
John L. Morris

Bass Pro Shop

By M. Karen Hubbard

LESSON DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will read a story about entrepreneur, John Morris, who began Bass Pro Shop in Springfield, Missouri. They will discuss the story they read and do the “Profit – Loss” activity sheet.

ECONOMIC CONCEPTS

- entrepreneur
- total revenue
- total cost
- profit
- three basic economic questions
- intermediate goods
- capital resources

RELATED SUBJECTS

- reading comprehension
- math
- map reading

MATERIALS

- One copy of “John L. Morris” reading for each student
- One copy of Activity 1 – “Profit or Loss” sheet for each student.

TIME

- 45 minutes

PROCEDURE

1. Read the story about John L. Morris and instruct the students to listen to details about how his bait and worm shop grew to become the Bass Pro Shop. Ask “what do you call a story about a person’s life?” (biography)
2. Discuss:
 - In 1971, what type of business did John L. Morris begin? (homemade bait and worms shop)
 - What did he name his shop? (Bass Pro Shop)

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- What happened in 1974? (sent first mail order catalog through the mail)
 - What happened to their mail order catalog shortly after that? (Bass Pro Shop catalog became largest mail order catalog in the world)
 - Would this help or hinder the company? How? (help the company by making it possible to purchase sporting goods through the mail even though there may not be a Bass Pro Shop close by; this increased the amount of customers the company could serve)
 - What is the “Outdoor World Showroom” and when/where was it begun? (gigantic store for outdoor sports, began in 1984 in Springfield, Missouri)
 - Look on a Missouri map and located Springfield, Missouri. In what part of the state is Springfield located? (southwest part of the state)
3. Explain that John L. Morris was an “entrepreneur,” someone who thinks of a good or service that someone would like to buy and produces it. An entrepreneur takes a risk that people will not like the good or service, and that all of the time, effort, and money he or she has spent to make the product will have been for nothing.
4. Explain that to begin his business he had to answer three basic economic questions: what to produce, how to produce, and for whom to produce. Ask the following questions:
- What did John L. Morris produce? (a place to sell sporting goods) Explain that goods are objects that people can see or touch that can satisfy wants, and in Mr. Morris’ case, the goods have to do with hunting, fishing, boating, etc.
 - How did Mr. Morris produce this place for selling sporting goods? (he used the money he made from selling the goods, or borrowed from a bank, in order to build more space to sell a larger variety of goods)
 - For whom did Mr. Morris produce this place for selling sporting goods? (people who like to hunt, fish, boat, etc.; tourists)
5. Explain that profit is income for entrepreneurs and is an incentive that encourages them to risk their money and resources. Explain that Mr. Morris wanted to make a profit, so he needed many customers. He decided to advertise his business. Ask the following questions:
- How did Mr. Morris advertise? (catalog, internet)
 - What are some other ways Mr. Morris probably advertises? (billboards, word of mouth)
 - Was his idea of a place to sell sporting goods a good idea? (Yes)
 - How do you know? (Bass Pro Shop in Springfield, Missouri, is the biggest tourist attraction in the state and he has about 30 stores nationwide and one in Canada.)
 - How does Mr. Morris use some of his profits? (He uses some of his profits to buy his family food, clothing, shelter, etc.)
 - How does Mr. Morris use some of his profit to help his business? (Some of his profits are put back into the business to help it grow – buy resources.)
 - What resources would he want to help his business grow? (For example: natural - a piece of ground for the buildings, fish for tanks; capital: buildings,

cash registers, computers, racks for displays; human: employees;
entrepreneur: John L. Morris)

- Explain that intermediate goods are not considered resources. They are things made by people and are used up in the production process, such as paper for cash register receipts, shopping bags, etc.
 - What else does Mr. Morris do with some of the profit he makes? (He contributes millions of dollars every year to conservation and restoration efforts of America's natural landscapes, charities, and educate people about the outdoors.)
 - Have any of you been to any of the Bass Pro Shops? If yes, which one? What was it like?
6. Remind students that Mr. Morris was in business to make a profit. As a reminder, ask the class what are the three things Mr. Morris did with his profits. The activity sheet that they are going to do is about a girl named Katy who wants to open a lemonade stand in order to make money. The students will use their math knowledge to help Katy figure out if she is making a profit. Distribute the "Profit – Loss" activity sheet to the class.
7. After the students have worked and corrected the activity sheet, tell them that this is an example of what Mr. Morris has to do to know if he is making a profit – but on a larger scale. Mr. Morris needs math skills just like the students are learning to help him with his business.

EXTENSION

Teacher could invite an entrepreneur from the community to discuss their risk and benefits of starting a business.

Name _____

ACTIVITY – PROFIT OR LOSS

Read the following story and use the information to work the problems.

Katy wanted to open a lemonade stand. She made a list of things she needed. She went to her mother to ask for the materials to produce the lemonade. Her mother said that the lemonade stand was a business and they would treat it like a REAL business. Her mother took Katy to the store to get the prices of the goods she would need. Her mother would charge her a rental fee of \$1.00 per day for use of the capital resources.

INTERMEDIATE GOODS (things made by people and are used up in the production process)

CAPTIAL RESOURCES (things made by people which are used to make other things and which are NOT used up in the production process)

Lemonade mix	\$3.00
Sugar	\$1.50
Cups	\$2.00 (40 cups)
Napkins	\$2.50 (250 napkins)
Ice	\$1.80 (10 lbs. bag)
Poster board	\$1.00 (sign)

Pitcher
Spoon
Measuring cup
Cooler (holds ice)
Table

Katy figured that she would charge \$1.00 per cup. The first day she sold 10 cups. Did she make a profit or loss?

1. **TOTAL REVENUE** = Price x Quantity = _____
 2. **TOTAL COST** = Add the costs of producing the lemonade = _____
 3. When **TOTAL REVENUE > TOTAL COST = PROFIT**
Is _____ > _____ = _____ (yes or no)
 4. Did Katy make a profit? _____ (yes or no) Why?
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On the second day, she sold 20 cups of lemonade. Did she make a profit?

5. **TOTAL REVENUE** = Price x Quantity = _____
6. **TOTAL COST** = Add the costs of producing the lemonade minus cups, napkins, poster board. Why are we not adding these in today?
7. When **TOTAL REVENUE > TOTAL COST = PROFIT**
Is _____ > _____ = _____ (yes or no)
8. Did Katy make a profit? _____ (yes or no) Why?
9. On the back of this paper, tell if Mr. Morris would keep selling a product that was not making a profit. Explain why.

ACTIVITY – PROFIT OR LOSS
ANSWER SHEET

1. TOTAL REVENUE - $\$1.00 \times 10 = \10.00
2. TOTAL COST - $\$12.80$
3. $\$10.00 < \12.80 - No profit
4. Katy did not make a profit because she was not able to make enough money to pay for her intermediate goods and rental and still have some money left over.
5. TOTAL REVENUE - $\$1.00 \times 20 = \20.00
6. TOTAL COST = $\$12.80 - \$5.50 = \$7.30$
There were enough cups and napkins for the second day and only one sign was needed.
7. $\$20.00 > \7.30 – Profit
8. Katy did make a profit the second day because she was able to make enough money to pay for her intermediate goods and rental and still have some money left over.

John L. Morris

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John L. Morris was born in southeast Missouri and grew up to be a big fan of fishing. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in business and economics. In 1971, his love of fishing led John to start a business selling homemade bait and worms in eight feet of space in his father's store in Springfield, Missouri. John named his shop the Bass Pro Shop. He did quite well in this location and in 1974, Bass Pro Shop sent its first catalog through the mail. It did not take long for Bass Pro to become the largest mail order sporting goods store in the world. A few years later, John started making boats with the name "Tracker Boats". In 1984, John began construction on the Outdoor World Showroom in Springfield, Missouri. The Outdoor World Showroom is a gigantic store for outdoor sports like fishing, boating, hunting, camping, etc. It is large enough to house streams, trees, a huge saltwater aquarium, a four-story waterfall, and more.

John Morris' company has grown to more than thirty stores in nine states in the United States and one in Canada. The company launched a website in 1996 and has since become one of the largest online shops selling outdoor sporting goods. There are more than eleven thousand employees working for the company. The original store in Springfield is still the most famous location for the Bass Pro Shop company. It actually has become the biggest tourist attraction in Missouri. This means that people who vacation in Missouri visit John's store more than anything else in the state. More than four million people visit the store each year, and most of these visitors spend more than three hours in the store. That is a lot of time to spend shopping in one store! The company sells two billion dollars worth of goods every single year, and its mail order catalog is sent to more than thirty-four million people. That is nearly six times the number of people that live in Missouri.

Bass Pro Shop donates millions of dollars every year to conservation and restoration efforts of natural landscapes because John loves nature and knows that without it there would not be any outdoor sports. The company donates money to many different charities every year like the Muscular Dystrophy Association and education of people about the outdoors and responsible stewardship of nature.

John Morris and his company have made, and continue to make, a huge economic impact in Missouri and around the country.