

# BUILDING A BUSINESS—GAMES AND TOYS



INTERDISCIPLINARY

3

GRADE 3

This guide links the *Building a Business* unit to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for third graders. *Building a Business* is an interdisciplinary unit in which groups of students develop a toy and game business, allowing students to explore and gain knowledge of history and science and their relationships. The TEKS from multiple content areas are covered. For instance, students use writing as a tool for learning in research, as described in the English Language Arts and Reading TEKS. They also learn about how businesses operate in the U.S. free enterprise system, as included in the Social Studies TEKS. The following document includes the applicable TEKS and the details of the *Building a Business* unit. The asterisks indicate the TEKS that are testable on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The final section of this document presents the applicable Texas College and Career Readiness Standards adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on January 24, 2008.

## Description of Unit

This project generates an understanding of marketing, consumer awareness, and business models by studying the games and toys industry. Students will learn about the making and selling of their favorite toys. Then in small groups, students will found their own toy companies. Each group will develop a prototype of a new toy, along with one of the following: a business plan for a toy/game company; marketing campaign to sell the toy/game; or plan to mass produce the toy/game.

## Goals

Students will meet these goals in their explorations:

- Develop the essential skills of logical thinking, creative problem solving, intellectual risk taking, and communicating
- Make connections across disciplines
- Study businesses and discover attributes that make them successful

### *Building a Business—Games and Toys (Grade 3)*

- Investigate the process of inventing new toys and games
- Design a prototype of a toy/game, test the prototype, and make revisions based on findings
- Keep records and document progress
- Draw conclusions
- Share results through either a developed business plan for opening a new toy/game company; OR the creation of a marketing campaign to sell the new toy/game; OR a plan to mass produce the new toy/game

## Phase I. Learning Experiences

1. Introduce the unit by discussing students' favorite toys and games. Discuss how students' favorites have changed as they have gotten older. For instance, have students talk about the ways in which video games have changed over time.
2. As an individual or group activity, have students make a timeline of their lives in terms of their favorite toys and games. You may wish to extend this activity by having students ask their parents/grandparents or members of the school community what their favorite toys and games were when they were children.
3. Show the History Channel timeline at <http://girlscouts.amesev.com/aboutgs/Juniors/TOYMAKER.doc>. Discuss how toys have changed over time. In small groups, students choose a toy/game and consider how it has changed or stayed the same over time. They should also discuss why some toys/games last and others do not and how popular toys reflect the times and the available technology. You may choose to have students develop a timeline of their chosen toy/game, using the History Channel timeline as a model.
4. Brainstorm leading toy companies. Small groups choose one to research. They should find the answers to these questions:
  - Who started the company?
  - What was their motivation?
  - When was the company started?
  - What toys or games have been the company's leading products?
  - What contributed to the company's success/downfall?
5. Next, students will explore the relationship between toys/games, their manufacturers, and the impact of advertising. Students watch television for 30 minutes on Saturday morning and record the number and the length of the advertisements they see in that period of time. Discuss the following questions:
  - What attracted you to the products advertised (sound, color, people)?
  - What other tools do advertisers use to get attention?
  - Who was the target audience of the advertisement?

- What did the advertiser do to help students remember the toy/game and want to purchase it?
- Where else are toys advertised (include different media, such as print and Internet)?
- How do consumers need to be aware of advertising strategies?

## Phase II. Independent Research

### A. Research process

1. Selecting a topic. Small groups form a toy/game company. Students should name the company and provide job descriptions and titles for the top executives (e.g., CEO, CFO). One good resource for steps in starting a business is *It's Your Business!* by Larry Robson. Each company will develop a new toy or game.
2. Asking guiding questions. Once the groups have selected a toy/game, they should think of three to five guiding questions to explore, such as:
  - Who is your consumer?
  - How will you find out whether they will like/buy the toy?
  - What will the toy be made of?
  - Feasibility—can you make it?
  - What safety issues will you have to deal with?
  - How much will the toy cost to make and to purchase?
  - How will you market/advertise the toy?
  - How much profit will you make?
  - What problems might you run into? How might you solve them?
  - How will you know if the toy is successful?
  - What resources will you need?

While these examples are general, the group's questions should be specific to the chosen toy or game. The questions should lead the group to form research-based opinions. The group should also develop a hypothesis or some possible answers to the questions.

3. Designing a research proposal. Each group will design a prototype of a toy of the future. It could be an old toy that is redesigned or updated, or something completely futuristic. Part of the research might include a needs assessment or interest inventory to see if the proposed toy/game appeals to the target audience. In the proposal, the group should include plans for developing and testing the prototype.
4. Conducting the research. The group should develop and test the prototype, as well as creating a survey to be used for conducting market research and analysis.
5. Drawing conclusions. The group should consider the following questions:
  - What was successful about your prototype?
  - What adjustments or changes did you have to make? Why?
  - Who is the target audience for your toy/game?

- What is new or unique about your toy/game?
- How much does it cost to manufacture your toy/game? How much will you sell the toy/game for? What are sources of the money you will need to manufacture the game?

## B. The product

The students show what they have learned through **one** of the following products:

1. The group develops a business plan for their toy/game company, which should include a budget and a marketing-research plan. Each student in the group should describe his/her role in the business.
2. The group develops a marketing campaign to sell the toy/game, including the creation of at least two of the following: a slogan, jingle, commercial, advertisement, billboard, or brochure. Each student in the group should describe his/her role in creating the marketing campaign.
3. The group develops a plan to mass produce their product. The plan should include a way to sell the product, take and fill orders, and manage inventory. Each student in the group should describe his/her role in preparing to produce and deliver the product.

## C. Communication

The group will present to the class what they have learned about the toy/game industry. The group should also discuss their toy/game and demonstrate the prototype. The audience should be given time for questions and answers. The Q&A session should be impromptu and unscripted in order to reflect student learning accurately.

## D. A completed project consists of:

1. Research proposal
2. Product—business plan, OR marketing campaign, OR mass-production plan
3. Videotape or audiotape of presentation, including the Q&A session

## Resources:

<http://girlscouts.amesev.com/aboutgs/Juniors/TOYMAKER.doc>

<http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/lessons/toys/>

[http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/03\\_06\\_ads\\_toys.htm](http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/03_06_ads_toys.htm)

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=543>

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10387831/#headline>

<http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bltoy.htm>

<http://inventors.about.com/od/toydesigning/>

## Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

The unit may address the following TEKS:

| <b>English Language Arts and Reading:</b> |   |
|---|---|
| 3.1                                       | Uses the relationships between letters and sounds, spelling patterns, and morphological analysis to decode written English  |
| 3.2                                       | Comprehends a variety of texts drawing on useful strategies as needed* (Testable on the Grade 3 Reading STAAR, Reporting Category 2)  |
| 3.12                                      | Analyzes, makes inferences, and draws conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provides evidence from the text to support their understanding* (Testable on the Grade 3 Reading STAAR, Reporting Category 3) |
| 3.17                                      | Uses elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text* (Testable on the Grade 4 Writing STAAR, Reporting Category 1)   |
| 3.18                                      | Writes literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas  |
| 3.20                                      | Writes expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes* (Testable on the Grade 4 Writing STAAR, Reporting Category 2)  |
| 3.22                                      | Understands the function of and uses the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing* (Testable on the Grade 4 Writing STAAR, Reporting Category 3)  |
| 3.23                                      | Writes legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions* (Testable on the Grade 4 Writing STAAR, Reporting Category 3)  |
| 3.25                                      | Asks open-ended research questions and develops a plan for answering them   |
| 3.26                                      | Determines, locates, and explores the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically records the information they gather  |
| 3.29                                      | Uses comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings   |
| 3.30                                      | Speaks clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language  |
| <b>Mathematics:</b>                       |   |
| 3.1                                       | Uses mathematical processes to acquire and demonstrate mathematical understanding   |
| 3.2                                       | Applies mathematical process standards to represent and compare whole numbers and understand relationships related to place value   |
| 3.4                                       | Applies mathematical process standards to develop and use strategies and methods for whole number computations in order to solve problems with efficiency and accuracy  |
| 3.8                                       | Applies mathematical process standards to solve problems by collecting, organizing, displaying, and interpreting data   |
| 3.9                                       | Applies mathematical process standards to manage one's financial resources effectively for lifetime financial security  |

**Science:**

- 3.1 Conducts classroom and outdoor investigations following school and home safety procedures and environmentally appropriate practices\* (Testable on the Grade 5 Science STAAR)
- 3.2 Uses scientific inquiry methods during laboratory and outdoor investigations\* (Testable on the Grade 5 Science STAAR)
- 3.3 Knows that information, critical thinking, scientific problem solving, and the contributions of scientists are used in making decisions\* (Testable on the Grade 5 Science STAAR)
- 3.4 Knows how to use a variety of tools and methods to conduct science inquiry\* (Testable on the Grade 5 Science STAAR)
- 3.8 Knows there are recognizable patterns in the natural world and among objects in the sky\* (Testable on the Grade 5 Science STAAR, Reporting Category 3)

**Social Studies:**

- 3.3 Understands the concepts of time and chronology
- 3.6 Understands the purposes of earning, spending, saving, and donating money
- 3.8 Understands how businesses operate in the U.S. free enterprise system
- 3.16 Understands how individuals have created or invented new technology and affected life in various communities, past and present
- 3.17 Applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology
- 3.18 Communicates in written, oral, and visual forms
- 3.19 Uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings

**Texas College and Career Readiness Standards**

This unit may address the following Texas College and Career Readiness Standards:

**English Language Arts:**

- I.A.1 Determines effective approaches, forms, and rhetorical techniques that demonstrate understanding of the writer's purpose and audience
- I.A.2 Generates ideas and gathers information relevant to the topic and purpose, keeping careful records of outside sources
- I.A.3 Evaluates relevance, quality, sufficiency, and depth of preliminary ideas and information, organize material generated, and formulate thesis
- II.A.1 Uses effective reading strategies to determine a written work's purpose and intended audience
- II.A.2 Uses text features and graphics to form an overview of informational texts and to determine where to locate information
- II.A.3 Identifies explicit and implicit textual information including main ideas and author's purpose
- II.A.4 Draws and supports complex inferences from text to summarize, draw conclusions, and

|         |   |
|---------|---|
|         | distinguish facts from simple assertions and opinions   |
| II.A.8  | Compares and analyzes how generic features are used across texts  |
| II.A.9  | Identifies and analyzes the audience, purpose, and message of an informational or persuasive text                                 |
| II.B.1  | Identifies new words and concepts acquired through study of their relationships to other words and concepts                       |
| III.A.1 | Understands how style and content of spoken language varies in different contexts and influences the listener's understanding     |
| III.A.2 | Adjusts presentation (delivery, vocabulary, length) to particular audiences and purposes  |
| III.B.1 | Participates actively and effectively in one-on-one oral communication situations   |
| III.B.2 | Participates actively and effectively in group discussions  |
| III.B.3 | Plans and delivers focused and coherent presentations that convey clear and distinct perspectives and demonstrate solid reasoning |
| IV.A.1  | Analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of a public presentation   |
| IV.A.2  | Interprets a speaker's message; identifies the position taken and the evidence in support of that position                        |
| IV.A.3  | Uses a variety of strategies to enhance listening comprehension   |
| IV.B.1  | Listens critically and responds appropriately to presentations  |
| IV.B.2  | Listens actively and effectively in one-on-one communication situations   |
| IV.B.3  | Listens actively and effectively in group discussions   |
| V.A.1   | Formulates research questions   |
| V.A.2   | Explores a research topic   |
| V.A.3   | Refines research topic and devise a timeline for completing work  |
| V.B.1   | Gathers relevant sources  |
| V.B.2   | Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources   |
| V.B.3   | Synthesizes and organizes information effectively   |
| V.B.4   | Uses source material ethically  |
| V.C.1   | Designs and presents an effective product   |

### Mathematics:

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| IV.D.2   | Applies probabilistic measures to practical situations to make an informed decision |
| VI.B.1   | Determines types of data  |
| VI.B.2   | Selects and applies appropriate visual representations of data                      |
| VI.B.4   | Describes patterns and departure from patterns in a set of data                     |
| VIII.A.1 | Analyzes given information  |
| VIII.A.2 | Formulates a plan or strategy   |
| VIII.A.3 | Determines a solution   |
| VIII.A.4 | Justifies the solution  |
| VIII.A.5 | Evaluates the problem solving process   |

**Science:**

- I.A.2 Uses creativity and insight to recognize and describe patterns in natural phenomena
- I.A.3 Formulates appropriate questions to test understanding of natural phenomena
- I.C.1 Collaborates on joint projects
- I.E.2 Uses essential vocabulary of the discipline being studied
- II.E.1 Understands descriptive statistics
- III.B.4 Lists, uses, and gives examples of specific strategies before, during, and after reading to improve comprehension
- III.C.1 Prepares and represents scientific/technical information in appropriate formats for various audiences
- III.D.1 Uses search engines, databases, and other digital electronic tools effectively to locate information
- III.D.2 Evaluates quality, accuracy, completeness, reliability, and currency of information from any source
- V.C.1 Recognizes patterns of change

**Social Studies:**

- I.B.2 Identifies and evaluates sources and patterns of change and continuity across time and place
- I.B.3 Analyzes causes and effects of major political, economic, and social changes in U.S. and world history
- I.C.1 Evaluates different governmental systems and functions
- I.C.2 Evaluates changes in the functions and structures of government across time
- I.F.1 Uses a variety of research and analytical tools to explore questions or issues thoroughly and fairly
- II.B.5 Explains the concepts of socioeconomic status and stratification
- II.B.6 Analyzes how individual and group identities are established and change over time
- III.A.1 Distinguishes spatial patterns of human communities that exist between or within contemporary political boundaries
- III.A.2 Connects regional or local developments to global ones
- III.B.1 Applies social science methodologies to compare societies and cultures
- IV.A.1 Identifies and analyzes the main idea(s) and point(s) of view in sources
- IV.A.2 Situates an informational source in its appropriate contexts
- IV.A.3 Evaluates sources from multiple perspectives
- IV.A.4 Understands the differences between a primary and secondary source and use each appropriately to conduct research and construct arguments
- IV.A.5 Reads narrative texts critically
- IV.A.6 Reads research data critically
- IV.B.1 Uses established research methodologies
- IV.B.3 Gathers, organizes, and displays the results of data and research
- IV.B.4 Identifies and collects sources



- IV.C.1 Understands/interprets presentations critically
- IV.D.1 Constructs a thesis that is supported by evidence
- IV.D.2 Recognizes and evaluates counter-arguments
- V.A.1 Uses appropriate oral communication techniques depending on the context or nature of the interaction
- V.A.2 Uses conventions of standard written English
- V.B.1 Attributes ideas and information to source materials and authors

### Cross-Disciplinary Standards:

- I.A.1 Engages in scholarly inquiry and dialogue
- I.A.2 Accepts constructive criticism and revise personal views when valid evidence warrants
- I.B.1 Considers arguments and conclusions of self and others
- I.B.2 Constructs well-reasoned arguments to explain phenomena, validate conjectures, or support positions
- I.B.3 Gathers evidence to support arguments, findings, or lines of reasoning
- I.B.4 Supports or modifies claims based on the results of an inquiry
- I.D.1 Self-monitors learning needs and seeks assistance when needed
- I.D.2 Uses study habits necessary to manage academic pursuits and requirements
- I.D.3 Strives for accuracy and precision
- I.D.4 Perseveres to complete and master tasks
- I.E.1 Works independently
- I.E.2 Works collaboratively
- I.F.1 Attributes ideas and information to source materials and people
- I.F.2 Evaluates sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance
- I.F.3 Includes the ideas of others and the complexities of the debate, issue, or problem
- I.F.4 Understands and adheres to ethical codes of conduct
- II.A.1 Uses effective prereading strategies
- II.A.2 Uses a variety of strategies to understand the meanings of new words
- II.A.3 Identifies the intended purpose and audience of the text
- II.A.4 Identifies the key information and supporting details
- II.A.5 Analyzes textual information critically
- II.A.6 Annotates, summarizes, paraphrases, and outlines texts when appropriate
- II.A.7 Adapts reading strategies according to structure of texts
- II.A.8 Connects reading to historical and current events and personal interest
- II.B.1 Writes clearly and coherently, using standard writing conventions
- II.B.2 Writes in a variety of forms for various audiences and purposes
- II.B.3 Composes and revises drafts
- II.C.1 Understands which topics or questions are to be investigated
- II.C.2 Explores a research topic

- II.C.3 Refines research topic based on preliminary research and devise a timeline for completing work
- II.C.4 Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources
- II.C.5 Synthesizes and organizes information effectively
- II.C.6 Designs and presents an effective product
- II.C.7 Integrates source material
- II.C.8 Presents final product
- II.D.1 Identifies patterns or departures from patterns among data
- II.D.2 Uses statistical and probabilistic skills necessary for planning an investigation and collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data
- II.D.3 Presents analyzed data and communicate findings in a variety of formats
- II.E.1 Uses technology to gather information
- II.E.2 Uses technology to organize, manage, and analyze information
- II.E.3 Uses technology to communicate and display findings in a clear and coherent manner
- II.E.4 Uses technology appropriately

Business Plan

Name of Company

Date

Names of Organizers

What is the purpose of the company? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why will someone want to buy your product? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why do you think your company will be successful? \_\_\_\_\_

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How will you know if your company is successful? \_\_\_\_\_

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What will you do if your company is very successful? \_\_\_\_\_

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What if people don't like your product? How will you find out what is wrong?

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Who will be a part of the company? What will each of them do? \_\_\_\_\_

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Plan de negocio

Nombre de la empresa

Fecha

Nombres de los organizadores

¿Cuál es el propósito de la empresa? \_\_\_\_\_

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¿Por qué querrá comprar alguien tu producto? \_\_\_\_\_

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¿Por qué crees que tu empresa tendrá éxito? \_\_\_\_\_

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¿Cómo sabrás si tu empresa tiene éxito? \_\_\_\_\_

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¿Qué harás si tu empresa tiene muchísimo éxito? \_\_\_\_\_

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¿Qué sucede si a la gente no le gusta tu producto? ¿Cómo averiguarás cuál es el problema?

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¿Quién será parte de la empresa? ¿Qué hará cada persona? \_\_\_\_\_

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