



Saturday Sancocho

(GPN #133 / PBS #1303)

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Program Description: LeVar tries to determine the value of items at a neighborhood swap meet, and viewers hear a young auctioneer and a baseball card collector talk about how much objects are worth.

Math Concepts:

- weight
- money values
- equal values
- measurement
- a dozen
- estimation
- graphing
- ordinals

• **Concept of a dozen.** Brainstorm with students items which are often purchased by the dozen or in packages of twelve (e.g., eggs, cookies, doughnuts, cans of soft drinks, etc.). Have them look around the classroom and collect items in twelves, such as 12 books, 12 crayons, 12 pencils, 12 paper clips, and the like. Extend the discussion to include things that typically come in 2's, 3's, 4's, etc.

• **Graphing Saturday fun.** Take a survey of students' favorite activities to do on a Saturday and graph the results. To make a larger graph, survey other classrooms at the same grade level. Display the graph where all participating classrooms can see it and give it a title such as, "Third Graders' Favorite Things to do on a Saturday."

• **Estimating and determining weight.** Bring in a selection of vegetables, such as a potato, an ear of corn, a tomato, some green beans, an onion, a few carrots, etc., that could be the ingredients in a sancocho (stew). Have students estimate the weight of individual vegetables. Record their predictions on a chart and then weigh the items. Discuss whether their estimates were higher, lower, or just right. Pose some problems comparing the weights of the vegetables, such as, "How many carrots will equal the weight of one ear of corn?" Have students make up their own weight problems. Again, have them estimate before they weigh and then check the accuracy of all predictions. Use the vegetables to make stew. Discuss with students the importance of measurement, cooking time, and cooking temperature as they prepare the stew.

- **Determining value.** Collect a set of objects that would likely appeal to the students, such as a soccer ball, a stuffed animal, a board game, a book, a hand-held computer game, a collectible doll, a popular video, a puzzle, a baseball bat, and the like. Display the objects in groups of three. Give each student three small pieces of construction paper with the numerals, one, two, or three, written on them. Have students consider what each of the three objects on display is worth to them and show a “one,” if the item is very valuable; “two,” if they have no strong feelings one way or another; and “three,” if the object is worth little to them. The purpose of this activity is not monetary value; instead, students are to think about what the objects are worth personally to them. Discuss how people’s interests, hobbies, recreational activities, etc., often determine what they consider valuable. This activity may be extended further by making a list of the items with a 1, 2, and 3 next to the name and recording tally marks to represent the students’ designations of worth. Use this chart to draw additional conclusions about value.

- **Bartering at a swap meet.** As a class, plan a swap meet that deals entirely in items made by the students. These tradable items might include the following: pictures drawn or painted by students (perhaps in paper frames); books and poems written and illustrated by class members; bookmarks; book jackets; puzzles (pictures mounted on tagboard and then cut into puzzle pieces); paperbag, stick, paper plate, or sock puppets; student-made board or card games; student-made trading cards (on popular subjects, such as dinosaurs, dogs, members of the class, or on topics they have studied, such as birds, mammals, etc.); and other ideas the students have for items they can make. When items are finished, display them on tables in the classroom so that students may browse for things they might be interested in bartering for. Have a “swap meet afternoon” and encourage students to talk about why (in terms of value and worth to them) they would trade items they made for certain other items.

- **Using ordinal numbers to recall the story.** Maria Lili and Mama Ana made ten trades altogether at the market. Make ten cards for a pocket chart with the ordinal words, first through tenth, written on them. Have students recall the story and brainstorm the trades that were made. Record the trades on sentence strips for the pocket chart. (At a later time, students may want to draw pictures or paste cutouts of the appropriate foods on the sentence strips.) Place the ordinal word cards on the chart and have the students decide which trade occurred at each stop in the marketplace. Allow them to refer to the book if needed.

Do-At-Home Activity

- **Practical math.** At a parent night or family math event or in classroom newsletter, make the following recommendations to parents:

Take children shopping and discuss how to compare prices. (For example, at the grocery store, a bigger size is often a better value, but only if you can use it.) Have children look at grocery ads for coupons and sale prices. Show them how to find prices on items at the store and how to search for lower priced items. Talk about the importance of buying better quality in some food items and how a less expensive brand will serve the purpose with other foods. When shopping for clothes, shoes, and other items, talk with children about how you go about deciding what is a good value. Also, encourage children to think about how much they want an item (Will they wear it?, Will they play with it?, Do they already have something similar?) rather than simply responding to an advertisement they have seen.

Occasionally, let children buy a small item for themselves, so that they learn the value of different coins, how to figure if they have enough money for the item and how to determine if they receive the correct amount of change.

When children accompany you to yard or garage sales, flea markets, or auctions, discuss the value of items you are considering and why you feel the way you do. Observe how people often negotiate prices and discuss why they do this.

Let children help prepare meals. Have them assist with reading recipes and measuring ingredients. Give them the responsibility of figuring out how many plates, knives, forks, and spoons are needed to set the table. When company is coming for dinner, have them determine how many extra chairs and the additional tableware that is needed.