

Make It. Sell It. Stand Behind It.

The Kids Adventure Workbook for Your Very First Real Business

“Schools make employees. We raise owners. This workbook walks one kid from an empty folding table to a sold-out lemonade stand with \$28.55 of real profit - using real 2026 prices, real arithmetic you can check, and one unhappy customer who changed everything.”

rsHIP

WHAT YOU WILL MASTER

- ▶ Say what a business actually is in one sentence - a problem somebody will pay you to solve - and find three real ones on your own street in ten minutes.
- ▶ Pick ONE first business out of six a kid can genuinely start this weekend (lemonade, dog walking, car washing, bracelets, mowing, baked goods) and defend the pick with profit-per-hour math.
- ▶ Add up what ONE unit really costs you, built from real June 2026 prices, and find the number almost every beginner skips: cost per cup.
- ▶ Set a price with a floor (your cost) and a ceiling (what a real person will hand you), and prove with arithmetic why the famous 25-cent lemonade stand loses money in 2026.
- ▶ Run the three-step fix when a customer is unhappy - agree fast, make it right, fix the cause - and then count what you actually kept: revenue minus cost equals profit.

A Business Is Just a Problem Somebody Pays You to Solve

Grown-ups make business sound like a secret club with a password. It is not. A business is simpler than a bike: you find a problem, you solve it, and the person who had the problem hands you money. That is the entire machine. Thirsty people walking a hot sidewalk have a problem. A dog stuck inside alone all day while its owner is at work has a problem. A car buried in pollen has a problem. Every business you have ever walked past started as somebody noticing a problem and deciding to stand in front of it.

Here is the part school usually skips. You do not need permission, a building, a website, a logo, or a grown-up job title. You need one problem, one solution, and one person willing to pay. Most first businesses cost less than a pizza to start. The lemonade stand you are about to build in this workbook costs \$11.45 to launch, and you probably already own the pitcher, the spoon, and the table.

So start by looking, not by thinking. Thinking makes you invent businesses nobody asked for. Looking finds businesses that are already waiting. Walk your street for ten minutes with exactly one question in your head: what is annoying somebody right here, right now? Write down three answers. Do not judge them yet, do not pick yet, do not worry whether you could actually do them. Problems are the raw material. Everything else in this workbook is just what you do with them.

BISCUIT THE DOG HAS A PROBLEM (AND SO DOES HIS OWNER'S SCHEDULE)

Mrs. Patel down the street works until 6:00 p.m. Her dog Biscuit is alone from 7:30 in the morning until dinner. You offer a 20-minute walk after school, three days a week, at \$8.00 a walk. Assumptions labeled: you already own shoes, your own time is free, a parent walks with you the first week, and your only cash cost is poop bags at about \$0.05 each.

Price you charge per walk	\$8.00
Walks per week	3
Revenue per week: 3 x \$8.00	\$24.00
Cost per week: 3 poop bags x \$0.05	\$0.15
Profit per week: \$24.00 - \$0.15	\$23.85

Finding Your One Thing

The first mistake almost every new owner makes is trying to do everything at once. Lemonade AND bracelets AND dog walking AND a car wash, all in one Saturday. You end up doing four things badly instead of one thing well, and then you decide business is hard. Business is not hard. Doing four businesses at the same time is hard. Pick ONE. You can always add the second one after the first one works.

Six businesses a kid can genuinely start this weekend: a lemonade stand, walking dogs, washing cars, making and selling bracelets, mowing lawns, and baking cookies or brownies for a neighbor. All six are real. All six have been run by real kids. They are not equal, though, and they differ in exactly three ways: how much money you need up front, how much time each single sale eats, and how much of the money you actually get to keep.

Now here is a grown-up idea in kid form: profit per hour. What matters is not what you charge. It is what you keep, divided by how long it took you. A \$5.00 bracelet feels fantastic until you notice it took you forty-five minutes to make and \$1.20 of string and beads to build. Run the profit-per-hour math on your top three ideas before you pick one. It takes five minutes with a pencil and it will very often change your answer.

THREE BUSINESSES, ONE HOUR EACH: WHICH ONE ACTUALLY PAYS?

Assumptions labeled: the prices are ordinary neighborhood rates that YOU set, the supply costs are what you pay at a store, and your own time is free but not unlimited. Change any number to match your street and redo the math - that is the point of the exercise.

Bracelet: \$5.00 price minus \$1.20 of materials	\$3.80 profit each
Bracelet takes 45 minutes: $\$3.80 / 0.75 \text{ hour}$	\$5.07 per hour
Dog walk: \$8.00 price minus \$0.05 of supplies	\$7.95 profit each
Dog walk takes 20 minutes: $\$7.95 \times 3$	\$23.85 per hour
Car wash: \$15.00 price minus \$1.50 of supplies	\$13.50 profit each
Car wash takes 40 minutes: $\$13.50 \times 1.5$	\$20.25 per hour

→ The bracelet is the most fun and the least money per hour - about \$5.07 against \$23.85 for the dog walk. That does not mean never make bracelets. It means know exactly what you are choosing, and if you love bracelets, your job is to get faster, buy beads cheaper, or charge more.



Running four businesses badly is not four times the money - it is usually zero. Pick one. Run it five times. Then decide what is next. Five small loops beat one big launch every single time.

What It Really Costs to Make One

This is the section grown-ups skip, and then they wonder why the money disappeared. Before you can choose a price, you have to know what ONE costs you. One cup. One bracelet. One walk. Not the whole shopping trip, not the whole afternoon - one. If you cannot say your cost per unit out loud, you are not running a business yet. You are running a very generous charity.

We are going to do it for real, using prices the United States government actually measured. In June 2026 the Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded the average U.S. city price of lemons at \$2.109 per pound and white sugar at \$1.018 per pound. Those are not numbers we made up to look neat, and you can check them yourself. Our recipe: 4 pounds of lemons plus 1 pound of sugar plus tap water and ice makes 20 cups of 8 ounces each.

Then add the thing every beginner forgets: packaging. The cup itself costs money. A 50-pack of paper cups at

Setting a Price

Price is the scariest part for most kids, and honestly for most adults too. Here is the rule that takes the fear out. Price is not what you wish people would pay, and it is not what feels polite. Price has a floor and a ceiling. The floor is your cost - \$0.57. Go below it and you lose money on purpose. The ceiling is whatever a real person will actually hand you before they shrug and walk away. Your job is to find a good spot in between.

A solid starting move is to multiply your cost by three. $\$0.57 \times 3 = \1.71 , so round to \$2.00 because people pay with the coins and bills in their pocket. Two dollars is a real price for a real cup of fresh-squeezed lemonade in 2026 - roughly what a bottle of anything costs at a gas station, and yours is fresher and colder and made by a human standing right there.

Do not apologize for your price. Do not put it in a tiny font. Say it out loud like it is obviously correct, because it is: you did the arithmetic. If somebody says it is too expensive, that is information, not an insult. Maybe the ceiling on your street is lower. Maybe you need a bigger cup, colder ice, or a sign people can read from a car. Test one price for one entire day before you change anything, or you will never know what actually worked.

FOUR PRICES, THE SAME TWENTY CUPS

Same batch, same \$11.45 of cost, four different signs. Assumptions labeled: at \$0.25, \$1.00, and \$2.00 we assume all 20 cups sell; at \$3.00 we assume the higher price scares off half your buyers so only 10 sell (and you only spend 10 paper cups). That last line is an assumption, not a measurement - go test it yourself.

At \$0.25 a cup: $20 \times \$0.25 = \5.00 in, \$11.45 out	LOSE \$6.45
At \$1.00 a cup: $20 \times \$1.00 = \20.00 in, \$11.45 out	KEEP \$8.55
At \$2.00 a cup: $20 \times \$2.00 = \40.00 in, \$11.45 out	KEEP \$28.55
At \$3.00 a cup: 10 sold = \$30.00 in, \$10.45 out (assumed)	KEEP \$19.55
Winner of the four	\$2.00 a cup

→ Doubling the price from \$1.00 to \$2.00 more than tripled the profit, from \$8.55 to \$28.55. And notice that the highest price was NOT the best price. The best price is the one that clears the most profit, not the one with the biggest number on the sign.

- ✓ The starting formula: cost $\times 3$, then round to a number people can pay from a pocket. $\$0.57 \times 3 = \1.71 , so charge \$2.00. Then hold that price for one full day before you change a thing.

Your First Customer

A sale is not a magic trick and it is not begging. A sale is a question that somebody answers with yes. Your only job is to make the question easy to answer. Stand up. Look at the person. Say what it is and what it costs, in one sentence: 'Fresh lemonade, two dollars a cup.' That is the whole pitch. Adding words does not add sales. Standing up and making eye contact does.

Your first customer will almost certainly be somebody who already knows you - a neighbor, a family friend, a parent walking a stroller past your driveway. Use that on purpose. The day before you open, tell five people out loud: 'I am running a lemonade stand Saturday morning at the end of my driveway.' Five actual sentences to five actual humans beat the prettiest sign you could possibly draw.

Then face the thing nobody warns you about: you might not sell out. You made 20 cups and 12 people came. The 8 cups of lemonade you cannot sell are gone, because warm lemonade does not keep until next weekend. But the 8

Standing Behind It When Something Goes Wrong

Something will go wrong. The ice will melt. A bracelet will snap the next day. You will miss a dog walk because practice ran long. This is not a sign that you are bad at business - this IS business. Every company you can name has handed somebody a warm cup at some point. The difference between a kid who runs one lemonade stand and a kid who runs a business for five years is decided entirely in the next sixty seconds.

Memorize the three-step fix today. One: agree fast. Say 'You are right.' Do not argue, do not explain, do not blame the ice or the weather or your little brother. Two: make it right - refund the money, replace the thing, or redo the job, and let the customer pick which. Three: fix the cause so it cannot happen the same way twice - buy a cooler, pack more ice, set an alarm on the kitchen clock. Agree. Make it right. Fix the cause.

Here is why this is worth actual money and not just good manners. A refund costs you a couple of dollars once. A customer who walks away telling the whole street that you made it right brings you back far more than that, over and over, for the rest of the summer. That is reputation - what people say about you when you are not in the room - and it is the one thing you build in your first business that you get to keep forever, even after the lemonade is gone.

THE WARM CUP: WHAT ONE APOLOGY COST AND WHAT IT PAID BACK

Mr. Ruiz buys the very first cup of the day. The ice had already melted and the lemonade was warm. You hand back his \$2.00 and give him a fresh cold cup, which cost you \$0.57 to make. Assumption labeled: he comes back four more times that summer. That is a plausible outcome, not a guarantee - which is exactly why it is worth trying.

Refund handed back	\$2.00
Replacement cup given free (your cost)	\$0.57
Total cost of making it right	\$2.57
That day's profit drops from \$28.55 to	\$25.98
He returns 4 more times at \$2.00: revenue	\$8.00
Your cost for those 4 cups: 4 x \$0.57	\$2.29
Profit from the customer you kept: \$8.00 - \$2.29	\$5.71
What the \$2.57 apology paid back	more than 2x

→ You spent \$2.57 to keep one customer and got \$5.71 back from that person alone - before counting a single neighbor he told. Standing behind it is not just being nice. It is the highest-return spending in your entire business.



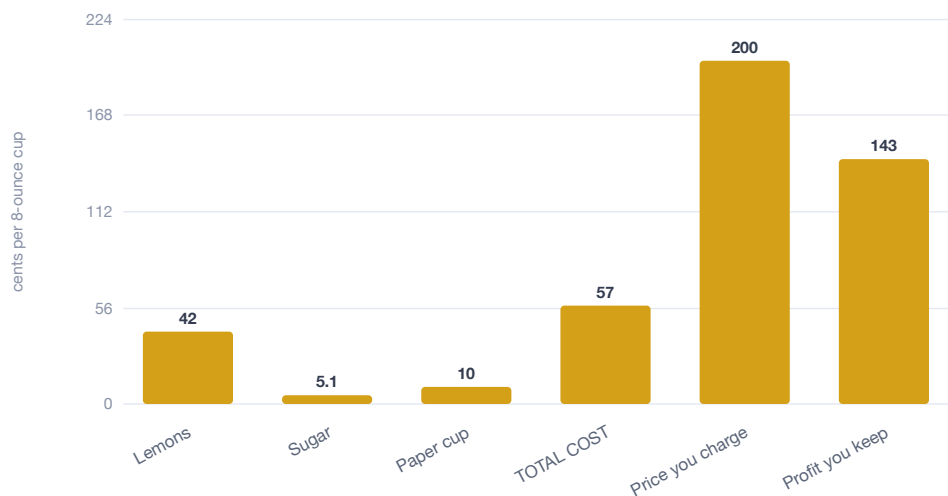
Never argue with an unhappy customer about whether they are right. You will win the argument and lose the customer, the neighbor, and everybody they talk to on that street. Agree fast, make it right, fix the cause.

Counting What You Actually Kept

The money in your hand at the end of the day is not profit. It is revenue, and revenue is the number that fools people. If you sold \$40.00 of lemonade you did not make \$40.00, because \$11.45 of that money was never yours to begin with. It belonged to the lemons, the sugar, and the cups, and it was just passing through your hand on the way back out. Revenue minus cost equals profit. Profit is the part that is actually yours.

Two more numbers make you genuinely dangerous. Margin is how much of every dollar you keep: \$28.55 kept out of \$40.00 is about 71 cents on the dollar, or 71 percent. Break-even is how many you must sell just to get your own money back: \$11.45 of cost divided by \$2.00 a cup is 5.7, so 6 cups. Cup number six pays you back for the whole shopping trip. Every cup after that is profit, and now you know exactly when the good part starts.

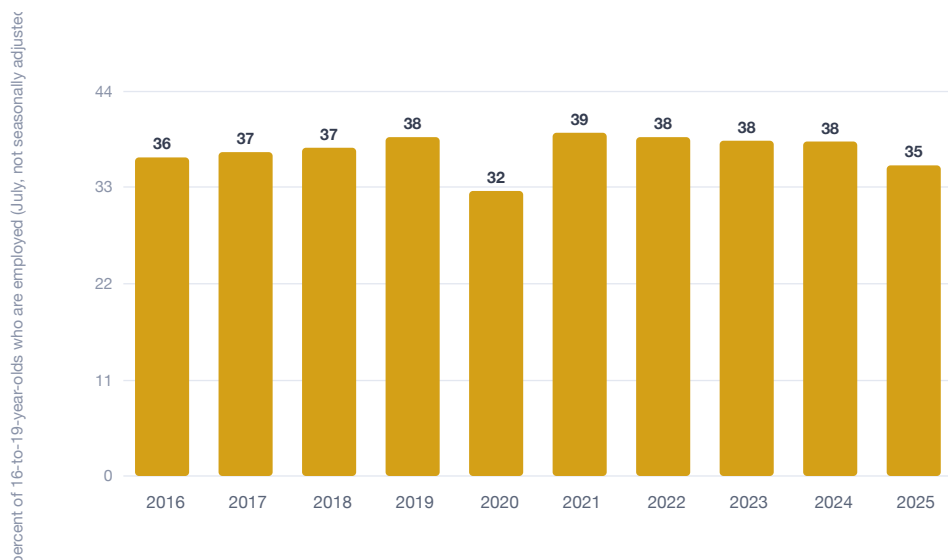
What One Cup of Lemonade Really Costs (and What You Keep)



Built from real measured prices, not guesses. In June 2026 the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded the average U.S. city price of lemons at \$2.109 per pound and white sugar (all sizes) at \$1.018 per pound. Our batch is 4 lb of lemons + 1 lb of sugar + tap water and ice, which makes 20 cups of 8 ounces. The arithmetic, step by step: lemons $4 \times \$2.109 = \8.436 , and $\$8.436 / 20 \text{ cups} = 42.2$ cents per cup; sugar $1 \times \$1.018 = \1.018 , and $\$1.018 / 20 = 5.1$ cents per cup; the paper cup itself is a stated assumption of 10.0 cents (a 50-pack for about \$5.00 - check your own store). Add them up: $42.2 + 5.1 + 10.0 = 57.3$ cents to make one cup. Charge \$2.00 (200.0 cents) and you keep $200.0 - 57.3 = 142.7$ cents. Assumptions stated plainly: water and ice are counted as free from home, and the pitcher, spoon, and sign are one-time tools rather than per-cup costs. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPI Average Price Data, U.S. city average, June 2026 - series APU0000711412 (lemons, per lb.) and APU0000715211 (sugar, white, all sizes, per lb.), both figures verified at the BLS public data API. The \$0.10 cup is a CashQuest Kids assumption, not a BLS figure.

Source: CPI Average Price Data, U.S. city average, June 2026 - lemons \$2.109 per lb. (series APU0000711412) and sugar, white, all sizes, \$1.018 per lb. (series APU0000715211); both figures verified at the BLS public data API. The \$0.10-per-paper-cup figure used in this chart is a stated CashQuest Kids assumption and is NOT a BLS figure. · U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2026) · <https://api.bls.gov/publicAPI/v2/timeseries/data/APU0000711412>

Out of Every 100 Teens, How Many Have a Job in July?



July is the single biggest month of the year for teen jobs - and even in July, most teens do not have one. The share of Americans age 16 to 19 who were employed in July ran 36.1 percent (2016), 36.7 (2017), 37.2 (2018), 38.4 (2019), 32.3 (2020, the pandemic summer), 38.9 (2021), 38.4 (2022), 38.0 (2023), 37.9 (2024), and 35.2 percent (2025). Read the last bar as a headcount: in July 2025 about 35 out of every 100 teenagers had a paying job, and about 65 out of every 100 did not. Nobody has to hire you to let you start the business in

Forge, Mr. Ruiz, and the Warm Cup

FORGE

Fresh lemonade, two dollars. I squeezed every lemon myself.

A bright Saturday morning driveway. Forge, age 11, stands behind a card table with a hand-lettered sign reading FRESH LEMONADE \$2. A glass pitcher sweats in the sun beside a stack of paper cups and a cash box with exactly four quarters in it. Mr. Ruiz, a silver-haired neighbor in a walking hat, digs in his pocket. The mentor FORGE - a sturdy blacksmith figure in an apron - leans on the mailbox in the background, arms folded, saying nothing.

MR. RUIZ

Two dollars? Back in my day it was a quarter.

1. Cup one. Four pounds of lemons, one pound of sugar, and a whole lot of nerve.

MR. RUIZ

This one is warm. The ice melted before I paid.

Two minutes later. Mr. Ruiz has walked ten steps and turned back, holding the cup at arm's length with a small apologetic frown. The ice in the pitcher has gone to slush in the sun. Forge's smile has fallen off her face; her hand is frozen halfway to the cash box. FORGE has not moved and is watching only Forge, not the customer.

FORGE

Oh no. That was my very first sale of today.

2. The first complaint always lands harder than the first sale.

FORGE

Here's your two dollars back. And a fresh cup, free.

Forge has already opened the cash box and is pressing two crumpled dollars back into Mr. Ruiz's hand with one hand while pouring a fresh cup from a cooler with the other. On the table beside her, a spiral notebook is open to a page where she has written in fat pencil: BUY A COOLER. MORE ICE. FORGE finally speaks, one eyebrow up, tapping the notebook.

FORGE

That fix cost two dollars and fifty-seven cents. Watch.

3. Agree fast. Make it right. Fix the cause. Sixty seconds, three steps.

MR. RUIZ

Brought my whole walking group. She stands behind her lemonade.

The Saturday after next. The card table now has a real cooler under it and a line of six neighbors in walking shoes stretching down the driveway. Mr. Ruiz is at the front, gesturing back at the group like a proud tour guide. The pitcher is empty. Forge's notebook is open on the table with four lines filled in: SOLD 20, PRICE \$2, COST \$11.45, KEPT \$28.55. FORGE is grinning into his beard.

FORGE

Twenty cups gone. Twenty-eight dollars and change kept.

4. The apology was the cheapest advertising she ever bought.

How well did it stick?

☐ **What is a business, in one sentence - and what are the only three things you need to start one?**

A business is a problem somebody will pay you to solve. You need exactly three things: one problem, one solution, and one person willing to pay. You do not need permission, a building, a website, or a job title. The lemonade stand in this workbook starts with \$11.45.

☐ **Lemons cost \$2.109 a pound and sugar costs \$1.018 a pound. You use 4 pounds of lemons, 1 pound of sugar, and 20 paper cups at 10 cents each to make 20 cups. What does ONE cup cost you?**

About 57 cents. Lemons: $4 \times \$2.109 = \8.44 . Sugar: $1 \times \$1.018 = \1.02 . Cups: $20 \times \$0.10 = \2.00 . Total batch cost = \$11.45. Then \$11.45 divided by 20 cups = about \$0.57 per cup. Water and ice from home count as \$0.00, and the pitcher is a tool, not an ingredient.

☐ **Why can the famous 25-cent lemonade stand not work in 2026, and what price does the cost x 3 rule give you instead?**

Because each cup costs about \$0.57 to make, so every quarter you collect loses you \$0.32 - twenty cups at a quarter is \$5.00 in against \$11.45 out, a \$6.45 loss. Cost x 3 gives $\$0.57 \times 3 = \1.71 , which you round up to \$2.00 so people can pay it easily. At \$2.00, twenty cups brings in \$40.00 and keeps \$28.55.

Check yourself, continued

- ☐ **A customer says the lemonade you just sold them was warm. What are the three steps, in order, and why is doing them worth actual money?**

One: agree fast - 'You are right' - with no arguing and no blaming the ice. Two: make it right - refund, replace, or redo, and let them choose. Three: fix the cause so it cannot happen twice (buy a cooler, pack more ice). It is worth money because the \$2.57 apology in this workbook brought back \$5.71 in profit from that one returning customer - more than double - before counting anybody he told.

- ☐ **You sold 20 cups at \$2.00 each and your total cost was \$11.45. What is your revenue, your profit, your margin, and your break-even?**

Revenue is \$40.00 ($20 \times \2.00). Profit is \$28.55 ($\$40.00 - \11.45). Margin is about 71 percent ($\$28.55 / \40.00), meaning you kept about 71 cents of every dollar. Break-even is 6 cups ($\$11.45 / \$2.00 = 5.7$, rounded up) - cup number six pays back the whole shopping trip, and every cup after that is profit.

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WORDS TO KNOW

Revenue

All the money customers hand you, before you pay for anything. Sell 20 cups at \$2.00 and your revenue is \$40.00. Revenue is the fun number, but it is not yours yet.

Cost

What you spend to make the thing you sell - the lemons, the sugar, the cups, the beads, the soap. In our lemonade batch, cost was \$11.45 for 20 cups, or about \$0.57 for one.

Profit

Revenue minus cost. The part that is actually yours to keep. \$40.00 of revenue minus \$11.45 of cost equals \$28.55 of profit. If profit is negative, you paid people to take your stuff.

Price

What one customer pays you for one unit. Price has a floor (your cost - never go under it) and a ceiling (what a real person will actually hand over). A good starting price is your cost times three, rounded to easy money.

Customer

The person who pays. Not the person who says your lemonade looks nice, not the person who promises to come back later - the person who actually hands you money. Your first one is usually somebody who already knows you.

Inventory

The stuff you have made or bought but have not sold yet. Eight unsold cups of lemonade go warm and are gone; eight unused paper cups worth \$0.80 go back in the bag and wait for next Saturday.

Refund

Giving a customer their money back when they are not happy. It costs you a little today and buys you a reputation that pays for years. Hand it back fast and without arguing.

Margin

How much of every dollar you keep. Price minus cost is margin per unit: $\$2.00 - \$0.57 = \$1.43$. As a percent, \$28.55 kept out of \$40.00 is about 71 percent - about 71 cents of every dollar stayed with you.

Supplier

Whoever sells you the stuff you need to make your thing - the grocery store selling lemons and sugar, the shop selling beads. A cheaper supplier lowers your cost without touching your price, which grows your profit instantly.

Reputation

What people say about you when you are not in the room. It is built one kept promise at a time and wrecked one argument at a time. It is the only thing you build in your first business that you keep forever.

SOURCES & MATERIALS USED

- CashQuest Kids, Pillars EP05: Make It, Sell It, Stand Behind It (2026) - base material for all sections, the seven-word loop (make it, sell it, stand behind it), the six starter businesses, the three-step fix, the one-page business plan, and every worked example. Stated modeling assumptions used throughout: a batch of 4 lb lemons + 1 lb sugar + tap water and ice yields 20 eight-ounce cups; paper cups cost \$0.10 each (50-pack at about \$5.00); water, ice, and the kid's own time are counted at \$0.00; the pitcher, spoon, and sign are one-time tools excluded from cost per cup; dog-walking, bracelet, car-wash, and repeat-customer figures are illustrative neighborhood rates the reader is told to re-price locally, not survey data. — CashQuest Kids (2026). <https://cashquestkids.com>
- CPI Average Price Data, U.S. city average, June 2026 - lemons \$2.109 per lb. (series APU0000711412); sugar, white, all sizes, \$1.018 per lb. (series APU0000715211). Used to build the cost-per-cup chart and every lemonade-stand calculation in this workbook. Both figures verified at the BLS public data API. — U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2026). <https://api.bls.gov/publicAPI/v2/timeseries/data/APU0000711412>
- Current Population Survey - employment-population ratio, ages 16-19, not seasonally adjusted (series LNU02300012). July values: 36.1% (2016), 36.7% (2017), 37.2% (2018), 38.4% (2019), 32.3% (2020), 38.9% (2021), 38.4% (2022), 38.0% (2023), 37.9% (2024), 35.2% (2025). Chart figures verified at the BLS public data API. — U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2026). <https://api.bls.gov/publicAPI/v2/timeseries/data/LNU02300012>

MY NOTES & NEXT MOVES