

# Drawing your own savings comic strip

Students identify an important lesson about saving money and create a comic strip reflecting that lesson.

## Learning goals

### Big idea

Saving money can help you achieve your financial goals.

### Essential questions

- Why is saving money a good financial strategy?
- What do you feel is worth saving for?

### Objectives

- Apply understanding of savings to new situations
- Create a comic strip that illustrates how saving money can help people achieve their financial goals

### What students will do

- Identify an important lesson about saving money.
- Create a comic strip, with two main characters and dialogue, that reflects that lesson.

### NOTE

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Please remember to consider your students' accommodations and special needs to ensure that all students are able to participate in a meaningful way.

### KEY INFORMATION

**Building block:**

 Executive function

 Financial habits and norms

**Grade level:** High school (9-12)

**Age range:** 13-19

**Topic:** Save and invest (Saving for long-term goals, Saving for short-term goals)

**School subject:** CTE (Career and technical education), English or language arts, Fine arts and performing arts

**Teaching strategy:** Personalized instruction, Project-based learning

**Bloom's Taxonomy level:** Apply, Create

**Activity duration:** 45–60 minutes

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### National Standards for Personal Financial Education, 2021

Spending: 8-1, 12-1, 12-9

Saving: 8-1, 8-2, 12-9

These standards are cumulative, and topics are not repeated in each grade level. This activity may include information students need to understand before exploring this topic in more detail.

## Preparing for this activity

- While it's not necessary, completing the "Reflecting on what's worth saving for" or "Writing a personal savings statement" activities first may make this one more meaningful.
- Print copies of all student materials for each student, or prepare for students to access them electronically.
- You may want to find a few examples of comic strips that you can share with the class to show how a story is told through words and pictures.
- Obtain pens, pencils, or markers.

### What you'll need

#### THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- Drawing your own savings comic strip (guide)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_drawing-savings-comic-strip\\_guide.pdf](#)

#### STUDENT MATERIALS

- Drawing your own savings comic strip (worksheet)  
[cfpb\\_building\\_block\\_activities\\_drawing-savings-comic-strip\\_worksheet.pdf](#)
- Pens, pencils, or markers

## Exploring key financial concepts

Many things influence both our short- and long-term financial decisions. Core values are underlying principles that help people prioritize how they spend their time and money. Values inform how we decide what is more important when alternatives compete for our time, our energy, and especially our money. Every person or family has a different idea of the future they want to build. Some of their ideas are focused on the next few weeks or months, while others are long-term. What do you want for yourself in the near future? What do you want to see in the next few years? These ideas about your future are your hopes, wants, and dreams. People often put off saving for large purchases or future events because they feel like they don't have enough money to save or they are busy struggling to make ends meet today. But not thinking about, planning for, or saving for these things may mean that these things don't happen.

#### TIP

Because savings products, terms, and laws change, students should be encouraged to always look for the most up-to-date information.

People who develop their own savings plan are more likely to save successfully. Saving money doesn't have to be overwhelming or difficult. In fact, there are lots of easy things people can do to build their savings, even if it's only a little at a time. Saving money can be fun if approached creatively. And there are definite rewards for saving money. Money put aside in a savings account can help you achieve specific financial goals.

## Teaching this activity

### Whole-class introduction

- Ask students to share some reasons why people save money.
  - Answers may include buying a home or car, starting a business, going to college, paying for a wedding, or having money for emergencies.
- Read the "Exploring key financial concepts" section to students.
- Be sure students understand key vocabulary:
  - **Emergency fund:** A cash reserve that's specifically set aside for unplanned expenses or financial emergencies. Some common examples include car repairs, home repairs, medical bills, or a loss of income.
  - **Long-term goals:** Goals that can take more than five years to achieve.
  - **Needs:** Basic things people must have to survive (such as food, clothing, and shelter), resources they may need to do their jobs (such as reliable transportation and the tools of the trade), and resources to help build and protect their money and property so they can meet future needs (such as emergency savings and insurance).
  - **Savings:** Money you have set aside in a secure place, such as in a bank account, that you can use for future emergencies or to make specific purchases.
  - **Short-term goals:** Goals that can take a short time, or up to five years, to reach.
  - **Wants:** Upgrades and other things that would be nice to have but aren't necessary for living, income, or protecting what you have.
- Distribute the "Drawing your own savings comic strip" worksheet.
- Ask students to discuss why they think comic strips are a popular way to tell stories.

### TIP

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Visit CFPB's financial education glossary at [consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/](https://consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/).

- Show students a few examples of short comic strips, or draw your own sample on the board, to introduce students to the basic elements of a comic strip. Ask students to discuss the following:
  - What shape are the frames of the comic strip? Are all the frames similar or different in shape and size? Why do you think the artist made it that way?
  - Describe how the frames work together to tell the story. How does the story unfold from one frame to the next?
  - How does the artist tell the reader what the characters are doing?
  - How is dialogue presented?
- Use the worksheet to introduce speech bubbles often used in comic strips.
- Explain to the students that they'll use the worksheet to create their own comic strip that tells an important story about saving.

## Individual work

- Instruct students to start planning their comic strip by identifying a lesson about the importance of saving money.
  - If students have difficulty generating ideas, bring them together to brainstorm.
- Once they have the basic story theme, students will create their storyline. They will detail what happens in the story and what savings strategies are used in the story.
- Students will create and describe the two main characters of their comic strip. These characters will be the ones engaged in the dialogue and taking part in the action.
- In outline form, students should write the dialogue that will tell their story and plan what each character will say in each frame. (They may want to number each frame and use the numbers in the outline.)
- They'll put the story elements together in their comic strip including illustrations, dialogue in speech bubbles, and other text or features.

## Wrap-up

- If time allows, have students post their comic strips around the room and invite them to participate in a gallery walk to view one another's work:
  - Have students begin at their own comic strip.
  - Tell them to move to the next comic strip on the right.

- Count to 10 and then have students move to the next comic strip on the right.
- Repeat until students are back at their own comic strip.

## Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other CFPB activities that address the topics of saving and investing, including saving for long-term goals and saving for short-term goals. Suggested activities include “[Bouncing ball money choices](#)”, “[Creating your own savings rules](#)”, and “[Picturing your future self](#)”.

## Measuring student learning

Students’ comic strips and answers during discussion can give you a sense of their understanding. **Keep in mind that students’ comic strips may vary, as there may not be only one right approach.** The important thing is for students to have reasonable justification for their approach.

If you choose to use the scoring rubric below to grade this activity, be sure to share it with all students so they know what criteria matter most and they can plan accordingly.

### SCORING RUBRIC

Criteria	Possible points	Points earned
<b>Clarity of message:</b> Presents a clear lesson or money-saving strategy.	20	
<b>Dialogue/word choice:</b> Uses language that gets their points across effectively.	20	
<b>Images:</b> Uses visuals that help convey the story’s message.	20	
<b>Characters:</b> Ensures that the characters’ roles in the story are clear and support the story’s message.	20	
<b>Comic strip features:</b> Uses comic strip features (speech bubbles, story sequence, etc.) properly.	20	
<b>Total points</b>	<b>100</b>	