



## TRADING FOR LIBERTY! Barter Puzzle Activity

### Teacher Prep

Print and cut the following documents for supplies.

- Colony/Country Barter Instruction Sheet
- Barter Bucks
- Barter Puzzle Pictures (2 tabs)
- Barter Puzzles with Cut Lines Folder: Puzzle #1; Puzzle #2; Puzzle #3; Puzzle #4; Puzzle #5; Puzzle #6; Puzzle #7; Puzzle #8

### Best Practice Suggestions

If possible, laminate the barter bucks, puzzle pictures, and puzzle pieces so they can be reused. When printing out the puzzle pictures, put the number of the puzzle on the back of the puzzle before laminating. Do the same with the puzzle pieces and label them 1-12. For example, the top left puzzle piece of Puzzle #1 could be labeled #1-1, and the bottom right puzzle piece of Puzzle #1 could be labeled #1-12. Do this before laminating or if done afterward, label with a sharpie marker and put a piece of tape over the writing so it doesn't rub off. Use a Ziploc bag for each puzzle so that when it is time to hand out puzzle pieces, they can easily be split between the 8 bags and handed out to groups.

### Instructions

Students should be split into 4-5 groups (colonies). Any remaining puzzles not being utilized by a group should be traded by individuals (or by the teacher). The first round will represent England's mercantile system, the second round will represent tariff-based trade, and the third round will represent free trade.

Each group should be given the "Colony/Country Barter Instructions Sheet" and they should decide which picture they will be trying to solve for prior to receiving their bag (which should have a puzzle picture, 12 puzzle pieces and 10 barter bucks). In their bags are the puzzles and pieces they will need to use to trade for all rounds.

- Note: The puzzle can only be chosen once, so every group (or individual) needs to have a different puzzle before the rounds begin.

## **ROUND 1**

For the first 5-minute round, instructions will be very strict. In order for students to get a puzzle piece to trade with, colonies must use barter bucks and only trade with individuals representing England. Each individual who represents England will have a different “cost of barter bucks” that will be required for trade. The teacher should establish this prior to the round starting.

- Note: It is highly unlikely that any groups will be able to complete their puzzle in 5 minutes due to the slow speed of trade and the limit of barter bucks being spent.

## **ROUND 2**

Prior to the second round, colonies will determine what they require for trade based on the information on the instruction sheet. Whatever is decided must be used by that colony for trading during the second round. It is important to note that no trade can happen unless the other colony is willing to accept that trade. Their acceptance (or not) of the trade must be based on their own previously decided trading criteria. Former representatives of England now represent a country and must determine criteria for their trade as well.

Let the groups trade for 5 more minutes and see if there are any who have completed their full puzzle.

- Note: The first three groups do get extra points for completing their puzzle and they also get extra points for how many barter bucks they end up with as well. The teacher should encourage students to consider how to keep “earning” barter bucks. Another option is to use the Earn Your Barter Bucks Tasks list and have a designated place where groups could send a student representative to complete a task to “earn” more barter bucks.

## **ROUND 3**

Prior to the third and last round, colonies and countries can decide how they will spend their time in a 3-minute lighting free trade round. They should calculate how many pieces are needed before they complete their puzzle and how many Barter Bucks they have. The end goal is to not only make sure every Colony and Country completes their puzzle but also that each Colony and Country is better off than before they started (by at least one Barter Buck). If the “Earn Your Barter Bucks Tasks” list is used, there should be a limit of only 3 tasks completed per Colony or Country during this round.

## Scoring:

- Completed Puzzle of the Chosen Image: 10 points
- 1st to Complete Puzzle Bonus: 10 points
- 2nd to Complete Puzzle Bonus: 6 points
- 3rd to Complete Puzzle Bonus: 3 point
- Barter Bucks: 2 points for each over the original 10
- Colony/Country not having either a Completed Puzzle or Barter Bucks: -10 for everyone

## Student Reflection:

The teacher should have students reflect on some of the following questions. They can do this verbally or in written format.

- Which round felt the most frustrating, and why?
- When you couldn't finish your puzzle in the first round, how did that make you feel about the rules?
- How did the trading rules affect your ability to trust or cooperate with other groups in the first two rounds? What happened when you knew that the goal in the last round was to make sure every colony and country finished their puzzle AND was at least one barter buck better than what they started with?
- In what ways did trade rules limit your freedom to make decisions for your group?
- If you lived under a government that always told you who to trade with and how much to pay, how might you respond over time?
- Why did most groups struggle to finish their puzzles under England's rules? What does that teach us about restrictions and tariffs?
- What changed in the second round when colonies could set their own trade criteria? Did it make trade easier or harder? Why?
- In the final round of free trade, what happened to the speed and fairness of trading? Did more groups succeed? Why do you think that is?
- The Declaration of Independence complained that Britain had "cut off our trade with all parts of the world." Based on this activity, why do you think that grievance was so important to the colonists?
- Adam Smith said people should be able to buy goods from "those who sell it cheapest." How did your free trade round connect to that idea?
- How might frustration with mercantilism and tariffs have helped push colonists toward independence?

- What does this activity teach us about why free trade is often connected to liberty?
- Do you think economic freedom (being able to buy, sell, and trade freely) is as important today as it was for the colonists? Why or why not?