LESSON 5

Business Models and What Makes Your Offer Stand Out

60 minutes (2 periods) | From Idea to Customer

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Learn the nine-part Business Model Canvas, apply real survey findings to shape your value proposition, and identify what makes your mini-business the better choice against today's alternative.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Explain the nine sections of the Business Model Canvas and what each captures about a business.
- Use customer survey findings to inform the value proposition and customer segments of your mini-business.
- Identify a realistic alternative customers use today and articulate your competitive advantage.

BEFORE THE BELL

- Before the Lesson Print or have on screen a blank Business Model Canvas template (the nine-box grid). Have the Supermac's worked example ready to display or project. The grid in step 3 is the canonical layout, point students at the SHAPE as well as the content. Ensure students have access to their completed Market Research page (5-question survey responses) and their earlier Customer Persona. Suggested Timing Getting Started: 5 min, students review their survey answers. What You'll Learn: 8 min, five key concepts in depth, then the Nine Boxes at a Glance preview. A Worked Canvas (Supermac's): 15 min, read the background, study the canvas grid, answer the two analysis questions. Build Your Business Model Canvas: 22 min, staged: 10 min on anchor boxes (Customer Segments + Value Proposition + The Alternative), then 12 min on the remaining seven boxes. Think About It: 5 min, reflection on what was hardest and whether they genuinely beat 'doing nothing'. What's Next: 5 min, recap and signpost to the Budget Sheet. Teaching Tips When discussing value proposition, push back hard on generic phrases like 'high quality' or 'good service'. The test is whether a sceptical customer would choose them over the alternative. Model this by asking 'Compared to what?' During the canvas activity, circulate and watch for the two common failure modes: value proposition that's true of everyone, and customer segments that are too broad ('young people'). Redirect on the spot. Use the Supermac's example slowly, the point is the BMC structure and how findings move from one box to another, not Supermac's specifically. If students haven't visited one, use a local chip shop or takeaway as the mental model. The Nine Boxes at a Glance table in step 2 is the safety net for the five boxes that aren't deep-taught (Channels, Customer Relationships, Key Resources, Key Activities, Key Partners). If students stall in step 4, send them back to that table first. The second reflection question ('Are you genuinely a better choice than doing nothing?') is the critical one. Students who can't answer yes should revisit their canvas before moving to the Budget Sheet. Common Mistakes Value Proposition is vague or generic ('best quality', 'friendly service'). Solution: Push for specificity by asking 'What would a customer say to their friend about why they picked you over the alternative?' Customer Segment is too broad ('everyone', 'young people', 'busy families'). Solution: Insist on a real segment that shares both a problem AND a way you can reach them, use the TY hot chocolate stall example to show the difference. Key Resources and Key Activities get confused. Solution: Resources are what you HAVE (a flask, a recipe, starter cash); Activities are what you DO (prep on Friday night, post on Instagram, run the stall on Saturday). Revenue Streams and Cost Structure are confused or left blank. Solution: Remind them that revenue is how money flows in (sales), and costs are what it takes to run the business (ingredients, equipment, space). Differentiation Support: Provide a sentence starter for each of the nine boxes. Students who get stuck can use 'Our customer segment is...', 'We make money by...', etc. to scaffold their thinking. Support: Allow students without completed homework survey responses to use their earlier Customer Persona as a stand-in for real data, so they don't fall behind. The student-visible step 1 already invites this. Extension: Strong students should hit the 'Finished early?' stretch challenge in step 4, sketching a second value proposition for a different customer segment. This deepens their understanding of competitive advantage and previews the marketing lesson later in the unit.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

introduction	Getting Started
content	What You'll Learn
activity	A Worked Canvas: Supermac's
worksheet	Build Your Business Model Canvas
content	Think About It
summary	What's Next