

JA Finance Park

JA Finance Park is a four-week economics education program that introduces personal financial planning and career exploration. It is designed to be taught to middle grades students by classroom teachers. At the culmination of this program, students visit JA Finance Park to put into practice what they've learned about economic options and the principles of budgeting. Assisted by their teachers and a staff of trained volunteers, they have the opportunity to actually develop and commit to a personal budget.

Program Goals

The goals of JA Finance Park are to:

- Help students think creatively, analyze tasks, and solve problems
- Encourage students to develop and demonstrate personal responsibility for learning and self-management
- Actively involve the business community and parents in helping students attain their goals
- Communicate and work with schools to promote the highest level of student achievement
- Help students develop and follow a monthly budget

Description	Key Learning Objectives	Social Studies	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Show Me
Unit One: Financial Institutions Students recognize the role of financial institutions and the various services they provide	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify services provided by financial institutions ▪ Explain debit cards and their use ▪ Explain the advantages and disadvantages of using credit ▪ Evaluate the risks and benefits of saving and investing ▪ Identify the impact interest rates have on investment value ▪ Read stock quotations and determine stock value Concepts: Benefit, Credit, Investment, Opportunity cost, Risk Skills: Active listening, Brainstorming, Comparing, Critical Thinking, Decision-making, Following directions, Math computation, Reading, Teamwork, Writing	SS4 SS7	CA1 CA3 CA4 CA5 CA6	MA1	1 2 3 4
Unit Two: Taxes and My Salary Students explore what taxes are, why they are important, what they are used for, and how they affect income and expenses	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define taxes and explain their purpose ▪ Distinguish the differences among sales, income, and property taxes, and the purpose for each ▪ Identify ways taxes affect everyone ▪ Identify the basic principles of Social Security ▪ Determine net monthly income Concepts: Government, Income, Salary, Taxes, Wages Skills: Active listening, Brainstorming, Charting, Comparing, Math computation, Reading, Teamwork	SS3 SS4 SS7	CA1 CA3 CA4 CA5 CA6	MA1	2 3 4
Unit Three: Budgeting Students create and evaluate personal budgets	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain who uses a budget and why ▪ Identify the components of a successful budget ▪ Evaluate the effectiveness of sample budgets ▪ Develop spending plans ▪ Practice budget decision-making Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Opportunity cost, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants	SS4 SS7	CA1 CA3 CA4 CA5 CA6	MA1	2 3 4

Description	Key Learning Objectives	Social Studies	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Show Me
Unit Three: Budgeting (cont.)	Skills: Active listening, Comparing, Decision-making, Math computation, Reading, Teamwork				
Unit Four: Preparing for JA Finance Park Students evaluate hypothetical life situations and prioritize budget items in preparation for the JA Finance Park experience	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a personal budget ▪ Calculate net monthly income ▪ Conduct pricing research ▪ Assess investments ▪ Receive business assignment and account number Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants Skills: Active listening, Comparing, Interpersonal skills, Math computation, Reading, Role-play, Teamwork, Verbal communication	SS4 SS7	CA1 CA3 CA4 CA5 CA6	MA1	2 3 4
Unit Five: The Visit Students make spending decisions to maintain a balanced budget while participating in the JA Finance Park experience	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a typical family budget using hypothetical life situations ▪ Use percentages to calculate minimum and maximum spending allowances ▪ Evaluate stock holdings Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants Skills: Active listening, Critical thinking, Interpersonal communication, Math computation, Role-play, Teamwork		CA1 CA3 CA4 CA5 CA6	MA1	2 3 4
Unit Six: After the Visit Students assess their accomplishments from the JA Finance Park experience	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate the integration of classroom instruction with the hands-on simulation ▪ Perform an assessment of credit and investments ▪ Reflect on their visit Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants Skills: Active listening, Critical thinking, Self-reflection		CA1 CA4 CA6		2 4
Unit Seven: Career Goals Students consider their career goals and what steps they must take to achieve them	Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Differentiate among abilities, interests, work preferences, and values ▪ Identify their personal characteristics ▪ Rate their abilities, interests, and work preferences ▪ Identify their career interests ▪ Perform career choice research ▪ Write a letter of application to a prospective employer Concepts: Career, Goals, Income, Values Skills: Active listening, Critical thinking, Research writing, Self-assessment	SS4 SS7	CA1 CA3 CA4 CA6		1 2 4