



## Lily Learns About Wants and Needs by Lisa Bullard

This book follows Lily and her dad as they consider their wants and needs. This is a quick read with many opportunities for discussion. This exercise provides the opportunity to:

1. Teach the concept that individuals have limited amounts of money that they can spend;
2. Differentiate between wants and needs, and how they impact different peoples' decisions;
3. Explore the choices people must make when determining how to use their money.

**Time Limit:** 40 minutes

### Supplies Needed:

- *Lily Learns about Wants and Needs* by Lisa Bullard
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Worksheet copies for all students



## Wants and Needs in Everyday Situations

**(1) (5 minutes)** Have you ever thought about the difference between something you want and something you need? *Take brief responses.* For example, if you went to a toy store and could pick out any one item, what would it be? *Allow for answers, writing them down on a white board. You'll revisit these items later in the activity.* Toys are exciting. There are probably many that you feel you must have.

**(2) (10 minutes)** Today we're going to read a short story about a young person, Lily, whose father teaches her the difference between wants and needs. A want is a thing you enjoy but could live without. A need is something you must have to survive. *Read the story.*

**(3) Go to page 5.** While shopping at the sporting goods store, Lily said she needed to buy a bike to play outside more. Dad noted that a need is something we must have. Do you need a bike to play outside?

Answer: No. You can play outside without riding a bike. Are there things you do need to play outside? (Shoes, sunscreen, a coat, etc.)

**(4) Go to page 7.** People's wants and needs can change depending on their priorities. After being told she couldn't buy a bike, Lily asked to buy a skateboard, saying she needed it to exercise outside. Dad reminded her that she can play outside without the added expense of a skateboard. Was the skateboard a want or a need? *Take student answers.* What is something that you want but don't need? *You can refer to the list created at the start of the lesson, if desired. Discuss.*

**(5) Go to page 9.** Later in the day while shopping, dad and Lily agreed that she needed a raincoat. Price is the cost of something that is bought or sold. Lily suggested a coat for the price of \$30.00. Dad suggested that they search for other options before making a final decision. Why did dad suggest the coat that was on sale for \$20.00?



Answer: People have a limited amount of money to spend and it can be spent only once. Because money is not unlimited, people have to make choices when they shop.

**(6) Go to page 11.** Lily joked that she didn't need to go to the dentist because some of her teeth had already fallen out. Is a visit to the dentist or doctor a want or a need? **Discuss.** A need is very different from a want -- in some cases you may have a need, like medicine, to be safe and healthy. If a person has to choose between a want or a pressing need and they have limited money, which should they pick first?

Answer: Needs come before wants. Some choices are necessary. Because money is not unlimited, a person may need to prioritize a need over something that they want. One person's needs may be greater than another's, which can also impact a person's decisions.

**(7) Go to page 14.** While shopping at the grocery store, Lily and her dad had to make choices about how they spent their money. Lily asked why root beer was on the shopping list. Is soda a want or need?

Answer: Soda is a want. Dad really wanted soda, because he liked the taste, but he had to make a choice about how to spend his money. His final decision was to pay for needs, like milk and toilet paper, before spending money on his want of soda.

**(8) Go to page 20.** Because Lily and her dad made smart choices at the grocery store, they were able to make a decision about how to use some of their leftover money. What did they decide to buy?

Answer: They decided to buy ice cream.

**(9)** If you are able to buy everything you need and you have some money left over, you have the choice to buy something that you want too!

**For Younger Students** show the Iowa Bankers Association video segment "Needs vs. Wants" prior to taking up the worksheets. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lUf31KlIFr8>. This 56 second long video can prompt additional discussion and may spur a longer conversation about what we need and want we want.

**For Older Students** consider undertaking the wants and needs poster activity described on page 22 of *Lily Learns About Wants and Needs*. This activity will require old magazines and catalogs, scissors, and glue sticks. Ask students to consider why three of the four quadrants are for needs instead of wants. This will provide an opportunity to discuss how most purchases made in life are to cover needs over wants.