Earn Your Future®
Digital Classroom
Level 3 Educator Guide
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Site overview

Welcome to the Earn Your Future Digital Classroom, a collection of online learning modules that teach essential foundational concepts of financial education for students in grades 3-12. This guide will help you navigate the digital classroom, guide you in planning to use the modules with students in a variety of ways, and provide an overview of the standards-based content covered in the modules.

Introduction

The financial decisions people make throughout their lives—such as buying a home, investing and saving, managing risk, and using credit—can affect them for the rest of their lives. One bad decision can damage credit and even lead to a major financial loss. Learning how to manage money and make wise financial choices is an essential life skill, yet many students enter adulthood without learning the basics of personal finance. In fact, 46 percent of teens do not know how to create a budget, and nearly 50 percent are unsure of how to use a credit card effectively. In addition, 80 percent of teachers do not feel competent to teach personal finance topics.

The goals of the Earn Your Future Digital Classroom are simple: help students learn about essential personal finance topics and give educators tools to help them confidently teach these topics. We aim to empower young people to make sound financial decisions in a wide range of situations, including buying a home, building and using credit responsibly, budgeting and managing money, choosing a career, saving and investing for the future, selecting insurance products and managing risk, and overall financial responsibility.

To engage the interest of students in these important financial literacy topics, we created interactive modules that bring personal finance to life using real-world scenarios. Throughout the modules, students follow characters’ financial journeys, are introduced to authentic situations, and consider their own attitudes and behaviors as they solve problems, overcome challenges, and make choices. The modules are rigorous and aligned to the Council for Economic Education’s National Standards for Financial Literacy. After each module, students are assessed to track usage and understanding of skills. The program also offers flexibility to teachers and volunteers who can use the modules in any order and at any time.

The modules are designed for students to complete in about 30 minutes, however the actual time may vary based on students’ individual reading levels and the format in which the modules are delivered. The Module Resource Guides include discussion questions and extension activities that instructors may choose to implement in their classrooms to further engage students in the topics presented in the modules.

3 Source: https://www.fdic.gov/about/comein/Mar3.pdf
Getting Started

To create an account, visit [http://www.pwcfdnearnyourfuture.org/](http://www.pwcfdnearnyourfuture.org/).

Once you enter your information to register as a teacher, follow the instructions found on the Teacher Dashboard to set up your class and add your students.

Visit the modules via the navigation on the left of the Teacher Dashboard. Click on “Launch Earn Your Future Digital Classroom,” and you will see the levels page, where you can select the level where you would like to start: Beginner, tailored for grades 3-5; Intermediate, tailored for grades 6-8; and Advanced, tailored for grades 9-12.
Module Resource Guides

Click “Get Started” on the level you have selected, and you will see the Choose a Module page. Each module is accompanied by a Module Resource Guide designed to provide the tools needed to effectively teach the content in a variety of teaching scenarios. Also included in the Module Resource Guides is a Background Information section, which highlights key ideas related to each topic covered in the module in 1-2 pages. The Module Resource Guides can be found on the Materials page, which is accessed via the navigation at the top of the Choose a Module page.
**Student tools**

Students will have access to three tools throughout all of the modules: a basic calculator, mortgage calculator, and a glossary. The tools dropdown menu can be found at the top right of the screen. During the “Home Sweet Home” module, students will receive instructions on how to use the mortgage calculator to explore how factors such as the interest rate and loan period affect the overall cost of a home.

The glossary is designed to help students define key vocabulary words. As seen on the screens below, students are introduced to two key vocabulary words (lenders and cosigners) in the module “Give Me Some Credit!” After selecting the glossary under the tools menu, students can search for key vocabulary words and read the definitions.
module overviews

Module Title: Fraud Alert!
Topic: Financial Responsibility & Decision Making
This module focuses on financial responsibility and decision-making. Students discover through the opening video that their character has lost all of the money in his or her bank account. Students pursue a quest to find out how the theft happened. To finish the quest, students must complete six challenges related to fraud, identity theft, and consumer protection. Along the way, they learn key skills for protecting their own identity and financial assets.

Module Title: Give Me Some Credit!
Topic: Credit & Debt
Students meet Nadia, an older teen who has applied for and been denied a credit card. Over the course of the module, students investigate why Nadia was denied credit. Students explore a sample credit report to understand what kinds of information these reports contain and what decisions and actions can affect a person’s credit score. Finally, students examine Nadia’s credit report and consider things she could do to improve her score and obtain the credit she desires.

Module Title: The Cost of Risk
Topic: Risk & Insurance
In this module, students meet Maya and her older brother, Devin. When Maya learns that Devin’s car insurance premiums are much lower than hers, she wants to know why. Students help Maya investigate this question as they learn the basic dynamics of insurance and its usefulness as a tool for managing risk. They learn why Maya’s rates are higher and what she can do to change her behaviors to lower her risk and payments. Students also examine several insurance quotes to compare insurance options to identify the one that is best for Maya.

Module Title: Make Your Money Grow
Topic: Saving & Investing
There are many ways to save and invest and, in this module, students learn about the major options, such as savings accounts, CDs, stocks, bonds, and mutual funds. After learning about each investment type, students meet Alisa and Kai—two investors who are at very different stages of their lives. Through these characters, students learn the importance of considering several factors when making investment choices -- including age, financial goals, and risk tolerance. Along the way, they learn about the importance of diversifying a portfolio, make decisions for Alisa and Kai based on their risk tolerance, and evaluate their own risk tolerance.
Module Title: Chart Your Course  
Topic: Income & Careers  
Students are often asked what they want to be when they grow up. In this module, students learn steps they can follow to start answering that question. First, students identify the factors that are important to them when choosing a career. Then, students investigate the relationship between education and careers and the opportunity cost of pursuing additional education. Finally, students consider the importance of monetary and nonmonetary compensation when selecting a job as they analyze authentic offer letters and meet real people who reveal the benefits and tradeoffs of their jobs.

Module Title: What’s the Plan?  
Topic: Planning & Money Management  
In this module, students take on the roles of high school seniors who must manage their budgets to meet short- and long-term financial goals. Throughout the module, students learn why creating a budget is important, the components of a budget, and how to build a budget. They also get practice adjusting a budget to try to save enough money for the prom package they have selected, in the face of changing conditions in their income and expenses.

Module Title: Home Sweet Home  
Topic: Home Buying  
Throughout this module, students explore the pros and cons of renting vs. home ownership, as well as the major considerations involved when buying a home. Students select a family to guide through the home-buying process. They learn what a mortgage is, explore parts of the mortgage, and understand the different components that affect the monthly mortgage payment, such as interest rates and down payments.

Module Title: Playing the Market  
Topic: Stock Market  
What is a stock? Why do companies sell stock? What are stock markets, and how do they work? What factors can affect stock prices? In this module, students learn the answers to all of these questions and more as they complete a virtual internship at an investment firm. Students acquire basic information about stock and the factors that can affect stock prices. They examine the different ways in which investors acquire and pay for stock and other factors that can affect total returns. At the end of the module, students examine the costs of investing and the benefits of diversification.
Recommended pathways

The modules are designed to be used independently and in any order. However, depending on your goals and the time you have available, you may choose to cluster the modules or present them in a particular order. Below are some suggestions for grouping the modules, which may provide opportunities to leverage knowledge and skills for maximum educational impact.

1) Module pairs

The modules can be organized as four two-module pairs. The first module explicates a major concept, and the second module provides an application or extension of that concept.

2) If you’re short on time...

No time to explore all the modules? You may choose to use these five modules, which focus on broad principles of personal finance:
3) Standards-based pathway

This pathway lists the modules based on the order of the Council for Economic Education benchmarks that each module addresses.
National standards for financial literacy

The modules are designed to meet the National standards for financial literacy from the Council for Economic Education.

The table below illustrates how the modules align to the national standards. The complete standards and benchmark correlations for each module can be found in the corresponding Module Resource Guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What’s the Plan?</th>
<th>Chart Your Course</th>
<th>Give Me Some Credit!</th>
<th>Home Sweet Home</th>
<th>Make Your Money Grow</th>
<th>Playing the Market</th>
<th>Fraud Alert!</th>
<th>The Cost of Risk</th>
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<td>Financial Investing</td>
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<td>Protecting &amp; Insuring</td>
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Additional financial literacy resources

Source: **AFSA Education Foundation**
Description: Offers an online reality-based personal finance course

Source: **Council for Economic Education**
Description: Offers Internet-based lesson plans, activities, and interactive tools about earning, spending, saving, borrowing, investing, and managing money based on real-life applications
Link: [http://www.councilforeconed.org/](http://www.councilforeconed.org/)

Source: **Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and Consumer Finance Protection Bureau**
Description: Offers financial education resources for students and teachers, including videos and lesson plans
Link: [https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/education/torc/](https://www.fdic.gov/consumers/education/torc/)

Source: **Federal Reserve**
Description: Offers classroom resources, games, and simulators
Link: [https://www.federalreserveeducation.org/](https://www.federalreserveeducation.org/)

Source: **Financial Entertainment**
Description: Offers a library of online and mobile games that aim to improve personal financial capability, self-confidence, and knowledge
Link: [https://financialentertainment.org/](https://financialentertainment.org/)

Source: **Financial Literacy and Education Commission**
Description: Offers financial tools for teachers, educators, and students about saving and investing, earning, protecting, spending, and borrowing

Source: **Internal Revenue Service**
Description: Offers lessons, interactives, and simulations for teachers and students
Link: [https://apps.irs.gov/app/understandingTaxes/](https://apps.irs.gov/app/understandingTaxes/)

Source: **National Education Association**
Description: Offers lessons plans, background resources, and games
Source: National Endowment for Financial Education and University of Arizona
Description: Offers one-stop access to a high school financial planning program and the Take Charge Today curriculum
Link: https://www.moneyteach.org/

Source: United States Mint
Description: Offers lesson plans and activities for students.
Link: http://www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/financialLiteracy/

Source: Utah Department of Education
Description: Offers lessons and activities for grades K–12
Link: http://financeintheclassroom.org/passport/