Lester Backus



Lester is 32 years old. He and his wife Olna and their two little girls (ages 7 and 9) live in the Old North neighborhood of Dayton. From their house Lester can walk across the Findlay Street bridge over to Third Street to his police station. He likes to walk, especially on the way home after his shift because there are 3 bars and a saloon on his way home. He likes to avoid home as much as possible because his wife is always nagging about needing new clothes and his oldest daughter wants him to buy her a camera so she can be a photographer. Lester is always looking for ways to make extra money so sometimes he gambles or enters himself into the popular boxing matches that take place over on Ludlow under the rail tracks.
The drinks and gambling still have to come out of his pay. Winning a boxing match is not a guaranteed payday.

What does this character want?

Identify two goals from the biography.

_____

_____

Who brings in money?

Person	Type of work

Use this packet for written work. Use the website's calculators. You do not need to copy every purchase or calculation, even if a screen asks you to.

Discuss one advantage and one obstacle from the biography.

Who does necessary work without a paycheck? _____

Starting yearly household income: $_____
Starting savings: $25 before purchases or unpaid bills. Savings are not yearly income.

The Goal:

Our dream: _____

Total needed to pay for our goal: $_____
Income needed to support that life each year: $_____
Record the full goal cost—not the amount still missing. For Harold, use the farm goal; for other households, use the goal shown for their character.

Our targets: Standard of living _____ /100 Quality of life _____ /100

Justification: _____

What are you willing to give up?

After choosing your current life, what choices helped your budget but cost your family something. What made you think it would be worth it?

_____

_____

The plan

What will you do to move toward the goal? Who will give up time, comfort or opportunity?

_____

_____

_____

_____

When life happens

After accepting each year's decision, record what happened, your choice, and the cash carried into the next year. Use a minus sign for unpaid bills. Do not copy the forecast or just this year's gain. For the final year, record cash BEFORE paying for the goal.

Year	**What happened and what we decided**	**Closer or farther? Cash at year's end**
1900		Closer / Farther $_____
1901		Closer / Farther $_____
1902		Closer / Farther $_____
1903		Closer / Farther $_____
1904		Closer / Farther $_____

Did you get the life you wanted?

Could you afford the goal? Yes / No
Did you achieve the whole family dream? Yes / Partly / No
Consider the goals in the biography and both life targets—not just the money or the key.

Final standard of living: _____ /100

Quality of life: _____ /100

Did you revise the dream or either target? What changed, and why? If not, write "no change."
_____
Revised goal cost: $_____ Yearly cost: $_____
Revised targets: Standard of living ____ /100 Quality of life ____ /100
Keep your original targets on page two.

Did more money make Lester's family better off? Consider time and obligations.

Was the path to the middle class worth the sacrifices? Explain a trade-off between standard of living and quality of life, or why you revised the dream.

Explain how urbanization shaped your story?