

Line It Up – Money Adventure

Activity

Resource: Wallet Wellness

Grade(s): 4 5 6

Division(s): Junior

Connected Activities

- Digital Deal or No Deal Detective
- The Borrowing Dilemma
- To Save or Spend?

What Is It All About?

Students explore how to track and balance money as it is earned and spent. They will use a number line game to represent income and expenses, helping them understand that if you spend more money than you earn, you can run out of money or go into debt.

Why Do It?

The flow of money being earned and spent is a continuous cycle all students will experience. Teaching students how to track their spending and plan ahead supports financial literacy and responsible decision-making. Students learn that earning, saving, and spending decisions can affect their well-being and help build lifelong money management skills.

What Do We Need?

- Dice
- Large floor space (for number lines)
- Marker
- Paper and tokens/counters (optional)
- Tape

How Do We Do It?

- Create multiple number lines (1 per group) by placing a piece of tape (about 2–3 metres long) on the ground in the classroom or hall and labelling each line with numbers \$1 to \$20. Students will move along this number line during the game (if space is limited, draw a number line on a piece of paper and use tokens/counters for students to move along the paper number line).
- Divide students into groups of 3–4 and provide each group with a labelled number line and a die to roll.
- Students start at zero on the number line. They take turns rolling the die and use the following rules to move up and down on the number line:
 - Even Number: Earn that amount and move up the number line by the number rolled.
 - Odd Number: Spend that amount and move down the number line based on the value of the number rolled.
 - If you don't have enough, go back to zero.
 - If you hit zero, you lose your next turn
 - Roll a 6: Choose to move up the number line 6 spaces or save it as a free pass to avoid a future spending debt.
- First person to reach \$20 or over wins!
- Lead a class discussion, or have students answer in a personal journal, to reflect on the following questions:
 - How might this game represent how money is used in life?
 - How did you feel when earning compared to spending?

- What strategies did you learn from this game? How do they represent choices you might make in your own life?

Teachers Notes

- Adaptation: Use a paper version of a number line (a less kinesthetic learning opportunity involving less space and movement). Groups of students share a paper number line, moving up and down the number line using a token/counter instead of their bodies.
- Connect to the Financial Literacy expectations (Grades 4–6 Mathematics) by emphasizing budgeting and understanding value for money.
- Connect to the Health and Physical Education expectations (Strand A: Social-Emotional Learning Skills; Strand C: Healthy Living) by linking decision-making and consumer awareness to emotional well-being and responsible choices.
- For Grade 6 students (who are learning about integers), use a number line including integers below zero to simulate debt in the game. Students can move below zero following the same rules.
- Numbers on the number line can be changed to include different expectations (e.g., each roll represents a \$5 bill). Create a number line that counts by 5s.
- Increase or decrease the end value (\$20) to make the game longer or shorter.
- Add in co-constructed ideas for other digits. For example, roll a 3: an unexpected expense comes! Your roof needs repairing! Move down three spots along the number line.