

Credit Check: The Hunt for Errors in Your Credit Report

SUBJECT(S): Personal Finance

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

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Personal Finance, VII. Using Credit

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- “Take Command of Your Credit Score”
- “Learning to Be a ‘Rocket Scientist of Statistics’”
- “FinTech Puts Money Management at Your Fingertips”
- “FinTech Challenges: ‘Cyberattacks Are Becoming More Sophisticated Each and Every Day’”
- “Digital-age Danger: Learning to Protect Your Identity”
- “Credit Alert: The Dangers of Overspending and Underpaying”
- “Budgeting Basics: Spending Less than You Earn”
- “Beware of Scammers Lurking Online”

TOPIC/COMPETENCY: Credit: Borrower’s Rights: Having minors check their credit reports for errors & identity theft; process for correcting errors

CEE National Standard:

IV Using Credit, Standard 5 – Reasons why someone might be denied credit

VI Protecting & Insuring , Standards 13 & 14 – Relating to Identity Theft & Govt. Laws that protect consumers

JumpStart National Standard:

II Credit & Debt, Standard 2- Summarize a borrower’s rights and responsibilities related to credit reports.

IV Risk and Protection, Standard 3 – Summarize major Consumer Protection laws

Common Core State Standard:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.9-10.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.9-10.4

CONTENT STATEMENT: Why is it important to understand the process of monitoring, and if necessary, correcting errors on your credit report and score?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Students will explore the nature of fraud and identity theft related to credit reports and discovers ways to address errors before they cause financial harm.

ESTIMATED TIME: 50 minutes class time; 50+/- minute assessment at home

MATERIALS NEEDED: Internet access for instructor and students; Projector; Print or digital copies of the worksheet “Myth or Reality?”; [Business Letter Writing Rubric](#); [Scenarios of Credit Report Errors for Business Letter Writing Assessment](#)

KEY VOCABULARY/TERMS: [Consumer Bill of Rights](#) Fraud, Consumer Credit Protection Act

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU NOW: Understanding the credit reporting process is a key to building wealth. Your credit score is much more than just a number – you need to know how to obtain it and how to monitor your credit report for errors whether you are a child or an adult.

Activities: 5-7 minutes

- Motivational hook / activity – Create interest in the material; answer the question: “Why do I need or want to learn this material?”
- Play one or both of these video clips to spark interest in your students as you start this lesson:

- <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/id-theft-why-you-should-check-if-your-kid-has-a-credit-report/> 1:17 length
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFxfjRYpbb0> 2:34
- Debrief the video viewing by asking clarifying questions from each video

Comprehension – 10 minutes

- Have students complete the “Myth or Reality” Quiz
- Go over the answers in whole class instruction
- Ask students what they were surprised to learn from these facts

Practicing – Activities for students to practice what they are learning (10 minutes)

- If computer access is available, have students work in pairs to conduct a search to find **one Infographic** that relates to the topic of a) credit reporting errors, b) child identity theft, or c) process for correcting credit report errors. Share with the rest of class by uploading the link to your classroom Learning Management System (Edmodo, Moodle, Blackboard, etc...) as a post so that everyone could gain access if they wanted to explore this topic further. **You can divide the class up into three sections and assign the topics so more topics are covered.*

Assessment – (15-20 minutes) Begin assessment in class and finish at home

- Reveal to students that the best way to handle a credit report error or an Identity Theft situation is to put their explanation in writing. This is much more permanent than a phone call and can be included in credit reporting agency files, if necessary.
- Tell them they will practice writing a letter to the appropriate agency, credit bureau or business that will serve as an effort to explain the situation and begin to resolve the problem.
- Hand out one “Credit Theft” scenario randomly to each student
- This task will require students to use **Business Letter Format** for writing and should begin with an inside address that includes their name, home address, date and formal salutation; three (3) paragraphs in the body of the letter which references several ideas derived from this lesson; a complimentary closing; and finally their formal signature (first name, middle initial, and last name — signed, not typed). ** If necessary, provide the*

written example of a formal business letter included in this lesson on an interactive white board or by handing out print copies of the sample letter to each student

- Grading – A rubric to grade this assessment is provided with this lesson

Apply/Going Further/Homework – Learners can read more about digital age dangers of identity theft from the Knowledge@Wharton Library. See link below.

<https://globalyouth.wharton.upenn.edu/articles/digital-age-danger-learning-protect-identity/>

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