group efforts, teachers can begin by asking students to consider the meaning and implications of the common phrase “two heads are better than one.”

Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question—“How do people meet their needs and wants?”—suggests that workers, managers, and owners of businesses and organizations in the local community collectively provide people with goods and
services to meet their needs and wants. The formative performance task asks students to brainstorm categories of workers, businesses, and organizations as a way to understand that the needs and wants of a community are met by its great variety of workers. As part of their collective brainstorming activity, students should consider the effect of any of these individuals and groups being absent from the community. Featured Source A is an article about how farmers provide food. Featured Source B is an article about how a woman was able to have her first house through the efforts of a community-based group. Featured Source C is an article about how oranges are produced and distributed to consumers.

### Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question—"What challenges do people face in meeting their needs and wants?"—focuses on the difficulties people can face in situations of scarcity, which can result from multiple factors—for example, lack of physical space, high prices, lack of transportation, and shortages of people and resources. After reading the sources, students complete a three-part T-chart in which they identify a challenge, the cause(s) of the challenge, and the effect(s) of the challenge. Featured Source A presents a challenge that poorer residents of a community might face (i.e., obtaining fresh and healthy food), while Featured Source B focuses on challenges caused by weather conditions, in this case, drought.

### Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question—"How can people work together to overcome the challenges of meeting their needs and wants?"—highlights attempts to rise above economic and geographic challenges via the use of tools and technology, new ideas, recycling, and sheer determination. The formative performance task calls on students to write a claim with evidence that addresses the supporting question. Featured Source A explains how urban farms provide city residents with fresh food. Featured Source B describes how a playground might be built using recycled materials. Featured Source C is a website featuring one girl’s efforts to make a difference.

### Summative Performance Task

Students draw on understandings developed through the formative performance tasks to craft an argument stemming from the compelling question and supported with evidence drawn from the sources. The argument can be presented through written expression or a combination of drawing and writing. To prepare for the crafting of an argument, students may gather their sources and notes and discuss in small groups the relationship between the compelling question, supporting questions, and featured sources.

In the summative performance task, students will answer the compelling question, using their notes on the differences between individuals ("me") and groups ("we") and supporting evidence to discuss meeting needs and wants through the interdependence of people in the local community.
Students’ arguments will likely vary but could include any of the following:

- When one person joins a community and decides to help the group solve its problems, then the person (me) becomes part of the group (we).
- “Me” becomes “we” by working together to make a group stronger.
- The community needs each worker (me) to meet the needs and wants of the group (we).
- “Me” becomes part of “we” when a person’s work helps the members of the community meet its needs for shelter, food, education, safety, and friendship.

Students could extend their arguments by creating collages that show people working together to solve a problem.

Students have the opportunity to Take Informed Action by concluding that strong communities require interdependence and cooperation among residents. They might also recognize that community members need to think of solutions that utilize new technologies, ideas, workers, transportation systems, and government assistance to minimize the impact of scarcity. Students demonstrate that they understand by brainstorming a list of challenges in their local community’s economy. They show their ability to assess by choosing one of those challenges to address and brainstorming ways to overcome it. And they act by writing a letter to a local government official suggesting a new approach to the challenge and stating the reasoning behind their suggestion.
People have grown corn in America for hundreds of years. Native Americans planted and ate corn long ago. When the Pilgrims arrived, some Native Americans taught them how to grow it.

Today, the United States produces more corn than any other country. American farmers plant corn seeds in the spring when the weather is warm enough. If a farmer plants when the soil is too cold, the seeds will rot.

Corn needs plenty of space to grow. It has to have a lot of sunshine and the right amount of water. If farmers have good weather, they can pick their corn by September. If the weather is too dry or cold or stormy, the corn may not grow very well.

When it is ready, many farmers sell their corn. People buy corn to eat, of course. Some companies buy corn to feed to farm animals. Other companies buy it to produce different foods or drinks. There are even companies that buy corn to make fuel for cars! That fuel is called ethanol.

When the growing season is over, farmers let their fields rest. In the spring, many farmers will plant corn again.

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Supporting Question 1

| Featured Source | Source B: Habitat for Humanity, article about how a woman gained her first home, “First in Her Family to Own a Home,” Habitat World, 2015 |

**First in Her Family to Own a Home**

This spring, Diane Chambers became the first member of her family within living memory to own her own home. Though it was a long time coming, it was still hard to believe. “It changes my life dramatically,” the retired school teacher says.

Previously, says Chambers, everyone in her family lived in big cities. “Homeownership was not something that anyone really did,” she recalls. “And it was something that not everyone could afford, of course.”

When she moved to New Jersey from New York City, where she taught high school in the Bronx, Chambers took a job at a local nonprofit, and that’s where she connected with Habitat Burlington County. “I would take young folks to volunteer, and I volunteered, too. But it never crossed my mind to look into a house for myself.”

Then she changed her mind. “I thought, ‘Just go ahead and apply.’ I never thought I’d be the first in my family, but I always wanted to own. ‘Make the possible out of the impossible,’ I like to say.”

The Habitat house, she says, has done just that. “I realized I didn’t have to depend on things outside myself anymore,” she says. “I had the tools to do whatever I wanted to.”

In a nice closing of the circle, Chambers says that at the dedication ceremony she noticed her sister looking closely at the house key. “She turned to me and said, ‘This has the same number as the place we grew up in.’ And she was right: 143. It’s almost like it was meant to be.”

One of Chambers’ favorite quotes is from the 13th century monk Nichiren: “If one lights a fire for others, one will light one’s own way.” It’s an idea she wants to pass along.

“One of the beautiful things about this is everybody who touched that house, all the volunteers, everybody whose heart went into helping build that home,” Chambers says. “It may be my home, but everyone else’s spirit is in there, too.”

Supporting Question 1

**Featured Source**

**Source C:** Susan LaBella, article about the production of oranges, “Oranges from Tree to You,” 2014

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**Oranges from Tree to You**

by Susan LaBella

Oranges are round, juicy fruits that grow on trees in places with warm weather. How does an orange get from the tree to your refrigerator?

People who work as fruit pickers move through groves filled with orange trees. When an orange is ripe, the picker clips it off the tree. All picked oranges are then carefully moved to a packing plant.

In the plant, oranges are placed on a machine with moving rollers. Special brushes wash the fruit as it rolls along. Next, each orange is dried.

Another machine lines up the oranges in boxes. A computer checks each box. Any oranges with spots or damage are removed. Orange growers want to produce good fruit that people will buy.

Finally, each orange is given a sticker and placed in a box. Full boxes are shipped in cool trucks to stores.

Each storeowner places the oranges on shelves. Then someone from your family comes to the store. Your family member chooses a few oranges, buys them, brings them home, and puts them in your refrigerator.

Then, one day, you open your refrigerator—and there those oranges are, ready for you to eat!

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Customer Alvaro Maduro (left) speaks with Maria Vanegas with The Food Trust about whole grain tortillas at the Indiana Food Market in Philadelphia. Mom-and-pop convenience stores in poor neighborhoods in Philadelphia have been getting healthier through the “Fresh Corner” initiative, an effort designed to help residents eat better in places considered to be food deserts. Photo: AP Photo/Matt Rourke.

**Poor People Cannot Find Fresh and Healthy Food**

PHILADELPHIA — Poor people have a hard time finding food. There are few food stores in poor neighborhoods. What is worse, the food is often not safe.

Poor places have few markets. The poor mostly shop at corner stores. Scientists checked the food in corner stores.

What the scientists found was not good. The food is often rotten. It is full of germs. Eating this food can make people sick.

The customers agree. Rodney Jenkins ate bad fruit from a corner store. He got sick. He worries about giving bad food to his children.
Bad Food

Jennifer Quinland is a food scientist. Her team visited many corner stores. The scientists looked for germs.

The scientists looked at milk, eggs and vegetables. They also checked lunch meats and sandwiches. They found a lot of germs.

Bad food doesn’t just make poor people sick. It also wastes their money. If food goes bad, you have to throw it out. This often happens with milk.

Sometimes the corner stores wait too long to put the milk in a refrigerator. Milk that gets warm goes bad faster. Bad milk starts to smell. No one wants to drink smelly milk. Customers do not know it is bad until they open it. Then they have to throw it away. It is like throwing money away.

Frozen Food

Quinlan said that poor people should try to get fresh food. But sometimes the food is rotten. She said it is better to throw it away.

Fresh fruits and vegetables go bad quickly. Quinlan said that frozen food is a safe choice. People can also buy canned and dried food. These foods last longer.

But sometimes people do not have frozen food. Or they cannot pay for canned and dried food. They have to eat whatever they can find.

Benjamin Chapman works on food safety. He said he understands why the poor eat unsafe food. It is better than eating nothing at all, he said.

Winter Usually Brings Snow and Water to California, but It’s Still Dry

California is very dry right now. Very little rain has fallen there for a long time. It is a big problem for California’s farmers.

California grows more fruits and vegetables than any other state. Farming takes a lot of water. Now farmers have to change the way they grow their crops.

Last year, California farmers stopped using some of their land. They were told to not use it to save water. They took part of their farmland and set it aside. They did not plant any crops on it. They knew the plants’ roots would drink all of the water.
Now scientists say farmers might have to set aside twice as much land this year. They say the dry weather in 2015 will be much worse than it was in 2014.

**Fewer Farm Jobs In California**

Wendy Fink-Weber works for a group that speaks for farmers. She says California lost about 17,000 farm jobs in 2014. She says that could mean more work for farmers in other states.

Farmers in other states could start planting some of the crops California cannot grow. But they could only plant the ones that would grow right away. Plants like almonds will not work. Almonds can take three to seven years of growing before they are ready to sell.

Farmers cannot stop growing on land where they planted fruit and nut trees. The farmers would have to pull up all of the trees and start over.

Instead, farmers will work on keeping the trees alive. The farmers will not water the trees a lot. They would grow larger and more delicious crops, but it would use up a lot of water. Instead, farmers will water the trees just enough to keep them alive.

**There Are Water Rules To Follow**

Dry weather is normal in California. But it has gone a long time with no rain. Now California has to use more groundwater.

Groundwater is water in underground pools, like water from a well. The pools form naturally. They take a long time to fill back up on their own.

In the spring, melting snow usually gives the state water. The water from the snow can be used to water farmers’ plants. This year, there was only a little bit of snow.

California has made new laws because of the water shortage. The laws say how much water people can use. Farmers do not have to follow some of the rules because water is such an important part of their jobs.

Many people want to help the farmers. Richard Howitt, who teaches at the University of California, wants to help, too.

He says farmers should grow different kinds of crops. When dry weather hits, the crops that need the most water could die. The plants that do not need much water might be OK.

Original version by the Scripps National Desk, adapted by Newsela ([newsela.com](http://newsela.com)). [https://newsela.com/articles/drought-jobs/id/8686/](https://newsela.com/articles/drought-jobs/id/8686/).
A Fruit Farm in a City

CHICAGO, Ill. — Breanne Heath had a big idea. She wanted to start a garden in Chicago.

Chicago is a big city. There is not a lot of land for gardens. Still, Breanne found the perfect patch of dirt. Now she has a small farm. She calls it The Pie Patch.

Berries And Pumpkins

It is a place where people can pick fruits and vegetables. The Pie Patch is on Chicago’s South Side. The farm sells fruits and vegetables. People can buy berries. They can also buy pumpkins. People can pick the fruits and vegetables from the garden.

Breanne loves gardening. She loves helping people, too. There are very few farms near Chicago. Breanne wanted to pick her own apples or strawberries. The closest place to go was outside of the state. She had an idea. She wanted to make it easy for people in Chicago to find fresh, healthy food.

And Veggies Too

Breanne works with a charity. It is called Su Casa. The charity helps women and children. Su Casa helps Breanne care for the garden. Su Casa then gets to keep some of the fruits and vegetables. They use the garden to feed the women and children.

Many people live in Chicago’s South Side. There are not a lot of places to buy healthy food there. The garden helps.

From The Garden

The Pie Patch makes it easy to find healthy food. Breanne also wants the food to be cheap.

The Pie Patch will open around June. Breanne hopes the farm is special. She wants people to like going there.

Original version by the Chicago Tribune, adapted by Newsela (newsela.com). https://newsela.com/articles/urban-fruit/id/8875/.
Have you ever built a model? A model is a small copy of something. People make models of buildings, cars, and many other things. Models can be fun to build. They also can communicate ideas to other people.

Let’s say your town wants to build a playground. However, the town has only a small amount of money to spend.

People are chosen to design and build the playground. They know they must keep costs low. The design team decides to save money by reusing materials. The team will use old tires to make swings. The designers will recycle plastic bottles and milk jugs to make rides. Someone suggests building play tunnels out of old plastic tubes.

Those ideas will save money. The ideas will also help the earth by not making more trash.

The team builds a model using recycled materials. The designers bring their model to the town leaders. The leaders look it over. They ask lots of questions. The leaders ask for some changes, but they like what they see.

The model helps everyone understand how the playground can work. Soon, the playground is built. It looks like the model, only much bigger!

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Meet Our Founder: Alexandra Scott

Alexandra "Alex" Scott was born to Liz and Jay Scott in Manchester, Connecticut on January 18, 1996, the second of four children. Shortly before her first birthday, Alex was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a type of childhood cancer...

She appeared to be beating the odds, until the shattering discovery within the next year that her tumors had started growing again. In the year 2000, the day after her fourth birthday, Alex received a stem cell transplant and informed her mother, "When I get out of the hospital I want to have a lemonade stand." She said she wanted to give the money to doctors to allow them to "help other kids, like they helped me." True to her word, she held her first lemonade stand later that year with the help of her older brother and raised an amazing $2,000 for her hospital.

While bravely battling her own cancer, Alex and her family continued to hold yearly lemonade stands in her front yard to benefit childhood cancer research. News spread of the remarkable sick child dedicated to helping other sick children. People from all over the world, moved by her story, held their own lemonade stands and donated the proceeds to Alex and her cause...

Here’s What Alex Had to Say about Herself in 2004

I’m Alex, I’m 8 years old. I have Neuroblastoma and I raise money for pediatric cancer research with the help of other kids and grown ups through my lemonade stand. I give the money I raise to research to find cures for pediatric cancers.

Full Name - Alexandra Flynn Scott  Birthday - January 18, 1996

Who Do I Live With?

My parents, my brother Patrick, my brother Eddie, my brother Joey, my dog Shammy, and my cute kitten Herbert.

Where Do I Live?

I live in Pennsylvania, right down the street from Philadelphia.

Favorite Colors - Blue and Purple

School - 2nd Grade

Favorite Food - French Fries

Favorite Animal - Penguin

Favorite Part of School - Everything

Favorite Book - Junie B. Jones series and The Little House on The Prairie books
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