Lesson Plan

Grow: Financial Planning for Life™

Balancing Expenses and Savings

45 minutes

Prerequisite: Balancing Expenses and Savings

INSTRUCTIONS

Each digital lesson is supplemented with a follow-up synchronous lesson plan to extend and reinforce learning. Activities and questions are structured in a way that supports both in-person and virtual classroom settings.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to…

- Explain how to create a SMART goal.
- Identify current financial goals.

MATERIALS

In-Person Lesson

- Writing utensils
- SMART Goals Graphic Organizer

Virtual Lesson

- Writing utensils
- SMART Goals Graphic Organizer

LESSON OVERVIEW

The purpose of these lessons is to give students an opportunity to personally work with the concepts they learn in the modules. While students at the high school level may not be quite ready to explore retirement plans, understanding their personal values will help them learn how to prioritize their spending needs and savings goals.

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT	DURATION
Opening	*"You met Perry while completing the "Balancing Expenses and Savings" lesson of Grow. What were some of the challenges that Perry had when trying to manage his money?"* • Prioritizing purchases • Keeping up an emergency fund • Living within his means *"You helped Perry make decisions throughout this exercise. What were some of the decisions that were most challenging to make?"* Record answers on board.	In-Person: Record comments on board to track all comments	5 mins
New Learning	*"Financial decisions should always be based on "living within your means" but we will always have a bigger appetite for things outside of our means. That's where savings goals and budgets can help you get what you want while still meeting your needs first. You might not get your wants as soon as you would like but you can work towards them."* *"One planning tool that was shared in the "Balancing Expenses and Savings" module was the creation of SMART goals."* Review what SMART goals are by completing the graphic organizer. Adaptation: Students may need help populating the front of the graphic organizer from memory, feel free to help by copying and cutting up the teacher's guide. They could use it as puzzle pieces trying to find where each item belongs on the graphic organizer.	Virtual: Share the SMART Goals Graphic Organizer virtually and allow learners to populate it while working in breakout rooms. In-Person: Distribute the SMART Goals Graphic Organizer and have students work in pairs or small groups to populate the front.	20 mins

SECTION	DESCRIPTION	FORMAT	DURATION
Activity: Project Introduction	*"We have spent some time reviewing SMART goals and now it's time for you to think up some goals for yourself. Turn the organizer over and think up at least one goal you would like to pursue in the next year. It does not have to be finance-related. I want to make sure that you are getting into the practice of writing SMART goals that are important to you."* Allow students time to draft SMART goals for their personal lives. Circulate and offer support and help when needed. Ask for volunteers to share their goals and to offer support if any goals need to be improved. Adaptation: Share a goal of yours to the class to model how you can apply this to your own life. Do this before asking students to work on their own.	Independent work	15 mins
Closing	*"Thanks for taking time to draft SMART goals. You are more likely to accomplish them now that you have written them down!"*		1 min
Evaluation	*"Let's close out today's lesson by connecting the creation of SMART goals to Balancing Expenses and Savings. Write a 2-sentence reflection on how writing SMART goals can help you with managing your money."*	Independent work	3 mins
Homework	1. *Challenge students to draft additional SMART Goals.* 2. *Track completion of SMART goals over the next two weeks. This will require having goals that are very short term.* 3. *Consider having students create an accountability buddy to check in with over the next month about their progress towards meeting their SMART goals.*		1 week

ANSWER KEY

SMART GOALS GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

	What does the letter stand for?	What action are you doing when writing a goal for this letter?	What is an example?
S	*Specific*	*This means writing down exactly the things you want to achieve.*	*I want to save $10,000 for a down payment on a house.*
M	*Measurable*	*Use this to determine a unit of measure to achieve success.*	*I want to save $10,000 for a down payment on a house within 10 years.*
A	*Attainable*	*To achieve your goals, you should make them realistic.*	*I will save money for a down payment by putting aside $83.33 per month, every month for 10 years.*
R	*Realistic*	*Create goals that are realistic based on your age, income level, and what realistically you can do to accomplish your goals.*	*I will only eat lunch out once a week to save $1,000 extra per year.*
T	*Time-based*	*Assign a specific timeframe for reaching your goals to keep yourself on track.*	*I want to be a homeowner in 10 years, so I will save $90 per month for a $10,000 down payment for a house.*

QUESTION	
How could having SMART goals help Perry balance his expenses and his savings?	*SMART goals would allow Perry to plan for expenses and work towards them.*

What is a financial goal that you would like to achieve?
I would like to buy a new car.

	Write how each letter of SMART can connect to your goal.
S	*A brand new electric two-door car.*
M	*I want to put $7,000 as my down payment and get a loan for 3–5 years for the remainder.*
A	*If I save roughly $300 a month for two years, I will have $7,000.*
R	*This is realistic since I can put one entire paycheck into savings each month which is usually a little more than $300.*
T	*I will purchase the car in two years once I have saved up the $7,000.*

Write your SMART goal here.
I will purchase a two-door electric car in two years. I will save $300 a month for two years and will have $7,000 as a down payment. I will then be used to saving $300 a month that I will be ready to make the car payment of $300 a month for the next 3–5 years to pay it off.