

Personal Finance Student Workbook: Grades K-4

10 detailed lessons • Guided practice, independent application, and reflection

Student edition

Designed for classroom use with fictional scenarios. Never require students to disclose household income, account information, debt, tax records, immigration information, or other private financial data.

Student directions

- Use only the fictional information in this workbook.
- Show calculations and label money amounts.
- Support recommendations with at least two facts.
- Name one tradeoff, risk, or next step.
- If a question feels personal, use the fictional character—not your family.

Lesson 1: Money Has Jobs

Essential question: How can one dollar do different jobs?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
money		
choice		
spend		
save		
share		

Scenario

Ava receives 12 classroom coins and must plan for supplies, a class celebration, and a future goal.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Give Noah 10 coins. Students create two different complete plans and circle the plan that best protects a 4-coin savings goal.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “money” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 2: Needs, Wants, and a Spending Plan

Essential question: How do needs, wants, and goals compete for limited money?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
need		
want		
budget		
goal		

Scenario

Mia has \$12. A notebook is \$5, a snack is \$3, a toy is \$9, and she wants to save \$4.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students classify six picture purchases, build a \$15 plan, and explain one tradeoff.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “need” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 3: Borrowing Builds Trust

Essential question: What makes borrowing responsible?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
borrow		
return		
promise		
trust		

Scenario

Jordan borrows a library book for seven days and a marker until the end of class.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students repair three borrowing mistakes and write a responsible promise.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “borrow” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 4: Borrowing Has Consequences

Essential question: What can happen when a borrower does not keep a promise?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
consequence		
replace		
late		
responsibility		

Scenario

A borrowed game is returned late with a missing piece.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students match four actions with likely consequences and select the best repair plan.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “consequence” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 5: Work, Income, and Skills

Essential question: How do people use skills and effort to earn income?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
work		
income		
skill		
cost		

Scenario

Four students make bookmarks. They sell 8 at \$2 each; materials cost \$5.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students compute revenue and remaining money for a second craft stand and identify two useful work skills.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “work” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 6: Community Work and Public Services

Essential question: How does work help people and communities?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
job		
service		
tax		
community		

Scenario

A crossing guard, nurse, bus driver, and shop owner all help a neighborhood in different ways.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students match workers to services and choose one public service that benefits many people.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “job” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 7: Plan for Problems

Essential question: How can planning reduce the cost of an unexpected problem?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
risk		
protect		
prepare		
emergency		

Scenario

A bicycle is left outside before a storm; a tablet is carried without a case.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students evaluate four choices using safer/not safer and explain why.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “risk” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 8: Sharing Risk

Essential question: Why do people sometimes share the cost of a large loss?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
insurance		
premium		
claim		
loss		

Scenario

Many families place small amounts into a shared protection pool; one family experiences a covered loss.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students sequence premium, covered loss, claim, and payment and identify one limitation.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “insurance” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 9: Save for a Goal

Essential question: How can a savings plan turn a goal into steps?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
save		
goal		
deposit		
timeline		

Scenario

Lee wants a \$24 game and saves \$4 each week.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students create and compare two plans for an \$18 goal.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “save” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Lesson 10: Saving and Investing Are Different

Essential question: Why might people save some money and invest other money?

Vocabulary warm-up

Term	My meaning or sketch	Example / nonexample
saving		
investing		
growth		
risk		

Scenario

Two goal jars are labeled Soon and Much Later.

Task 1 — Identify the decision

- What goal is the character trying to reach? _____
- What limits or constraints matter? _____
- Which facts are most important? _____

Task 2 — Work the evidence

Evidence or calculation	What it means	Check or correction

Task 3 — Compare choices

Choice	Benefit	Cost / risk	Who or what goal does it fit?
Option A			
Option B			
Option C			

Task 4 — Make and defend a decision

Students place four goals on a soon/later continuum and choose save or learn-about-investing with a reason.

My recommendation: _____

Evidence 1: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Tradeoff, risk, or consequence: _____

Changed condition

Your teacher will change one fact. Write the new fact, revise your choice, and explain why it changed or stayed the same.

New fact: _____ Revised choice and explanation: _____

Exit ticket

Answer the essential question in 2-4 complete sentences. Use “saving” or another lesson term and one scenario fact.

Self-check

☐ I answered every part. ☐ I checked calculations. ☐ I used evidence. ☐ I explained a consequence. ☐ I used only fictional information.

Alignment and official sources

This locally adaptable resource addresses NYSED’s five required Personal Finance Education topics and published grade-band objectives. NYSED does not mandate or approve a particular local curriculum. Districts remain responsible for implementation, certification, accessibility, privacy review, and verification.

- NYSED Personal Finance Education: <https://www.nysed.gov/standards-instruction/personal-finance-education>
- NYSED Personal Finance Topics & Grade Bands: <https://www.nysed.gov/standards-instruction/personal-finance-topics-grade-bands>
- NYSED Personal Finance Education FAQ: <https://www.nysed.gov/standards-instruction/personal-finance-education-faq>
- NYSED Guidance & Resources: <https://www.nysed.gov/standards-instruction/personal-finance-guidance-resources>
- NYSED March 2026 Implementation Memorandum: <https://www.nysed.gov/memo/standards-instruction/amendment-section-1002-regulations-commissioner-education-require>