The Goat in the Rug
By Charles L. Blood and Martin Link

Summary

Geraldine the goat literally puts her whole self into the weaving of a Navajo rug. After being sheared for her wool, she watches as Glenmae cleans, dries, combs, spins, and dyes her wool. Geraldine is so proud! A lot of her is in that rug. She hopes to grow her wool quickly so she can be a part of the next Navajo rug.

Key Economic Concepts

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<th>Specialization</th>
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<td>Assembly Line</td>
<td>Division of Labor</td>
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Materials

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<th>Ruler</th>
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<td>Glue</td>
<td>Scissors</td>
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<td>Construction Paper (various colors)</td>
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Teaching Procedure

1. After reading the story, define and discuss unit production (when one person produces the complete product). Point out that Glenmae did all the steps herself in the rug’s production. Discuss how long this process could have taken. Use the illustrations of the story showing the regrowth of Geraldine’s wool as an indicator of the passage of time.

2. Explain division of labor, specialization, interdependence, and assembly line.

3. (Optional) Illustrate these concepts by making “hamburgers” using Lesson 8 from the Play Dough Economics curriculum. (www.ncee.net)

4. Using Handout 1, have students create a paper “rug.” Follow these steps:
   a. Prepare a 9" x 12" sheet of construction paper to use as a “loom.”
   b. Measure and cut ten 1" x 9" strips of paper in various colors.
   c. Students weave paper strips on the loom and glue down all ends.

   Note starting and completion time.

5. For the assembly line part of Handout 1, assign jobs to several students:
   - ___ paper folders for looms
   - ___ paper measures for looms
   - ___ paper cutters for looms
   - ___ paper ends gluers
   - ___ paper measurers for strips
   - ___ paper cutters for strips
   - ___ 10 paper weavers
   - ___ quality control person
6. Specify some total number of minutes for unit and assembly line production. Compare and contrast the production results.

7. Using Handout 2, have students design their own assembly lines to make a product (e.g. ice cream sandwiches, cookies, Christmas ornaments).

Key Questions To Ask Students

1. Was Glenmae producing a good or a service? (a good)

2. Did Glenmae specialize in making the rug? (No, she did everything herself. She engaged in unit production.)

3. How long was the production time in the making of the rug? (several weeks) Why? (Glenmae did all the work herself.)

4. When people specialize, as on an assembly line, they become more interdependent. What does this mean? (They depend more on one another.)

5. What is the main advantage of specializing in producing goods and services? (increased productivity — i.e. more output per unit of input.) What are some disadvantages? (Work can be repetitive and tedious. If one person is sick or leaves, others may not be able to do the work.)

Follow-Up Activities

1. Field Trip Time! Take a field trip to a candy factory or a bakery that uses assembly line production. Also try to visit a small business that produces the same products using unit production. Compare and contrast.

2. How Much Does It Cost? Compare the cost of mass-produced products to those made using unit production. Are they the same? Are they different? What would account for this?

3. Can It Be Done? Can services be produced using an assembly line? Can they be produced using a specialized process that divides the labor? Visit a local electric company or water company and discuss these concepts during your visit. Or, have a company representative visit your classroom.
Handout 1

Making a Paper Navajo Rug

NAME _______________________________________________________

UNIT PRODUCTION

Steps necessary to produce a “rug:"

1. Create Paper “loom” (9" x 12")
2. Cut 10 Strips (1" x 9")
3. Weave Strips
4. Glue Ends

Amount of Time Used for Production: _____________________

Number of Rugs Produced Per Unit of Time: _____________________
(i.e. Productivity)

ASSEMBLY LINE PRODUCTION

Number of People on the Assembly Line: _____________________

Amount of Time Used for Production: _____________________

Number of Rugs Produced: _____________________

Number of Rugs Produced Per Person: _____________________

Rugs Produced Per Unit of Time (Per Person) (i.e. Productivity) _____________________
Handout 2

Design Your Own Assembly Line

NAME _______________________________________________________

Design your own assembly line for making English muffin pizzas or fruit salad.

Brainstorm ideas of goods to produce. Choose one and design an assembly line for its production.