

LEVELED BOOK • Q

Who Likes Lemonade?



Written by Karen Mockler
Illustrated by Nicholas Jackson

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Focus Question

What lesson does Mike learn from having a lemonade stand?



Mike McCarthy wanted a Super Spy Kit like his friend Derek's. The kit had see-in-the-dark specs and Super Ears—whatever those are—and it was awesome. At eight years old, though, Mike had enough life experience to know he was no good at saving money. Saving up seventy-five dollars to buy a new kit was out of the question.

Fortunately, Mike's friend Derek had offered to sell Mike his used kit for a third of that price. If Mike could get one big **influx** of cash, he could hand Derek twenty-five dollars and make the spy kit his.

He needed to sell something, but what?

Mike had seen those other kids with their art sales and homemade bracelets. The only people who bought their stuff were their parents, and that was because they had no choice.

Mike was no charity case. He would sell a product so wonderful that everyone would want it.

He would sell lemonade, but not the sickly yellow powder kind. It had to be the kind that made people's lips pucker. It had to make their taste buds fire off "Sweet!" and "Sour!" with a quick one-two punch.



“Mom,” Mike asked, “can Aster and I have a lemonade stand?”

Aster was Mike’s little sister. She was missing some teeth, and he figured her smile would help draw in customers.

“You can,” said his mom, “but not like last summer’s.”

Mike frowned and tried to remember last summer’s.

Mom frowned, too. “You got bored and wandered away,” she said.

“The problem,” Mike said, “was that the lemonade was not high quality. This time I’m gonna make **artisanal** lemonade, from scratch.”

Mrs. McCarthy snorted. “Is that right?” she asked.

“That’s right,” Mike said. “I’ll use **organic** lemons, and organic sugar, and organic water.”

“Sounds expensive,” she said.

“You get what you pay for,” Mike said.

"And who will pay for these artisanal ingredients?" she asked. "You?"

"Sure," said Mike, "as long as I get to keep the profits."

He made a list for his mom: two lemons, one bag of sugar, paper cups.

"Two lemons will make about two cups of lemonade," she said.

Mike did the math. Fake lemonade might go for fifty cents a cup, but real, organic lemonade could go for twice that. He needed twenty-five dollars to buy Derek's kit. That meant he needed to sell at least twenty-five cups of lemonade.

Math Minute

If Mike sold his lemonade for \$2 a cup, how many cups would he need to sell in order to buy Derek's kit?

What if he sold the lemonade for \$0.75 a cup?



Answer 1: 13 cups Answer 2: 34 cups

Mike revised his shopping list. “Okay, thirty lemons,” he announced.

His mother whistled. “Lemons are out of **season** now,” she said. “Lemons come ripe in the winter.”

Mike laughed in disbelief. “Who wants to drink lemonade in the winter?”

“Nobody,” said his mom.

“Right,” Mike said. He was winning this argument!

Mrs. McCarthy shook her head. “Those lemons will eat straight into your **profit margin**,” she said.

Mike doubted that. If lemons were out of season, people would find fresh lemonade that much more irresistible. It stood to reason.

So Mike’s mom bought him thirty organic lemons and two bags of organic sugar. She **donated** a stack of cups left over from a Christmas party. Aster helped her brother draw a big banner to hang off their picnic table.



They opened their lemonade stand at three o'clock the next afternoon. Adults loved the lemonade, kids loved the lemonade, and business **boomed**. Aster smiled at everyone and ran back into the house every twenty minutes to fetch more ice. Mike sat under a large umbrella, pouring drinks and taking money.

Derek showed up and asked for a free sample. Mike poured an inch of fresh lemonade into a cup. Derek drank it and licked his lips.

“Hey,” Derek said, “I’m selling you my spy kit at a **discount**. How about you give me the same discount on a glass of this stuff?”

Mike narrowed his eyes . . . and sold his friend a cup for thirty-three cents.

Derek handed him a quarter and a dime. “Keep the change,” he said.





By five o'clock, they had run out of lemonade, and that was fine. Mike knew exactly how much money was in the box: \$27.35. He handed his sister \$1.35.

"You don't have to pay me," Aster said.

"You earned it, sis," he replied. Then Mike marched inside.



"I made twenty-six dollars," he announced **triumphantly** to his mom, "after I paid my employee."

"Is that your gross profit," his mom asked, "or your net?"

"One of those," Mike said.

"Have a seat," said Mrs. McCarthy. She explained that *gross profit* was the amount of money from sales. *Net profit* was the amount of money *left* from sales *after* the costs were subtracted.

Mike had a sinking feeling in his stomach. For the first time, he studied the grocery receipt his mom had handed him the day before.

“These lemons are sixty-nine cents each,” Mike said, stunned. He knew money didn’t grow on trees, but lemons did! How could anything from nature cost so much? Now Mike understood: *out of season* = *expensive*.

Then Mike did some more math: 30 lemons at \$0.69 each equaled \$20.70. The organic sugar was \$6.80. The total cost was \$27.50.

Math Minute

Thirty lemons cost Mike **\$20.70**. If he only wanted to spend **\$7** on lemons, how many lemons could he buy?

If the lemons only cost **\$0.30** each, how many lemons would **\$7** buy?



Answer 1: 10 Answer 2: 23



Mike slid the box and its twenty-six-dollar contents across to his mom. When he spoke, his voice was scratchy and hard to hear.

“I owe you a buck fifty,” he said.

Aster tried to give him back her money, but Mike shook his head.

Mrs. McCarthy smiled at both of them with tears in her eyes. “I’m so proud of you two,” she said.

“I’m the one who should be crying,” Mike said. “I’m a total failure.”



His mom grabbed him and kissed his head. "Not you," she said. "Besides, I saved you something."

She opened the refrigerator and pulled out a cup of lemonade.

"Aster told me you weren't drinking any," she explained. "Do you know how good it is?"

Mike shrugged and took a sip. His lips puckered and his taste buds fired off a quick one-two punch. His lemonade was delicious.

“That’s a quality product,” she said, smiling. “So good, in fact, I set aside two more cups for your sister and me.”

Mrs. McCarthy slid fifty cents back across to Mike. Then the three of them sat at their kitchen table, sipping some of the best artisanal lemonade around—whatever that is.



Glossary

| | |
|--|---|
| artisanal (<i>adj.</i>) | made by or relating to a person who is skilled at a craft or trade and who creates items by hand (p. 5) |
| boomed (<i>v.</i>) | suddenly increased or grew in business (p. 8) |
| discount (<i>n.</i>) | a decrease in the regular price of something (p. 9) |
| donated (<i>v.</i>) | gave as a gift to a fund or cause; contributed (p. 7) |
| influx (<i>n.</i>) | the steady flowing in or arrival of large amounts of something (p. 3) |
| organic (<i>adj.</i>) | grown and produced without chemicals or artificial products (p. 5) |
| profit margin (<i>n.</i>) | the difference between the cost of a product or service and its selling price (p. 7) |
| season (<i>n.</i>) | the time of year when a specific type of food is ready to harvest and is plentiful (p. 7) |
| triumphantly (<i>adv.</i>) | in a manner indicating joy at succeeding (p. 11) |

Words to Know

artisanal

boomed

discount

donated

influx

organic

profit margin

season

triumphantly

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Correlation

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| Fountas & Pinnell | N |
| Reading Recovery | 30 |
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Who Likes Lemonade?

A Reading A-Z Level Q Leveled Book

Word Count: 1,048

Connections

Writing

How would you earn twenty-five dollars to buy the spy kit? Write a letter to Mike describing your plan and why you think it will be successful.

Math

What was Mike's gross profit?

What was his net profit?

How do they compare?




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