

APRIL 2024 PARENT GUIDE



**ARTICLE SUMMARIES &
FAMILY DINNER CONVERSATION STARTERS**

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

We want our *Tuttle Times* Parent Guide to be a valuable resource for you. Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's minds and helping them understand the big ideas that lay the foundation for a bright future. We want to empower you to confidently guide your children in learning these principles.

Our mission is to equip you with knowledge and resources to make learning engaging and meaningful for your children. By encouraging curiosity, critical thinking, and a love for learning, your children can apply their knowledge in real-life situations and nurture their problem-solving skills and creativity.

We have included dinner table conversation starters in this Parent Guide. We firmly believe that changing the world begins at the dinner table. We hope these conversation starters will spark meaningful discussions and provide opportunities for bonding as a family.

—The Tuttle Twins team



Be sure to check out our [April Issue Resources](#), which has links to the challenge badges, activity solutions, and more!

New! We would love for you (and your child!) to share your thoughts on this month's issue with us. Find the survey links on the April Issue Resources page!

Remember... everyone who completes the survey by April 30 will be entered to win a \$50 gift card!

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Article Overviews and Dinner Table Conversations

We encourage you to read the *Tuttle Times* articles with your children, and we hope that the topics and big ideas bring about conversations that expand their knowledge and understanding of how the world works.

For each article, we give an overview or explain our reasoning for including it in this month's issue along with dinner table conversation starters. Bon appétit!

Megastore vs. Local Market (Issue pages 3–7)

Ethan and Emily are shopping for snacks for their family's game night. They have to decide between the allure of low prices at Stuffmart and their loyalty to Mr. Jackson, the owner of the Hilltop Market.

They ultimately choose to support Mr. Jackson's store, appreciating his helpful service and creative snack suggestions. The story highlights the complexity of decision-making, acknowledging the various factors, such as price, variety, and community impact.

As the twins reflect on their decision with their parents, they learn that there is no one-size-fits-all answer and that each choice carries its own benefits and consequences.



Dinner Table Conversation Starters

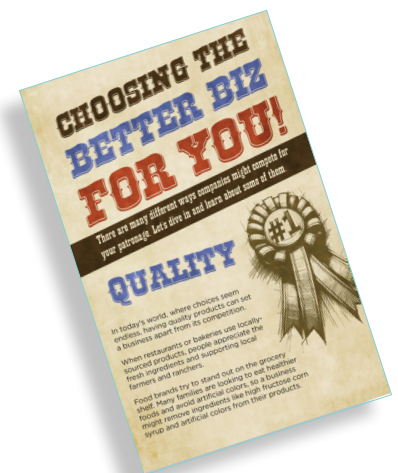
- What do you think Mr. Tuttle meant when he said, “The market is a reflection of people’s choices. It’s not what people say they support, but what they choose to do.”
- How do you think Stuffmart opening in Spoonerville will affect the community?

Choosing the Better Biz for You (Issue pages 8–10)

Everyone has different needs and preferences, and that gives businesses the opportunity to differentiate and win over customers. Businesses differentiate based on quality, variety, specialities, innovation, price, and customer experience.

Dinner Table Conversation Starters

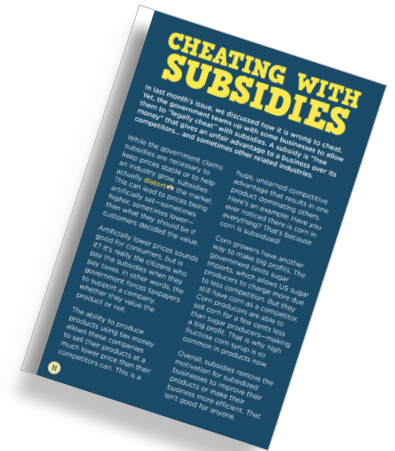
- Think of your favorite restaurant, store, or entertainment venue. What factors from the article do they use to win your business?
- How important is it to you that businesses support your local community?



Cheating with Subsidies (Issue pages 11-12)

This article explains how government subsidies give businesses an unfair competitive advantage and the impact it has on the market—businesses and consumers. Subsidies distort the market, affect pricing, and influence consumer choices. Corn being subsidized affects what other businesses choose to use to make their products. Due to subsidies keeping the price of corn low, many companies use corn syrup and high fructose corn syrup instead of sugar and other sweeteners in their products.

And government interference in the sugar industry, which affects imports, allows the sugar industry to charge higher prices than they would be able to with more competition. But the corn industry takes advantage of high sugar prices by undercutting sugar by just a few cents, so they win the business while raking in the profits.



Dinner Table Conversation Starters

- What do you think would happen if corn subsidies were ended?
- If someone told you that subsidies were necessary to keep prices lower, how would you respond?

Latest Buzz: The TikTok Bill (Issue pages 13-14)

Data security has been a hot topic for a while now. Many members of Congress find China gaining personal data from millions of Americans through the TikTok app to be a huge problem. Their solution is to force the Chinese-owned company to sell to an American company, or TikTok will be banned in the United States.

We discuss the implications if the bill is passed related to data security, economic impact, government overreach, and individual freedoms. It is not the government's job to protect citizens from a social media app. We should all be able to make our own decisions.



Dinner Table Conversation Starters

- Do you think the government should have the authority to ban apps due to national security concerns, or should it be left to individuals to make their own choices?
- If the bill is passed, what do you think the reaction will be from the 100+ million people in the United States who use TikTok?

Actions, Not Words, Impact the Market

Many people say they want strong local economies. They want to preserve the uniqueness of their community. While many profess support for small businesses, their purchasing habits often tell a different story. Convenience and affordability often win over customers. Amazon, Walmart, and other megastores emerge as winners, while small businesses struggle to compete.

As Mr. Tuttle said in this issue's story, "The market is a reflection of people's choices. It's not what people say they support, but what they choose to do."

The disparity between what people say they support and their purchasing habits is stark. Surveys show overwhelming public support for small businesses. Yet, a closer examination of consumer behavior shows only 1 in 5 regularly shop at small businesses. Over 80 percent of consumers choose the convenience and competitive prices offered by retail giants.

The rise of e-commerce has further exacerbated this trend. Online platforms allow consumers to browse and purchase goods from the comfort of their homes (or while at work). While many small businesses strive to establish an online presence, they often struggle to compete with the customer experience the retail giants provide online.

It used to be that you paid a premium for convenience, but Amazon has found a way to offer many products at competitive prices while becoming a brand synonymous with convenience. Likewise, Walmart's sprawling stores offer one-stop shopping experiences at hard-to-beat prices. These factors often outweigh the appeal of supporting small, local businesses.

In this month's story, the twins chose to support a local business over the new megastore. They learned that price is only one factor when making a purchase decision and that everyone has different needs and preferences. There's nothing wrong with choosing to purchase the lowest price product if that is what you decide is best for you. But there is room in the market for businesses that offer different benefits such as high quality products and excellent customer service.

As inflation affects many families' budgets, discounts offered by megastores are hard to pass up. During economic uncertainty, it's not surprising that many people prioritize savings over other factors. As a result, supporting small businesses often takes a backseat to value and affordability.

Many of us find ourselves constantly on the go, and it's easy to forget to think about anything beyond convenience. It makes sense, but it also could have long-term consequences for our community. We shouldn't get so caught up in convenience and savings that we forget to weigh the pros and consequences of our purchase decisions. Small businesses are often the lifeblood of neighborhoods, contributing to local employment and the neighborhood culture. When consumers consistently favor large corporations over local businesses, they inadvertently undermine the very communities they claim to cherish.

Actions, Not Words, Impact the Market

To address this disconnect between intention and action, consumers must recognize the power of their purchase decisions in shaping their community. This may involve making choices to support local businesses, even if it means sacrificing some convenience or paying slightly higher prices.

This isn't about not supporting bigger businesses—becoming a big, successful business is great. But letting price and convenience trump any thoughts about the company's values and what they bring to your community is shortsighted. It takes more time and research than just following your normal routine, but we think it's worth it. And are these big businesses so successful on their own, or is it due to getting special treatment from the government, which allows them to expand more easily into more and more communities?

Policymakers play a crucial role in creating an environment conducive to small business growth and sustainability. Policies that give unfair advantages to some businesses should be repealed to level the playing field between small businesses and corporate giants.

To truly empower local economies and communities, individuals must prioritize their actions over their words and actively support the small businesses that form the backbone of their communities.



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