

# Tennis Ball Factory

**Subject:** Math, Social Studies

**Grade Level:** 3-5

**Concept:** Economic Concepts

**Method:** Design Thinking

## OVERVIEW

This experiment uses student participation to teach the concept of diminishing marginal returns. Students are told they will be the employees in a widget factory. Tell students that they are part of the inputs required to generate a factory's short-run production function. They will be using two buckets, a number of tennis balls, and a whiteboard to record the results of the exercise.

To start the activity you will need to set up and assign the following:  
4 volunteers

- One student to act as the factory owner (optional)
  - One student to act as timekeeper
- One student to act as output recorder – who can record the information on the classroom whiteboard or on their own.
- One student volunteer to be the first production line employee at the widget factory.

Set the buckets approximately 16-20 feet apart.

Place all the tennis balls in one bucket.

All other students that participate become workers on the 'production line'.

[Read Full Lesson](#)

**Connection to Entrepreneurship:** This experiment uses student participation to teach the concept of diminishing marginal returns.