

JA Finance Park®

JA Finance Park helps students build a foundation for making intelligent, lifelong, personal financial decisions through hands-on, realistic simulation experiences. The program includes in-school activities culminating in the JA Finance Park simulation followed by a post-simulation assessment.

The key learning objectives listed beside each activity state the skills and knowledge students will gain.

Unit One: Financial Institutions

Students recognize the role of financial institutions and the various services they provide. Through case study, games, graphing, and other group activities, students understand the advantages and disadvantages of saving, investing, and using credit.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 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.

Unit Two: Taxes and My Salary

Students learn what taxes are, why they are important, what they are used for, and how they affect income and expenses. They discover what is meant by net monthly income and how net monthly income is calculated.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 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.

Unit Three: Budgeting

Students learn the importance of creating and maintaining a personal budget. Students create their own personal budgets and evaluate other budgets through case-study analysis.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 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.

Unit Four: Preparing for the JA Finance Park Simulation

Students prepare for the JA Finance Park simulation by conducting pricing research, tracking stock prices, and receiving job assignments. They practice budgeting skills by evaluating hypothetical life situations and prioritizing budget items.

Unit Five: The Simulation

Students experience the JA Finance Park simulation, where they apply classroom learning by making important spending decisions and maintaining a balanced budget.

Unit Six: After the Simulation

Students participate in a reflective assessment of what they accomplished during the JA Finance Park simulation. The assessment includes feedback from parents/guardians.

Supplemental Unit Seven: Career Goals

Students identify their abilities, interests, work preferences, and values. Based on their newly acquired financial knowledge, students consider their career goals and what steps they must take to achieve them. They investigate the training they will need for their career of choice.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Create a personal budget.
- Calculate net monthly income (NMI).
- Conduct pricing research.
- Assess investments.
- Receive a business assignment and account number. (Site-based and mobile students)

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Create a typical family budget using hypothetical life situations.
- Use percentages to calculate minimum and maximum spending allowances.
- Evaluate stock holdings.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Reflect on their simulation experience with their teachers.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 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.

JA Finance Park enhances students' learning of the following concepts and skills:

Concepts—Banking, Benefits, Budgets, Buying, Careers, Choices, Consumers, Credit, Debt, Exchange, Expenses, Income, Interest rates, Investments, Government, Money, Needs, Opportunity costs, Risk, Salary, Saving, Savings, Scarcity, Social Security, Taxes, Wages, Wants



Middle Grades Programs

Capstone Program

Skills—Active listening, Analysis, Applying information, Brainstorming, Budgeting, Cause and effect, Charting, Comparing, Computation, Critical thinking, Data collection, Decision-making, Filling out forms, Following directions, Graphing, Interpersonal communication, Interpreting data, Listening, Math computation, Negotiation, Observation, Planning, Problem-solving, Reading, Research, Role-playing, Self-reflection, Spending, Taking responsibility, Teamwork, Writing, Verbal communication

All JA programs are designed to support the skills and competencies identified by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. These programs also augment school-based, work-based, and connecting activities for communities with school-to-work initiatives.