

Tim Parrish

Instructor's Name

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Old-Time Grocery Store

While pulling off the highway onto the pothole-filled asphalt parking lot of Sav-A-Sum Market in Dardanelle, Arkansas, I see what appears to be a typical grocery store. The building itself is constructed from cement blocks which are painted light blue. On the front side of the building there are lightly colored bricks and nine large windows; hanging from the windows are handwritten advertisements. Above the windows there is an over-hanging canopy which extends outward to protect the customers from inclement weather. The canopy and the adjoining brown metal facing are supported by wooden columns. On the facing the store's name, "SAV-A-SUM MKT," is written in bold red lettering on a white background.

Entering Sav-A-Sum Market, I'm suddenly paralyzed by the aroma of freshly baked cinnamon rolls. After regaining my composure, I get a shopping cart and begin to meander along the front aisle toward the smell of the rolls. Reaching the bakery and observing all the mouth-watering goodies inside the glass display cases, I pause momentarily and then move along.

Strolling through the produce section and sampling the grapes, which are extremely sour, I remember that I need some potatoes. Finding the potatoes neatly stacked on wooden tables, I swoop up a bag and place them in my cart.

With my mind concentrating on my grocery list, which I had left at home, I begin to aimlessly go from aisle to aisle. Suddenly, my attention is sharply turned to a familiar sound. That sound is the "CLICK, CLICK, CLICK" of a labeling gun, an almost obsolete piece of

equipment rarely used in grocery stores of today. Observing the merchandise on the shelves more closely, I realize that every item has a price tag on it.

Waltzing down the back aisle of Sav-A-Sum Market, I find the open-faced dairy cooler. Picking up some cheese and milk, I think that it has been a long time since I've seen an open-faced dairy case like this one. Farther down the aisle is the meat market, and hanging above the meat display case is a set of steer horns, another thing I haven't seen in a long time. Turning at the end of the aisle, I find myself in the frozen food section, which is directly across from the bread and snack cakes. Picking up some snacks, I also decide that I want some ice cream to go with my cakes.

Realizing that I have walked through this store and not really looked at it, I take another look around. Up above the windows there is light brown paneling, which doesn't match the blue paint on the walls or the blue paint on the interior columns either. The wax on the floors is not bright and shiny, but rather dull and dingy instead. In several places on the floor the tile looks to be worn out also. The flickering of an overhead light catches my attention, and looking upward, I see that the ceiling tile, which was once white, has faded to pale gray.

Reaching the checkstand, I start to place my groceries on the conveyor belt, and the checker smiles and says, "Hello." Apparently, I must have the look of major confusion on my face because the checker asks me, "Are you all right, sir?" I look at her and smile. Then I reply, "Yes." Little does she know that my confusion is caused by the sight of her manually ringing up my groceries instead of scanning them. Taking a closer look around, I realize that none of the checkstands is equipped with electronic scanners, just manual cash registers. In the meantime she has called for someone to sack my groceries.

After the sacker arrives and bags my groceries, he asks me, "Where are you parked, sir?" After my telling the sacker where I am parked, he proceeds to take my groceries to my car and

put them in it.

To me, there are three qualities that entitle Sav-A-Sum Market to be called an old-time grocery store. First is the pricing of stock, which enables me to see how much something costs, and second is the customer service. Specifically, the bagging and carrying out of my groceries qualify this market as an old-time grocery store. The third and my favorite of all is the use of manual cash registers, because I have always disliked scanning equipment.