

\$30 A MONTH

ELEMENTARY LEVEL - MAKING A BUDGET

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL #1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Activity snapshot:

Students will have to create two budgets. One budget will be based on using \$30 to pick fun activities to do in one month and the other budget will be based on grocery shopping for one month with only \$30. Realistically, in North America, doing extra-curricular activities and eating for one month is impossible on only \$30.

Rationale:

In the most extreme cases of poverty, people live on less than \$1 a day. Almost half the world—that's three billion people—lives on less than \$2 a day. Students are often unaware of the role that money plays in their lives. Fun activities such as going to the movies or buying a new book or toy are often paid for by parents and adults without children paying attention to how much they cost. Even the simple act of eating lunch at school goes by without students considering how much money the food in their lunch box cost their family or school.

Objective:

In this exercise, students will understand the difficulty in meeting basic needs on a budget of \$30 dollars a month (or \$1 a day). Through this experience, students will begin to understand the scope/degree of poverty and the impacts of extreme poverty on children around the world.

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Handouts/worksheets E7: Entertaining Ourselves on a Budget, E8: Grocery Shopping on a Budget, chart paper

Steps – Part 1

1. Generate a discussion about extra-curricular activities students participate in after school and on weekends. Make a list of these activities on the board or chart paper. (Note: Students can do this activity in a large group or in small groups with chart paper for each group.)
2. Introduce the concept of a budget and the idea that these activities they enjoy doing with their family and friends cost money. Ask students to look at their lists and estimate the cost for each activity.
3. Distribute Worksheet #E7: Entertaining Ourselves on a Budget. Go over the instructions with students and ask them to complete the budget. Remind students that the budget is for an entire month. It may be useful to go over the concept of “one month” (i.e. explain how many days there are in the school week, on the weekend, how many weeks in one month, etc.).
4. Once students have completed the sheet, generate a class discussion about how the activity made them feel. Ask:
 - a. Did you realize how much entertainment costs?
 - b. Do you think \$30 is a lot of money to spend on fun stuff or is the amount not enough?
5. Written Reflection: Ask students to write down how this activity made them feel as it will be useful in Activity #2.

Steps – Part 2

1. Ask students to think about the foods they eat on a regular basis, whether at home or at school for lunch and snacks.
2. On the board, make a list of the ingredients in these meals. Expand the list to include the foods they generally have in their refrigerator. Ask them to guess how much they think these basic items cost.
3. Distribute Worksheet #E8: Grocery Shopping on a Budget. Advise students to complete step #1. (Note: It might be helpful to reinforce that this is only an exercise, that the prices aren't necessarily accurate and the foods listed aren't necessarily the foods that their family would choose to buy.)
4. Lead a discussion to gauge how students felt about their experience doing the grocery shopping.
5. Do they think they bought enough food to sufficiently feed their family? Guide students to proceed with step #2 on the worksheet to help them answer this question.
6. Take students through a discussion about step #3 on their worksheet. At this point, students are introduced to the ideas of the developing world. They learn that billions of people—many of them children—live on less than \$1 a day or \$30 a month. Ask students how this fact makes them feel after completing this exercise. Ask students to think about how their own lives would be impacted if they had to live on this budget.
7. After the discussion, ask students to complete step #3 on their worksheet.

Closure:

Lead a large group discussion to talk about what students discovered.

Assessment Suggestions:

- Participation during discussions
- Completion of worksheets

Handout/worksheet E7

ENTERTAINING OURSELVES ON A BUDGET

Instructions

- You have \$30 that you can use for one month to have as much fun as you can.
- Below is a list of all the things that you can choose from. Read the list carefully and think about which of these activities you would choose to do in one month.
- Remember, one month is a long time.

Fun Activity List

- Go to a movie: \$8
- Buy popcorn and a drink at the movie: \$5
- Go Ice Skating: \$5
- Buy a new toy, video game, or DVD: \$20
- Go out for ice cream: \$4
- Buy a treat at the store: \$5
- Buy a new book: \$10
- Buy new clothes for school: \$20
- Play on a sports team: \$10
- Do an activity such as swim, dance, karate: \$10

Now list all the things you would choose to do. **BUT REMEMBER** you only have \$30. So, you can choose whatever you want as long as you don't spend more than the \$30 you have. You will have to use your math skills to make a budget. Choose carefully: You have one month, \$30 and a whole lot of fun to choose from.

My Choice of Fun:	Cost:
Total Spent:	

That was not so easy, was it? We like to do a lot of fun things on the weekends, after school and with our friends and family, and sometimes the cost can add up. Have you ever thought about this before? Take a minute to think about how much money we spend in our daily lives just on doing fun things.

Write your thoughts down in the space below (and use the back of this page if you need more space):

Handout/worksheet E8

GROCERY SHOPPING ON A BUDGET

Instructions

- You have the task of doing all the grocery shopping for an entire month for your family—this is a big responsibility!
- As in the first exercise, you will only have \$30.
- Below is a list of common foods that we buy in the grocery store on a weekly basis.
- Some of these foods might not be what you and your family like to eat all the time, but remember this is only an exercise. You will have to choose from the list below and buy all your food with \$30.

Your Shopping List

Loaf of bread: \$2
 Package of pasta: \$3
 Rice: \$4
 Carton of milk: \$2
 Juice: \$2
 Cheese: \$3
 Chicken: \$7
 Beef: \$7
 Fish: \$7
 Can of tuna fish: \$2

Eggs: \$2
 Peanut Butter: \$3
 Jelly: \$3
 Lettuce: \$1
 Tomatoes: 5 for \$2
 Cucumber: \$1
 Peppers: 5 for \$2
 Potatoes: 5 for \$1
 Apples: 5 for \$2
 Oranges: 5 for \$2

Bananas: 5 for \$2
 Grapes: \$2
 Cereal: \$3
 Cookies: \$2
 Potato Chips: \$2
 Ice Cream: \$3
 Soda: \$2
 Frozen peas and carrots: \$2
 Frozen Fish Sticks: \$4

Step #1: Make your budget

My Groceries for One Month:	Cost:
Total Spent:	

Now that you have finished your shopping, do you think you bought enough food for all the people that live in your house for one whole month? Remember, there are 30 days (sometimes 31) in one month, and we have to eat three meals a day. Perhaps thinking about what we eat in one day will help us figure out if we bought enough.

In the space below, write down what you ate for all three meals yesterday.

Step #2: Yesterday I ate...

Now we have figured out what we ate in one whole day and how much food we could buy with \$30 for one whole month. Do you think \$30 is enough money to live on for one whole month?

BUT WAIT A MINUTE.

In Activity #1 we had \$30 to do all the fun activities and in activity #2 we had \$30 to do the grocery shopping. What if you only had \$30 for every month, to do everything? What if you only had \$1 a day to live on for food, fun and everything else in your life? Now that you have done the above activities, think about how hard it would be to live on only \$1 a day, or \$30 dollars a month. How does it make you feel to think about children all over the world who actually live on this budget? How would you feel if you had to?

Step #3: Write down your thoughts