

Common Cents: A Lesson about Getting Banked or Staying Unbanked

SUBJECT(S): Personal Finance

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ **NBEA STANDARD(S):**

- Personal Finance, I. Personal Decision Making
- Personal Finance, VI. Banking and Financial Institutions

≡ **RELATED ARTICLES:**

- [“When Was the Last Time You Visited a Bank Branch?”](#)
- [“Opening a Bank Account: Be the Boss of Your Own Money”](#)
- [“Educator Toolkit: Cold, Hard Cash”](#)
- [“Conquering the Negative Bank Balance”](#)
- [“A Trip to the Bank, Lollipops and World Savings Day”](#)

TOPIC/COMPETENCY: Standard: Describe How to Use Different Payment Methods

Common fees associated with banking [overdraft fees, NSF fees, minimum balance fees, ACH; avoiding check to cash]

CEE National Standard:

II Buying Goods and Services, Standard 7 [Grade 4]

Jump\$tart National Standard:

Spending & Saving, Standard 3.

Common Core State Standard:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.910.7

LESSON TITLE: “Common Cents: A Lesson about Getting Banked or Staying Un-Banked”

Objective: Students will identify and compare common costs associated with managing their money through a banking relationship or selecting alternative sources of quick cash.

ESTIMATED TIME: 50 min.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Internet; Projector; [Guided-Notes Worksheet](#); Computer access for students desired but not required; [Assessment](#) and [Answer Keys](#).

KEY VOCABULARY/TERMS: [Hyperlinked to their online glossary] [Consumer](#)

[Consumer Behavior](#) [Consumer Choice](#) [Financial Services](#) [Depository Institution](#) [Unbanked](#)

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU NOW: Many of you have bank accounts, or will in the near future. The goal of this lesson is to understand the value of having a savings and checking account.

Activity/Introduction of Topic: 5 minutes

Motivational hook / activity – Before your students enter your classroom, write on the chalkboard or interactive whiteboard the following letters: **TINSTAFL** Ask your students to try to figure out what this group of letters represents. Repeat the letters out loud, and then write down what it represent:

“There is no such thing as a free lunch”.

Ask students what they think this phrase means. Explain to them it has ties to economic and financial decision-making.

Show this video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5jDvY_btBE

Transition the knowledge from gained from knowing the history and background of this phrase to the lesson content about fees charged for consumer services.

Content: LISTEN Students will listen to a lecture and explanation of ways to manage daily cash needs. (20 minutes)

1. a) Pass out the Guided Note Sheet to everyone in the class.
2. b) Ask students to take notes as you discuss today's banking landscape.

*Teacher Lecture Notes provided

Comprehension: WATCH this video clip from CBS Money Watch that shows an interview with financial expert and author Liz Weston who shares advice about three ways to avoid bank fees.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9Ag9fXGrTU> Video is 3:37 in length

Ask class to confirm her three tips on how to avoid bank fees. Be sure they have these written down on their Guided Notes.

Her advice to avoid fees? 1) Use an online bank – but always do your homework to find out if the online bank is FDIC insured. 2) Join a Credit Union. There's a membership, but they typically charge less in fees and lower interest rates on loans. 3) Change your behavior to avoid fees. Track your banking habits to see if there's ways to avoid fees by only using certain ATMs, or signing up for direct deposit, etc... .

Practicing/Applying – (These were combined here to allow for enough time to conduct this research activity in class.

Online Research Activity (15 min.) – Students will conduct online research of two (2) different depository institutions (bank, credit union, savings and loan or online bank such as Ally Bank, Discover, etc...) and collect information for one checking account at each place.

1. Pass out the Bank Fees Research Activity Worksheet to each student.
2. Brainstorm in whole class instruction the names of various depository institutions in your area and/or on a nationwide basis. Write the list on the board so that students can have several choices to use for their research.
3. **C)** Provide each student with access to the Internet to conduct individual online search of two different depository institutions. (or assign this as a homework task for students who have Internet access at home).
4. **D)** When students have finished their research and have completed the worksheet, debrief the class and ask about fees found through their investigation and ask several

students which bank they would choose and why. Be sure to probe about their financial lifestyle choices as well.

Assessment – students will complete the Quick Quiz provided with this lesson to demonstrate awareness of bank fees and methods of payment. See Answer Key

Going Further / Homework – Have students complete the Practicing/Apply worksheet at home if class time does not allow for this activity. Students will need Internet access to conduct the research and compare bank fees and accounts at two different banks.

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