

Striker Jones

Elementary Economics for
Elementary Detectives

Second Edition

By Maggie M. Larche

Copyright © 2010 by Maggie Marcilliat Larche

ISBN 978-1460962879

All rights reserved.

This is a work of fiction and, as such, it is a product of the author's creative imagination. All names of characters appearing in these pages are fictitious. Any similarities of characters to real persons, whether living or dead, are coincidental. Any resemblance of incidents portrayed in this book to actual events, other than public events, is likewise coincidental.

Bulk order discounts are available for schools, fundraisers, community groups, and other functions. Please see www.elementaryecon.com for more information.

Publisher's Cataloging-In-Publication Data
(Prepared by The Donohue Group, Inc.)

Larche, Maggie M.

Striker Jones : elementary economics for elementary detectives / by Maggie M. Larche. -- 2nd ed.

p. ; cm.

Summary: This is a chapter mystery book that teaches children basic economic skills. In each chapter, boy detective Striker Jones solves a mystery every child would understand, using one or more economic concepts. Without using economic jargon, this book teaches concepts such as risk, incentives, supply and demand, and trade-offs.

Interest age level: 007-010.

ISBN: 978-1-4609-6287-9

1. Economics--Juvenile fiction. 2. Economics--Fiction. 3. Mystery and detective stories. I. Title.

PZ7.L27 Str 2011

[Fic]

Contents

1. Shark Showdown	1
2. The Missing Key	11
3. Risky Decisions	25
4. Looks Like Love	37
5. Election Day	49
6. Smarts and Crafts	59
7. Auction Action	67
8. The Egg Hunt Hoodwink	79
9. Museums and Mummies, Dinos and Daisies	89
10. The Surprise Story	101

Chapter 1

Shark Showdown

It was late August when Striker Jones and his best friend, Bill Flannagan, were at the beach for one last day of summer fun. With a new school year starting the next day, they decided to commemorate the end of summer the best way they knew how.

“Let’s dig a hole,” said Striker.

“You’re on,” said Bill.

They set to work hollowing out a crater in the white sand as the sun beat down on their heads.

“I’m not stopping until we hit water,” said Bill, raking a pile of sand with his hands.

“Unless it’s for ice cream,” said Striker.

“Or girls,” added Bill.

Striker laughed. “Deal.”

The two boys worked in a comfortable silence, occasionally whistling or telling the odd joke or two. They'd been best friends for years, and digging a hole had become one of their yearly traditions. They each had their own separate part to play. Striker was of medium height, so he would loosen the sand. Meanwhile, Bill, who was very tall, would shovel the sand out of the hole.

They had made it down about two feet, when Striker looked up and noticed another friend at the beach—Zack Marcus. Zack was the same age as Striker and Bill and was scheduled to be in their class during the next year.

Usually, Striker thought Zack was a pretty normal guy, but right then, he was doing something rather peculiar in the water. Zack was standing where the beach pier jutted out into the water. The water was a little rough there, yet he wasn't paying any attention to the waves crashing around his shoulders. "Not the safest spot to be daydreaming," thought Striker, when he noticed that Zack was staring intently at something he held in his hand.

"Look," said Striker to Bill, where he was lying down on the sand to reach deeper into the hole. "Zack is here, and I think he found something."

Bill raised himself up on one elbow. "What's he got?"

“Dunno,” said Striker. “But he’s coming back to shore. Let’s ask him.”

Out in the water, Zack was working his way onto shore, fighting the waves that kept breaking and threatening to knock him over. A few minutes later, Zack reached the beach near Striker and Bill. He flopped onto his back, breathing heavily from the trek.

“Hey, Zack,” called Bill. “Whatcha got there?”

Zack rolled over so that he could see Striker and Bill. “Oh, hey, guys.” He sat up and brushed the sand off his stomach. “Look what I just found in the water!” He held out his open palm, in which lay a brown, pointy rock.

Striker squinted in the sun to see the object better.

“Wow,” he said. “Looks like an arrowhead!”

“Yep,” said Zack with a grin. “Isn’t it awesome?”

“Cool!” said Bill. “Can I see it?”

“Sure,” said Zack, handing over the rock. “I bet it’s really old. It was probably even made by Indians.”

“But how did it end up in the ocean?” asked Bill.

“Well,” said Zack, “my dad told me once that lots of the rivers around here run into the ocean. So, maybe this was just washed in from somewhere inland.”

“Makes sense,” said Striker.

“You know,” said Bill, turning the stone over in his hands, “I’ve always really wanted one of these. Would you be willing to make a trade?”

“A trade?” asked Zack, raising an eyebrow. “For what?”

“Well...” Bill paused, thinking. “How about that Swift Rogers baseball card you’ve been asking me about for so long?”

Zack sat straight up. “Really?” He seemed surprised that Bill was making such a valuable offer.

“Totally,” said Bill. “I love Indian stuff.”

“You’ve got a deal, mister!”

“Cool. I’ll bring you the card tomorrow at school.”

The two boys shook on it, and Striker and Bill went back to digging their hole.

One hour later, the hole was so big that they could both stand up in it and just barely see over the side.

"I've gotta say," said Bill, inside the hole, "we've dug some awesome holes, but I think this one might be the biggest."

"I know," said Striker, standing next to him. "We finally hit water!" And it was true—there was a little puddle of water at their feet from the ground. "Let's see if we can get it even deeper."

"Ok," said Bill, "but first, I'm going to dunk in the ocean. It is so hot out here!" He climbed out of the hole and brushed the sand off of himself. "Be right back."

Striker squatted down in the hole and began using his hands to loosen the sand.

Just as he was thinking he might need a bucket to finish the job, he heard someone talking nearby. It sounded like Zack.

"Uh oh," Zack was muttering quietly. "Not over there." Suddenly, Zack raised his voice to a yell. "Bill, um, Bill! Don't go over there!"

"Why not?" Striker faintly heard Bill's voice come drifting back from across the water.

"Because... um, because," Zack yelled, "because there's... a shark!"

Striker sat up in surprise.

"What?" Bill called back.