

There's Competition?

I scratched my head. This was their first day being open. I didn't see any Sweet Treat signs posted in the neighborhood like we had. How could people know already?

"We made and printed out flyers to pass out," Jaiden responded, and handed me a small piece of colored paper. "It looks pretty good, huh?"

I glanced at the paper quickly. It *did* look pretty good - almost amazing, actually. My stomach started to sink. Then I saw something made me mad.

"*Hey!* You're selling your lemonade cheaper than ours... you're trying to rip us off!" I said angrily.

"Don't get all upset, Brandon," said Jenna sweetly. "It's just a little competition."

Competition? Were these girls really trying to challenge us? One look at the smirks on their faces, and I got a worse feeling. *They weren't just trying to compete with us - they were trying to put us out of business!*

The Brandon Jones Series

The Great Business of Summer

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*This book is dedicated to every educator who has
had a positive influence in my life, whether as
my teacher, my mentor, my co-worker, or friend
- Continue to preserve!*

*“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the
lighting of a fire.”
-William Butler Yeats*

Brandon Jones & The Great Business of Summer



by Amber Brown

Illustrated by Anirban Mitra



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Vocabulary terms for this book:

pint
quart
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profit
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expenses
break-even
loss
gain
advertisement

Brandon Jones & The Great Business of Summer

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Bored Already

“This is the best time of the year,” I thought to myself. *“All kids love summer! No school, no homework... just days and days of fun and relaxing in the sun.”*

I slapped my hands over my eyes. If this is true, then why am I laying on my bed, bored out of my mind? It’s only the second week of summer and I am totally, completely, 100% bored out of my mind.

Right about now you’re probably asking yourself, *“Who is this strange kid?”* My name is Brandon Jones. I’m nearly eight years old and I just finished second grade at McNair Elementary school. It was a long year. The work was tough, but I learned a lot of cool new things. I even made honor roll all year, which made my mom very happy.

My mom is a fourth grade teacher at my school, which pretty much means I don’t have a choice but to make honor roll every grading period *or else*. I don’t even want to find out what “or else” means.

I peeked through my fingers and watched the ceiling fan spin around slowly. Just as I was about to start wondering how mad Mom would be if I tried to paint the fan a bunch of really cool colors, the doorbell rang. A few moments later, my mom called up the stairs, “Brandon! Gabe and JB are here!”

Great! I sat up quickly then jumped off of the bed. *Finally, something to do!*

I ran down the stairs, taking two steps at a time. “Hey guys,” I said.

“What’s up, Brandon?” said JB.

“Hey, B.,” Gabe said, as we fist bumped each other.

Gabe and JB are my two best friends. Gabe and I met on the playground a couple of years ago. I was sliding down the slide at recess just as he was trying to climb up from the bottom. We bumped into each other and both ended up sliding to the ground. He laughed, I laughed, and we’ve been best friends ever since.

We both met JB on the first day of first grade. His family had just moved here, and because he was the new kid he didn’t have any friends at school yet.



I saw him watching me and Gabe tossing a football during recess and asked him if wanted to play. The three of us have been stuck together like glue since that first day.

“Dude, check out what Gabe has,” JB said with a huge grin on his face.

I was puzzled. “What?” I asked. I hadn’t noticed Gabe had one hand behind his back.

“Check *this* out,” he said and flashed a new video game box.

“Let me se this,” I said. Then my eyes widened. “Is this...?”

“Enzo’s Enterprise volume three - it sure is!” my friend said excitedly.

“How did you get this?” I asked in amazement.

“My aunt Tammy forgot my birthday last month and said she felt really bad about it. So she mailed the game to make it up to me. I just got it this morning. I haven’t even tried it out yet,” Gabe answered.

“Well what are we waiting for?” I asked. “Let’s get started!” My friends and I were already walking towards the living room where my game system was plugged into the TV.

Normally I’d rather play sports video games, like college football or professional basketball, but this Enzo’s Enterprise is pretty neat. Gabe showed us how to play Volume 1 and we’ve all been hooked ever since.

No really - you don’t understand. This game is one of the **best video games ever**. In this game, this kid named Enzo starts some kind of business and you have to help him make money. I know it sounds a little lame, but I promise it’s really not. This game is one of my favorites - next to my pro basketball games, of course.

So anyway, all kinds of problems come up and you’ve got to figure out a way to help the business solve them.

Like in the last volume, the kid Enzo was trying to run a candy business at school, but the teachers and principal kept coming up with new rules to try to keep him from selling the candy. We finally figured out a way Enzo was able to meet with the teachers and agree to sell the candy only during lunch and after

school. Enzo made so much money in the game I thought about trying it in real life, but it would never work at our school. I'm sure our principal just wouldn't go for it.

Another really cool thing about Enzo's Enterprise is that you can compete with other kids online to see who helps Enzo make the most money. At the end of the every month, the winner gets a free Enzo's Enterprise poster and statue mailed to their house. I, Brandon Jones, have never won that award... at least not yet.

"So what kind of business is this one?" JB asked, as Gabe slid the disc into the game system.

"I heard you can pick your own this time," I said.

Gabe smiled. "Yeah, in this new one, they give you three choices and you can choose which one you want."

We all paused as the TV screen lit up.

"Oh wow," JB whistled.

"This is just way too cool," Gabe mumbled.

“No kidding!” I agreed, smiling from ear to ear.

We decided to choose a pizzeria. We had played the game for about an hour when my mom walked in and stood in front of the TV set.

“I know the three of you don’t think you’re going to play video games all day, do you?” she asked with her arms folded.

My friends and I sighed. *Of course* we thought we should be able to play the game all day - but none of us would dare say that to my mom!

“Let’s go sit outside,” I told my friends. We walked out of the door and sat in my back yard for a few minutes without talking.

“What do you guys want to do?” asked Gabe finally. “Wanna go to the park and play a game?”

“A game of what?” asked JB.

“What about baseball?” Gabe asked. He swatted at a bug and pretended to swing a bat.

All three of us love sports, but baseball is Gabe’s favorite.

“No, we did that all day yesterday,” I said. “Besides, we have baseball practice tomorrow. We should do something else.”

“Yeah, I guess you’re right,” said Gabe. “What about basketball?”

He knows basketball is my favorite sport. I shook my head. “Nah. It’s too hot already.” Noon was an hour away, but we were already starting to sweat.

JB wiped his forehead and agreed with me. “Think of something else, Gabe,” he said, and leaned against a tree.

We all got quiet again. My mom must’ve walked by the window in the kitchen because suddenly we could hear her conversation while she was talking on the phone.

She had been laughing, but now stopped and said, “Oh, I thought we had some more lemonade! We’ll have to go to the store and buy some more. This weather has been so hot, it feels like I drink a gallon of water and lemonade everyday.”

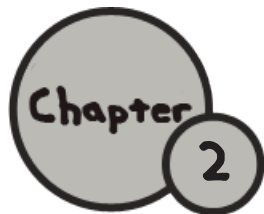
She must have been on the phone with one of her sisters because she laughed again and said, “Oh I know *you* love lemonade! Remember that time you made a huge sticky mess all over the kitchen, calling yourself trying to make some by yourself? We had ants in the kitchen for days! Mom was furious!”

We heard the refrigerator close and her voice trailed off as she walked away.

Suddenly I felt a spark of genius. “I’ve got it!” I said, grinning.

“Got what?” My friends asked, looking curious.

“Something different we could do this summer!” I said, growing more and more excited by the second.

A graphic consisting of two overlapping circles. The larger, light gray circle on the left contains the word "Chapter" in a black, handwritten-style font. The smaller, white circle on the right, which overlaps the bottom right of the larger circle, contains the number "2" in a black, handwritten-style font.

Chapter
2

My Great Idea

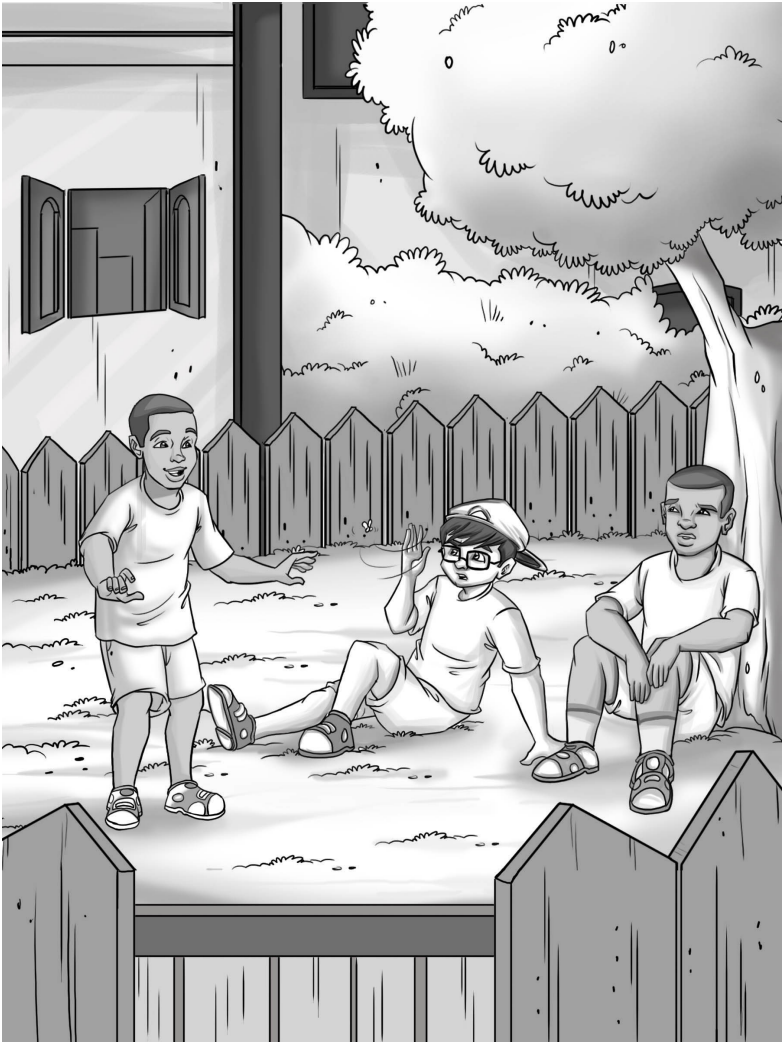
“What is it, Brandon?” Gabe asked, pushing his glasses up closer to his eyes.

“Let’s open a lemonade stand!” I said. By this time, I was so excited, I was almost shouting.

“A lemonade stand?” repeated JB. “I think the sun has gotten to you, B.”

“Us... selling lemonade?” Gabe asked.

My friends didn’t look as excited as I thought they would. “Yes, I’m serious!” I said loudly and jumped up and down to make my point. “Just like Enzo’s Enterprises. Instead of a pizzeria or candy, we could sell lemonade!”



“Why a lemonade stand?” asked JB.

“Why *not*?” I asked. “Everyone loves lemonade - and it’s so hot outside, I bet lots of people will want to buy some.”

“Well that’s true,” said Gabe, as he licked his lips.

I think he’s starting to warm up to my idea.

“Plus, we could even make a little money,” I suggested. “Real money, not just money on a video game.”

When I said this, JB started smiling and nodded his head.

“Okay, I’m in!” he said, standing up next to me. We both looked at Gabe.

“Okay, count me in, too, guys,” he said with a huge grin on his face.

“Alright!” I yelled, and we started giving each other high fives all around.

“Let’s go inside and tell my mom,” I said. “She’ll be able to help us get started.”

The guys and I walked inside just as Mom was hanging up the phone.

“Hi boys,” she said with a smile. “Uh oh! I know that look. Brandon, what do you and your friends have going on?”

We all laughed, then my friends looked at me.

“Mom! We have the coolest idea *ever!*” I started. “We want to start a lemonade stand!”

Mom paused. “Well, it’s certainly an *interesting* idea.”

“Interesting?” I repeated, as though there were an echo in the house. When my mom says “interesting” I never know if it’s a good thing or not.

“What’s wrong with it?” I asked.

“Oh no, I think it’s a great idea,” said Mom. I’m just curious if you boys know what it takes to run a business. Would any of you like a snack?”

“Yes, ma’am!” we all said to the snack offer.

“Who said anything about a business, though?” I asked.

My friends nodded their heads in agreement. “Yeah, we just want to sell lemonade,” said JB.

“So, you want to *sell* something, and I’m sure you want to make money, but you don’t think that’s a business?” Mom replied, looking at all of us.

Okay. I have to admit - she got us.

Gabe said, “I guess I can see it being a business. A small one though. I don’t want to give up my summer to work in an office or anything.”

He turned to look at me. “Maybe running a lemonade stand is going to be harder than we thought, Brandon,” Gabe continued, with a worried look on his face.

“Oh no, Gabe,” Mom said quickly. “I think you guys can do it, I just think all of you should learn a little bit about business first.”

“In fact, I’ll tell you what. I’ve been needing something to get into this summer...”

Uh oh. My mom loves to make everything what she calls a “learning experience”. Sometimes I wonder if all teachers do this to their kids at home, or whether it was just my mom.

Mom says learning isn’t just for the classroom or schools. She believes opportunities for learning are all around us and is always looking for new things my friends and I could learn. I keep telling her one day I’m going to be all learned out, but she never seems to listen.

It seemed like this was about to be one of those times.

My mom sat out a few more snacks. “Yes... I think I can make this into a great new learning experience for all of you.”

I knew it! I almost smacked myself on the forehead.

My friends looked like they were getting more excited, though.

Poor guys. They *still* haven’t learned that my mom is a teacher at school *and* a teacher at home.

“What do we need to do?” asked JB. “Should we bring a bag of lemons over?”

Mom laughed. “Oh no! Not just yet, JB. How about you guys first talk to your parents to make sure they are okay with the idea? You can tell them to call me if they have any questions.”

“Also, if they say yes, you all should think of what else besides lemons you may need. Why don’t you both come over here tomorrow morning around nine before baseball practice and we’ll get started?” she continued.

“Cool! Thanks!” said Gabe and JB, almost at the same time.

The next morning my friends came over just as the clock was turning nine.

We were all sitting around the kitchen table when Mom walked in. “Good morning, fellas,” she said, as she gave each of us a folder.

I opened my folder and groaned. My mom had made worksheets for us to do! What kid wants to do *worksheets* in the summer?

What I was thinking must have flashed across my face because Mom sat at the table next to us and said, “Now Brandon, it’s not going to be that bad. It’ll be fun, I promise!”

“*Really, Mom?*” I thought to myself.

I looked at the first sheet in the folder. There were a few business sounding words Mom apparently wanted us to learn. “But how does knowing what a consumer is will help us with a lemonade stand?” I asked.

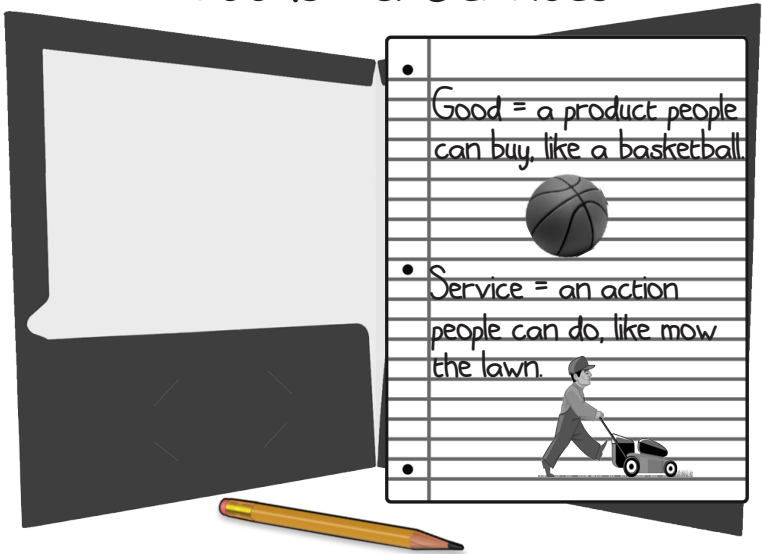
Mom looked surprised. “*Everything*, Brandon! Do any of you know what a consumer is?”

Gabe scratched his head. “Isn’t a consumer a person who buys something? At least that’s what it is in the Enzo’s Enterprises game.”

My mom smiled and ruffled Gabe’s hair. “*Exactly!* And a producer is the person who sells the goods or provides a service. So you guys will be producers and the customers will be consumers.”

“So is a lemonade stand a good or service?” asked JB.

Goods Vs. Services



“That’s a pretty good question, JB,” Mom answered. “A good is an actual object or product that people can buy, like a basketball or even a sandwich. A service is an action that someone does, like a car wash, cutting grass, or a hair cut at a barber shop.”

JB smiled. “Oh, I think I get it - a good is something we can touch or hold, right? And since the customers would be buying a glass of something they can actually hold, it has to be a good.”

“Yes, that’s right,” my mom agreed. “But what’s another word we can use for a customer?”

“*Consumer!*” we all yelled, then laughed.

“Awesome!” Mom said, giving us high fives.

“Let’s look at the sheets in the folder,” she said. “There are a few more words I think we should discuss.”

Mom sat at the table with us while we answered questions on the worksheets. My friends and I learned that revenue is money a business makes from selling their products, but the money a business spends to make the products and run their business is called expenses.

“I think we all know what profit is,” said JB, rubbing his hands together.

“Oh really?” said Mom, raising an eyebrow. “And just what do you think profit is?”

“The money we’re going to put into our pockets!” JB, Gabe, and I yelled together.

“True, but there’s a little bit more,” said Mom. “A business’s total profit is how much money it makes *minus* the costs it takes to run the business.”

“Wait, what?!” we asked, getting a little confused.

Mom thought for a second. She pulled out a piece of paper and started drawing. “Okay, think about it this way. If you boys make \$30 from selling lemonade, but you had to spend \$10 to buy what you needed, your total profit would be...”

“\$20,” I interrupted. “Because it would be the \$30 minus the \$10 it cost us to start.”

“You’re exactly right!” Mom said excitedly. “Now what if you spent the same \$10 on supplies, but you make \$50? What would your total profit be?”

“Yes, indeed!” Mom said. “You boys are catching on quickly!”

“But what all will we need to buy to start up a lemonade stand?” I asked.

“Well of course, we’ll have to buy lemons, duh!” said JB. Then he ducked his head to avoid being hit by the balled up napkin I threw at him.

“And cups,” added Gabe.

“Don’t forget ice, an ice chest to keep the ice cold, oh and the sugar!” Mom said.

“Sugar?!” my friends and I all exclaimed. “We can’t use sugar from the house?”

Mom laughed. “I’ll think about it,” she said. Then she looked at the clock.

“It’s almost time to leave for baseball practice. Go get your things loaded into the car while I grab my purse.”

My friends and I are on the same baseball team. Our parents take turns driving us. Usually during the summer my mom drops us off and Gabe’s or JB’s parents pick us up.

I pulled my baseball bag from the hall closet while JB and Gabe grabbed their bags. As we walked into the garage, JB said, “I wonder how much money we’ll be able to make this summer?”

“Revenue or profit?” asked Gabe with a grin.

JB scratched his head. “What’s the difference again?” he asked.

“Revenue is how much the lemonade stand will make from selling each cup of lemonade,” I answered.

“Yeah, and profit is how much we’ll really make after we subtract how much money it cost us to buy the cups, lemons, and everything else we’ll need,” added Gabe.

“Well then, I’m talking about profit,” said JB. “All I want to know is how much money I will have to buy some new comic books!”

“Just think of all we could do with the money.. uh.. *profits*,” I corrected myself. “Your comic books, snacks, candy, ooh and maybe new video games, too!”

“Yeah,” Gabe agreed. “Brandon, this is this the best idea *ever!*”