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INSERT **1 hour 30 minutes**

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INFORMATION

- This insert contains the case study.
- You may annotate this insert and use the blank spaces for planning. **Do not write your answers** on the insert.

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Mr Barney's Producer Co-operative

The background

The Grange is a school that has extra-curricular groups on Friday afternoon. One afternoon each week students are encouraged to take part in activities unrelated to examinations. One teacher, Mr Barney, organises a gardening group during this time. The group has a small plot of land at the side of the school where plants are grown.

The Grange school kitchen provides lunch every day for all students and staff. The school's location, far from the nearest town, means that fresh fruit and vegetables are expensive due to high delivery charges.

The idea

The students in Mr Barney's gardening group were complaining about their school lunch. They thought that there should be a greater variety of food, including fresh fruit and vegetables. Mr Barney set a challenge to the group, asking them to suggest ways to improve the school lunch. The suggestions must not increase the price of the lunches.

Most of the ideas the students presented were unrealistic. For example, one suggestion was to allow a fast food enterprise to open at the school. However, one student suggested that the school garden could be used to grow fresh fruit and vegetables. Mr Barney liked this suggestion and decided to investigate further.

The research

First, Mr Barney interviewed the school cook. He asked him what type of fruit and vegetables he would like to use, and the quantities required each week.

Next, Mr Barney used the internet to research which of these crops the gardening group could grow. He also identified the equipment and raw materials that would be needed. Mr. Barney realised that he would need some money to pay for these extra materials.

Mr Barney knew that the current plot of land would not be big enough to supply all the fruit and vegetables required. He walked around the school grounds to identify a larger plot of land which might be suitable for growing fruit and vegetables.

The planning

With his research complete, Mr Barney discussed his plans with another teacher, Ms Aleeza, before presenting them to the Principal.

Ms Aleeza was impressed with Mr Barney's idea. She asked him two questions:

1. Would the gardening group be able to grow all the varieties of fruit and vegetables needed?

2. If they had too much of any fruit or vegetable, what would they do with the extra?

Mr Barney explained that he planned to produce only the fruit and vegetables that the cook would use most frequently. He told Ms Aleeza that the plot of land that he had identified was not large enough to grow a wide range of crops. Mr Barney admitted that he had not thought about what to do with any extra fruit and vegetables.

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Ms Aleeza suggested that other local schools may be willing to buy the extra fruit and vegetables that The Grange school did not need. This gave Mr Barney an idea. If he could encourage local schools to set up their own fruit and vegetable plot, each school could specialise in different crops and share their produce with each other. This would allow all the schools involved to enjoy a greater variety of fruit and vegetables and other benefits. He called it a producer co-operative.

Mr Barney decided to arrange a meeting with teachers from local schools to discuss the idea of setting up a producer co-operative to grow and share fruit and vegetables.

The meeting

At the meeting, Mr Barney explained his idea to the teachers. They could see the benefits of setting up their own fruit and vegetable plots, creating a producer co-operative.

One teacher was worried that she would not be able to persuade the Principal of her school to allow her to use the school land. She asked Mr Barney how he had persuaded his Principal to allow fruit and vegetables to be grown at the school. Mr Barney realised, in his enthusiasm to develop the producer co-operative, he had not yet asked for permission.

Mr Barney asked the teachers to help him write a list of benefits of running a producer co-operative which they could each present to the Principals of their schools. The teachers could use this list when planning their negotiations with the Principals of their own schools.

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