

# Bouncing ball money choices

Students play a game to share how they think and feel about money.

## Learning goals

### Big idea

The people around us help shape the way we think and feel about money.

### Essential questions

- Who are the people in my life who shape the way I think and feel about money?
- How do I make choices about money?

### Objectives

- Identify the people in our lives who help shape our choices about money
- Recognize how our thoughts and feelings about money shape our money choices

## What students will do

- Form a circle and toss or bounce a ball to different classmates.
- Answer a question about money based on the number they see when they catch the ball.
- Reflect on their thoughts and feelings about money as they listen to classmates' answers.

### KEY INFORMATION

Building block:

 Financial habits and norms

**Grade level:** Middle school (6-8),  
High school (9-12)

**Age range:** 11-14, 13-19

**Topic:** Save and invest (Choosing how to save), Spend (Buying things)

**School subject:** CTE (Career and technical education), Physical education or health

**Teaching strategy:** Cooperative learning, Gamification

**Bloom's Taxonomy level:** Remember, Understand

**Activity duration:** 15-20 minutes

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### STANDARDS

**Council for Economic Education**

Standard II. Buying goods and services

Standard III. Saving

**Jump\$tart Coalition**

Spending and saving - Standard 1

## Preparing for this activity

- Print a copy of the “Bouncing ball money choices game: 10 questions for students” list in this guide.
- Get a beach ball, volleyball, soccer ball or other large, light ball to use for this game, and write or tape the numbers 1-10 on different areas of the ball.

### What you’ll need

#### THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- Bouncing ball money choices (guide)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_bouncing-ball-money-choices\\_guide.pdf](#)
- “Bouncing ball money choices game: 10 questions for students” list

#### STUDENT MATERIALS

- A beach ball, volleyball, soccer ball, or other large, light ball

## Exploring key financial concepts

Whether or not we realize it, sometimes the people close to us can change the way we manage our money. When it comes to money, everyone has different ideas about what’s important and why. Your “money circle” is your family members, friends, and other people in your life who influence your decisions about money. We each have a unique money circle because it’s based on our individual relationships. While you’re learning about how to handle your finances, it can be helpful to have conversations about the feelings and relationships that help shape how you think about money.

Your “money style” describes how you make choices about money. For example, would you rather save money or spend it? Do you plan how to spend money, or do you make quick decisions about what to buy? Do you feel confident about money, or do you worry about it? These are all parts of your money style. People in your money circle may have different money styles that lead them to make different choices about their money.

#### **TIP**

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Because financial products, terms, and laws change, students should be encouraged to always look for the most up-to-date information.

# Teaching this activity

## Whole-class introduction

- Tell the class that they'll explore how people think or feel about money and the people who influence our money choices.
- Read the "Exploring key financial concepts" section aloud to the students.
- Be sure students understand key vocabulary:
  - **Money circle:** Family members, friends, and other people in your life who help shape your decisions about money.
  - **Money style:** Describes how you make choices about money.
- Introduce the game:
  - Explain that the ball has the numbers 1 through 10 on it, and each number corresponds to a question about money choices.
  - Point out that the questions are designed to get them thinking about their own money circles and money styles. There are no right or wrong answers.
- Define the parameters for the game:
  - One-word answers are not sufficient. Students should give some detail or an example.
  - Students will have only 30 seconds, so their responses should be brief yet clear.
  - If anyone is uncomfortable sharing their answers, they can ask for a different question or choose to pass.
  - The same questions will come up multiple times but will be answered by different students.

### TIP

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Visit CFPB's financial education glossary at [consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/](https://consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/).

## Group work

- Toss or bounce the ball to a student.
- When the student catches the ball, have them call out the number closest to their right index finger.
- Ask the student the question that corresponds to that number on the "Bouncing ball money choices game: 10 questions for students" list.

- Give each student up to 30 seconds to answer the question. You may need to ask them questions to draw out a full answer. You can use the information in the list's "Expanding understanding" column to add to the discussion.
- After the student answers their question, ask them to toss the ball back to you or have them toss it to another student.
- Continue the game until the time you've allotted for the activity runs out or until all students have had a turn.
- Remember, this should be a quick activity that feels like a game, so try to keep things moving and energetic.

## Wrap-up

- If there's time, bring the class back together and ask for volunteers to share:
  - Who is in their money circle
  - Ideas about how they could change their money style if they wanted to
  - One thing they learned or want to remember from the activity

## Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other [CFPB activities](#) that address the topics of spending and saving. The "[Understanding who shapes your money decisions](#)" activity can help students further explore money circles and money styles.

## Measuring student learning

Students' comments can provide insight into their understanding of how they make choices about money.

**Keep in mind that students' answers may vary, as there may not be only one right answer.** The important thing is for students to have reasonable justification for their answers.

# Bouncing ball money choices game: 10 questions for students

Print one copy of these questions for the game. Feel free to share the information in the “Expanding understanding” section to add to the discussion.

## Rules:

- One-word answers are not sufficient. Give some detail or an example.
- Keep answers brief – no more than 30 seconds.
- There are no right or wrong answers.
- If anyone is uncomfortable sharing their answers, they can ask for a different question or choose to pass.

Question	Expanding understanding
1. In my house, the topic of money is _____.	The way finances are talked about in your house can help you identify how you feel about money. Think of one or two adjectives or phrases (for example, stressful, carefree, or not talked about).
2. Whom do you usually talk to when you make a decision about money?	The people you talk to about your money choices are in your money circle. They help shape the way you think and feel about money.
3. In your life, who makes money decisions that affect you?	Your money circle may include your siblings, parents, grandparents, and friends. The people in your money circle influence the way you think and feel about money.
4. The last time you spent money, how did you decide to spend your money that way?	Knowing your spending habits and strategies can help you make the best choices for you.
5. If someone surprised you with a gift of \$25 in cash, what would you do with it?	How you answer this question can help you think about your money style. People in your money circle may have different money styles.

Question	Expanding understanding
6. Have you ever made a choice about spending money that you regretted?	Understanding how you decide to spend money can help you make choices in the future that will help you meet your goals.
7. Would you call yourself a saver or a spender? Why?	A saver is someone who regularly sets aside money or avoids spending money. A spender is someone who makes purchases right away or buys things easily. These can be examples of a money style. Your money style can affect your money choices.
8. Do you plan how to spend money, or do you make quick decisions about what to buy?	A planner is someone who thinks through expenses and makes money decisions ahead of time. "Impulsive" means the person's immediate wants influence their money choices. These can be examples of a money style. Your money style can affect your money choices.
9. Are you confident about the way you'll manage your money in the future, or do you worry about it?	"Confident" means that the person is sure of themselves. A worrier is someone who imagines the worst about what could happen. These can be examples of a money style. Your money style can affect your money choices.
10. Is the way you save or spend money the same or different from your friends and family?	People with different money styles can work together, even when the styles seem to conflict. Different styles can be both helpful and challenging. By seeing what is the same and what is different, you can begin to understand how individual styles shape people's choices about money.



Saver



Spender



Planner



Impulsive



Worrier



Confident