

## Herschel Puppet Teaching Activities

Use some of these creative ways to use the Herschel Puppet to teach economics and personal finance to your students. Before doing these, students should view the *Herschel's World of Economics* DVD, available at [www.kidseconposters.com](http://www.kidseconposters.com).

**Reenact the Original DVD:** In pairs, have students act out some of the scenes they saw on the DVD. This is a great way to reinforce the basic concepts, and is an excellent activity for a learning center.

**Herschel Asks Questions:** For review, have Herschel ask the class some simple questions about a Herschel lesson. The teacher could be Herschel, but students (or another adult) can also take turns being Herschel. For example, after viewing Lesson 1 on Goods and Services, the puppet could ask the students question such as these:

- “Hey, boys and girls, what were some of my **economic wants**?”
- “What were some of the **goods** that I wanted?”
- “What were some of the **services** that I wanted?”

There are also several questions from the Herschel Teacher’s Guide (HOT LINK) that you can use.

More generally, after students have viewed all six of the programs, Herschel can ask questions about all the economic concepts: e.g. “When I had to choose which candy bar to eat, I was facing what kind of economic problem?” (scarcity) “What is one of the four characteristics of money?” (durable) “When Molly traded a doggie treat to Spot for a baseball card, who benefited, Molly, Spot, or both?” (both Molly and Spot!).

**Identifying Specific Goods and Services:** Have Herschel describe a specific good or service. (Or this activity could be used to describe particular productive resources.) Students in the audience must tell: a. what it is and b. identify it as a good or service. Examples: “I am something you can eat that is red and round that grows on trees.” (a. apple b. good) “I am a person who fixes your car.” (a. mechanic b. service)

Before this activity begins, for an assignment, each student should come up with 2-3 questions, then can take turns being Herschel.

To make it more exciting, add a bit of competition. Divide the class up in teams and see which team can get the most correct answers. In fact, team competitions can be used for several of these puppet teaching activities.

**Identifying Other Economic Concepts:** The Identifying Goods and Services Activity above can be modified to teach other economic concepts introduced in *Herschel*. For example, Herschel could ask similar questions about the different kinds of productive resources. Examples: “What productive resource is wet and is needed for life? a. water b. natural resource What productive resource does a carpenter use to hammer nails? a. hammer b. capital resource. What kind of productive resource gives you a shot at the doctor’s office? a. nurse b. human resource.

**Ask Herschel a Question!:** As a twist on the activities above, have students volunteer to be Herschel. Then the teacher or other students can ask Herschel a question, such as, “Herschel, is a shirt a good or a service?”

**Have Older Students Use Herschel to Teach the Younger Students:** The old adage is true – you learn something best by having to teach it! So why not have some of the older students teach the younger students? Using the Herschel puppet is a perfect way to do this. The older students could do several of the teaching ideas mentioned here, but could also create their own teaching ideas.

**Creating More Herschel Episodes:** Discuss economic concepts not covered in the six Herschel DVD lessons. After discussing these concepts, place students into groups. Give each group a different KidsEcon Poster (HOTLINK) associated with the economic concepts that were discussed. (e.g. Saving or Profit) Have each group write a new episode featuring their economic concept. The students would need to write the dialog and have members of the group act out their episode for the rest of the class. Students could even record them onto videotape or DVD as an addition to the original Herschel DVD and make it available for other teachers and classrooms. Videos could also be entered in a contest much like the Economics Calendar Contest. (HOTLINK)

**Herschel Keeper:** Each day or week a student could be chosen as the “Herschel Keeper.” This student would be responsible for handing out and collecting materials during economic instruction time. One way to choose a student to be the “Herschel Keeper” would be to correctly answer a question(s) about previously covered economic concepts or be the top scorer on an economics quiz or on Herschel’s Test of Economics. (HOT LINK TO TEST).

**Herschel Goes Comparison Shopping!:** “Herschel and Me” could be a writing and math activity for a student who gets to take Herschel home over the weekend. The assignment would be for the student (along with Herschel) to visit a store (or stores) and compare brands of dog food, treats, doggie toys, dog bowls, etc. The student could make a chart of his or her findings, such as the difference in prices for different brands, price differences at different stores, etc. The student should write about the trip to the store and give a report to the class on Monday. A special small backpack or other type of carrier could be purchased to transport Herschel safely to and from the classroom.

**Producing Doggie Treats:** Classrooms with classroom businesses could produce doggie treats. There are many recipes on the Internet, including the recipe (HOT LINK) found on the KidsEcon Posters site. Herschel could be used in the marketing and advertising of their product. (Herschel says, “Our treats are YUMMY”, etc.) Students could produce posters and write advertisements featuring Herschel that could be put up around the school or read on the morning or evening announcements.