Activity 1 Organizing a Store

What Do You See?

GOALS

In this activity you will:

- Plan the arrangement of the items for sale in a store.
- Analyze trends in the arrangement of the store.
- Relate the arrangement of items in the store to the arrangement of elements in the periodic table.

What Do You Think?

Some supermarkets now sell books, flowers, and prescription drugs in addition to eggs, meat, and cereal.

- **How many different items do you think that a supermarket has?**

The *What Do You Think?* question is meant to get you thinking about what you already know or think you know. Don't worry about being right or wrong. Discussing what you think you know is an important step in learning.

Record your ideas about this question in your *Active Chemistry* log. Be prepared to discuss your responses with your small group and the class.

Investigate

1. Suppose that you decided to go into the business of opening and running a supermarket. In your group, brainstorm a list of between 50 and 100 items you would sell at your supermarket.

   A member of your group should volunteer to record the items suggested by all members of the group. Everyone, including the person serving as recorder, should participate.

   a) Make a map showing the locations of all of the items in your store. Give some thought to what will be at the front of each aisle, and what will be at the back. Consider how the store will be arranged from left to right.

b) Keep in mind which items you want shoppers to see as they enter the store and which should be near as they approach the cash register. Would either of these factors alter your arrangement?

c) Consider the items from left to right across your store. Why did you choose to arrange the items that way?

Your teacher may decide to supply you with copies of flyers from a supermarket. Cut out all the items from the flyer and arrange them as if they were being sold in your store.

What Do You Think Now?

At the beginning of the activity, you were asked to think about the question:

- **How many different items do you think that a supermarket has?**

When you get used to one supermarket, it becomes easier to navigate your way. Would your supermarket be easy to navigate? Why?

Reflecting on the Activity and the Challenge

Organizing 50 to 100 items in your store is not unlike the problem faced by Mendeleev when he organized about the same number of chemical elements into the periodic table. This activity was designed to get you to understand some of the problems Mendeleev faced. It is hoped that you can better appreciate what he did. You may wish to build this experience into the game you design.

Chem to Go

1. What is the pattern or arrangement in your store's aisles?
2. Choose one aisle in your store. Describe the arrangement of items going from the front of the store to the back of the store. What is the trend (or general drift) in that aisle?
3. A new item is brought into the store — chocolate-covered peanuts. Where would you place this item? Provide an explanation for your decision.
4. Your store decides to sell napkins, plates, and decorations for Thanksgiving. How will you adapt your store arrangement to make room for these items?
5. You would like people to purchase a certain item because it gives you a big profit. Where would you place it in your store and why?
6. One of the characteristics of Mendeleev's original periodic table was a series of blank spots. Mendeleev expected these would eventually be filled with elements yet to be discovered. What would such a "blank" correspond to in your store?
7. Many supermarkets have the fruits and vegetables at the entrance to the market because these items are large profit items. Many supermarkets put magazines by the check-out counter hoping that shoppers will make an "impulse buy" before they leave. Did your supermarket map include these considerations? How would you change the map if profits were a new characteristic of the items?