



What Is Currency? | Lesson Plan

What is currency and why is it important?

Students learn about currency, the different types, and why we use it.

Learning Objectives:

- Explain what currency is and how it is useful.
- Describe what people used to acquire goods before currency.
- Define key terms associated with currency, including bartering, mint, counterfeit currency, and exchange rate.
- Explain where currency comes from today.
- Differentiate between the different types of currency.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Currency:** A system of money used by a society to buy and sell goods and services.
- **Bartering:** The direct exchange of goods or labor
- **Mint:** The agency of the government that produces money, especially coins.
- **Counterfeit Currency:** Money produced illegally and made to look like real money.
- **Fiat Money:** Money that is only backed by trust in the government
- **Exchange Rate:** How one currency's value compares to another's value.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.7, CCRA.R.10, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.W.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.L.6

Academic Subject Areas: Financial Literacy, Personal Finance, Life Skills

What You'll Need

- Video: *Ca\$h Cour\$e: What Is Currency?* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Ca\$h Cour\$e: What Is Currency?* (Click [Here](#))
- Bartering cards (Click [Here](#))

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (20 mins.)

1. Start by engaging students in a conversation about their experiences trading items with friends and what made those trades fair:
 - Have they ever traded snack items at recess or lunch? What trades did you make?
 - Have they ever traded trading cards? What made your trades fair?



2. Explain that they will participate in a bartering exercise using cards. Hand out a few bartering cards to each student and instruct them to trade with classmates until they are satisfied with the items on their cards.
3. Prompt students to evaluate the items on their cards and consider what other students have on their cards. Encourage them to move around the room, engage with various students, and negotiate trades.
4. Have students reflect on their final set of cards and what they consider a fair trade. Facilitate a discussion about their experience. Did they find it easier to trade items, or would it have been easier to trade with money?

Watch and Apply: (15 mins.)

1. Distribute the "Ca\$h Cour\$e: What Is Currency? Worksheet." Preview the questions so students know what to listen for as they watch the video.
2. Watch the video *Ca\$h Cour\$e: What Is Currency?* as a resource for learning about currency.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Worksheet Review and Discussion: Review the worksheet answers with the class, addressing any difficult areas or questions.
2. Discuss the shift from bartering to using currency. Explore reasons for this evolution and compare the ease of trading with that of using money.

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (5-10 mins.)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video. Or, have students watch the video at home and use the worksheet as a quick quiz the next day in class.