



The Berenstain Bears' Mad, Mad, Mad Toy Craze



Use these questions with children 5 to 7 years old to discuss the following economic concepts in *The Berenstain Bears' Mad, Mad, Mad Toy Craze* by Stan and Jan Berenstain (ISBN: 978-0-679-88958-8): **Consumers, goods, price, and sellers.**

- 1. Goods are objects that satisfy people's wants. At the beginning of the story, what goods were Brother and Sister "flipping out about" and "going through the roof about"? Why do you think they wanted these goods?**

Brother and Sister wanted Beary Bubbies, toys sold at Herb's Hobby Shop. Beary Bubbies were a new toy, and all their friends had Beary Bubbies.

- 2. A price is the amount we pay for something that we buy. What price did Herb's Hobby Shop charge for Beary Bubbies?**

\$2.95

- 3. Consumers are people who buy goods and services to satisfy their wants. Sellers are people who produce and/or sell goods and services. Brother and Sister bought the last three Beary Bubbies Herb's Hobby Shop had to sell that day. Why did the shop sell out of Beary Bubbies?**

Because consumers wanted more Beary Bubbies than Herb's had to sell them.

- 4. What was the cubs' plan to get more Beary Bubbies since they couldn't buy them at Herb's?**

The cubs planned to buy them from other sellers—Lizzy and Queenie—because these sellers each had two of a kind.

- 5. Why could Lizzy sell her Beary Bubbie for \$5.00 and Queenie sell hers for \$7.00 when Herb's Hobby Shop sold them for only \$2.95?**

Because the consumers—the cubs—were willing to pay that much to get more Beary Bubbies.

- 6. What did Brother and Sister do to earn money so they could buy more Beary Bubbies?**

Brother and Sister did chores: They pulled weeds, sorted trash, and cleaned out cobwebs.

- 7. In the middle of the story, Mama and Papa wanted to buy Beary Bubbies too? Why?**

Mama and Papa read that some Beary Bubbies had sold for hundreds of dollars. If they could buy some Beary Bubbies and sell them for more, they could earn some money.

- 8. At the end of the story, the family was no longer interested in Beary Bubbies. Why?**

By the end of the story, Beary Bubbies were available "everywhere." They were no longer special, and they weren't good play toys.

- 9. By the end of the story, do you think the family could have sold their Beary Bubbies for more than they paid for them? Why or why not?**

Because so many Beary Bubbies were available—some for "free" in cereal boxes or at the gas station—it is very unlikely that the family could have sold their Beary Bubbies for more than they had paid. Beary Bubbies became very easy to get.

- 10. A craze happens when a good suddenly becomes very popular for a short time. Why do you think the title of the book is *Mad, Mad, Mad Toy Craze*? Can you think of other toy crazes?**

Answers will vary. At first, everyone wanted Beary Bubbies. Because there weren't enough for everyone who wanted them, people were willing to pay high prices to get them. After a short time, Beary Bubbies were everywhere and people weren't as excited about them. "Mad" can also mean foolish or silly. The last page of the book suggests the family felt foolish about their purchases. Toy crazes might include action figures (e.g., Star Wars) and rubber-band bracelets.