

Money Masters: The Secret Life of Cash

Lesson Overview

Target Age: 10 Years Old (Olivia)

Duration: 60–90 Minutes

Focus: History of exchange, the four pillars of money management, and practical budgeting skills.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- Explain the difference between **bartering** and using **currency**.
- Identify and define the four main uses of money: **Spend, Save, Give, and Invest**.
- Create a balanced "Success Budget" using a hypothetical income.
- Distinguish between **needs** and **wants** in a real-world scenario.

Materials Needed

- A handful of random household items (a pencil, a toy, a snack, a book)
- Play money or printed "Olivia Dollars"
- Three clear jars or containers (labeled: Save, Spend, Give)
- Markers and poster paper (or a notebook)
- A calculator (optional)

1. The Hook: The Barter Challenge (10 Minutes)

Scenario: Imagine you are hungry for a sandwich, but money hasn't been invented yet. You have a collection of cool rocks. You find someone with a sandwich, but they don't want rocks—they want a new pair of socks. You have to find someone with socks who wants your rocks before you can get that sandwich!

Activity: Let's try a quick trade. I have a [Snack], and you have a [Toy].

- Try to "negotiate" a trade.
- Discuss: Was that easy? What if I didn't want your toy?

The Big Idea: Money was invented to make trading easier. It is a "medium of exchange" that everyone agrees has value.

2. I DO: Where Does Money Come From? (15 Minutes)

The Evolution of Money: Briefly explain the timeline: Barter (Trading) → Commodity Money (Salt, Shells) → Metal Coins → Paper Bills → Digital Money (Credit cards/Apps).

The Four Pillars of Money: Explain that money isn't just for buying things right now. It has four jobs:

1. **Spend:** Buying things we need (food) or want (video games) today.
2. **Save:** Setting money aside for something big in the future (a bike).
3. **Give:** Helping others or supporting a cause you care about.
4. **Invest:** Putting money into something to help it grow over time.

3. WE DO: Needs vs. Wants Sorting (15 Minutes)

Interactive Discussion: I will call out an item, and you jump to the left if it's a **NEED** (something you must have to survive/work) and to the right if it's a **WANT** (something fun but not necessary).

- Clean Water (Need)
- The newest iPhone (Want)
- A warm winter coat (Need)
- Ice cream sprinkles (Want)
- Electricity for the house (Need)

Critical Thinking Question: Can a "want" ever feel like a "need"? How do we decide which one to pay for first?

4. YOU DO: The \$100 Blueprint (30 Minutes)

The Task: You just earned \$100 for a week of helping with a big neighborhood project. You must decide how to divide this money using your three jars (Spend, Save, Give).

Success Criteria:

- You must put at least 10% (\$10) in the **Give** jar.
- You must put at least 30% (\$30) in the **Save** jar for a "Future Olivia" goal.
- The rest goes in **Spend**, but you must list exactly what you will buy and how much it costs.

Step-by-Step:

1. Decorate your three jars/containers.
2. Write your "Big Goal" on a sticky note and tape it to the **Save** jar (e.g., "New Tablet" or "Theme Park Trip").
3. Use the play money to physically divide the \$100 into the jars.
4. Create a "Spending List" for the remaining money. If you go over your budget, you have to take something off the list!

5. Conclusion: Wrap-Up & Recap (10 Minutes)

Review:

- What was the hardest part about bartering?
- What is the difference between a need and a want?
- Why is it important to "Give" and "Save" before we "Spend" everything?

The Final Takeaway: Money is a tool. If you learn how to use the tool well, you can build the life you

want!

Assessment Methods

- **Formative (During Lesson):** Check for understanding during the Needs vs. Wants game and the Barter Challenge.
- **Summative (End of Lesson):** Review the \$100 Blueprint. Does the math add up to \$100? Did they meet the Save/Give requirements?

Adaptations & Extensions

- **For More Challenge:** Introduce the concept of "Sales Tax." If Olivia wants to buy a \$20 toy, explain that it might actually cost \$21.50 at the register.
- **Kinesthetic Variation:** Set up a "Mini-Store" in the room with priced items and have her use her "Spend" money to actually "buy" items from you.
- **Digital Link:** If Olivia has access to a computer, show her a simple online compound interest calculator to see how "Saving" grows over 10 years.