

JA Finance Park

JA Finance Park introduces students to 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.

JA Finance Park is a six-week economics education program designed 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

Units

Unit 1: Financial Institutions—Students recognize the role of financial institutions and the various services they provide. They 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. (six 45-minute class periods)

Unit 2: 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. (four 45-minute class periods)

Unit 3: Budgeting—Students create and evaluate personal budgets. They explain who uses a budget and why, evaluate the effectiveness of sample budgets, and practice budget decision-making. (three 45-minute class periods)

Unit 4: Preparing for Finance Park—Students evaluate hypothetical life situations and prioritize budget items in preparation for the *JA Finance Park* experience. They create a personal budget, calculate net monthly income, conduct pricing research, and assess investments. (five 45-minute class periods)

Unit 5: The Visit—Students make spending decisions to maintain a balanced budget while participating in the *JA Finance Park* experience. They create a typical family budget using hypothetical life situations, calculate spending allowances, and evaluate stock holdings. (one full day experience at *JA Finance Park*)

Unit 6: After the Visit—Students assess their accomplishments from the *JA Finance Park* experience. They assess credit and investment decisions and reflect on the visit. (one 45-minute class period)

Unit 7: Career Goals—Students consider their career goals and what steps they must take to achieve them. They 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; and write a letter of application to a prospective employer. (five 45-minute class periods)

Description	Key Learning Objectives	Social Studies	Language Arts Literacy	Mathematics	Career Education; Consumer, Family & Life Skills
<p>Unit 1: Financial Institutions Students recognize the role of financial institutions and the various services they provide</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Benefit, Credit, Investment, Opportunity cost, Risk</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Brainstorming, Comparing, Critical Thinking, Decision-making, Following directions, Math computation, Reading, Teamwork, Writing</p>	6.5.8.A	3.1.4-8.A 3.1.4-8.C 3.1.4-8.D 3.1.4-8.E 3.1.4-8.F 3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C 3.4.4-8.A 3.4.4-8.B	4.1.4-8.A 4.1.4-8.B 4.1.4-8.C 4.3.4-8.D 4.5.4-8.A 4.5.4-8.C	9.2.8.B 9.2.8.C 9.2.8.E
<p>Unit 2: 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</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Government, Income, Salary, Taxes, Wages</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Brainstorming, Charting, Comparing, Math computation, Reading, Teamwork</p>	6.5.8.A 6.5.8.B	3.1.4-8.A 3.1.4-8.C 3.1.4-8.D 3.1.4-8.E 3.1.4-8.F 3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C 3.4.4-8.A 3.4.4-8.B	4.1.4-8.A 4.1.4-8.B 4.1.4-8.C 4.5.4-8.A 4.5.4-8.C	9.2.8.B 9.2.8.C 9.2.8.E
<p>Unit 3: Budgeting Students create and evaluate personal budgets</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Opportunity cost, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Comparing, Decision-making, Math computation, Reading, Teamwork</p>		3.1.4-8.A 3.1.4-8.C 3.1.4-8.D 3.1.4-8.E 3.1.4-8.F 3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C 3.4.4-8.A 3.4.4-8.B	4.1.4-8.A 4.1.4-8.B 4.1.4-8.C 4.5.4-8.A 4.5.4-8.C	9.2.8.B 9.2.8.C 9.2.8.E

Description	Key Learning Objectives	Social Studies	Language Arts Literacy	Mathematics	Career Education; Consumer, Family & Life Skills
<p>Unit 4: Preparing for Finance Park Students evaluate hypothetical life situations and prioritize budget items in preparation for the JA Finance Park experience</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Comparing, Interpersonal skills, Math computation, Reading, Role-play, Teamwork, Verbal communication</p>		3.1.4-8.A 3.1.4-8.C 3.1.4-8.D 3.1.4-8.E 3.1.4-8.F 3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C 3.4.4-8.A 3.4.4-8.B	4.1.4-8.A 4.1.4-8.B 4.1.4-8.C 4.5.4-8.A 4.5.4-8.C	9.2.8.B 9.2.8.C 9.2.8.E
<p>Unit 5: The Visit Students make spending decisions to maintain a balanced budget while participating in the JA Finance Park experience</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Critical thinking, Interpersonal communication, Math computation, Role-play, Teamwork</p>		3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C 3.4.4-8.A 3.4.4-8.B	4.1.4-8.A 4.1.4-8.B 4.1.4-8.C 4.5.4-8.A 4.5.4-8.C	9.2.8.B 9.2.8.C 9.2.8.E
<p>Unit 6: After the Visit Students assess their accomplishments from the JA Finance Park experience</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Budget, Expenses, Income, Needs, Savings, Taxes, Wages, Wants</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Critical thinking, Self-reflection</p>		3.2.4-8.A 3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C		9.2.8.A 9.2.8.B 9.2.8.E
<p>Unit 7: Career Goals Students consider their career goals and what steps they must take to achieve them</p>	<p>Objectives: The students will:</p> <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 <p>Concepts: Career, Goals, Income, Values</p> <p>Skills: Active listening, Critical thinking, Research writing, Self-assessment</p>		3.1.4-8.A 3.1.4-8.C 3.1.4-8.D 3.1.4-8.E 3.1.4-8.F 3.2.4-8.C 3.2.4-8.D 3.3.4-8.A 3.3.4-8.B 3.3.4-8.C 3.3.4-8.D 3.4.4-8.A 3.4.4-8.B		9.1.8.A 9.1.8.B 9.2.8.A 9.2.8.B