

Choosing the perfect trip

Students match three families' interests to their perfect vacation and then write about their own perfect trip.

Learning goals

Big idea

Sometimes we decide to spend money on things that interest us or make us happy.

Essential questions

- Why do people make different choices about vacations?
- What would my ideal vacation be?

Objectives

- Understand that people may make different spending choices
- Explore how personal interests affect spending choices

What students will do


- Read about three families and match them to trips they may enjoy.
- Reflect on their own family's interests and write a short paragraph about a trip they and their family may enjoy.

NOTE

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:

 Financial knowledge and decision-making skills

Grade level: Elementary school (4-5)

Age range: 9-11

Topic: Spend (Buying things)

School subject: English or language arts, Social studies or history

Teaching strategy: Competency-based learning, Direct instruction

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Analyze, Create

Activity duration: 45-60 minutes

National Standards for Personal Financial Education, 2021

Spending: 4-1, 4-2, 4-4, 4-5, 8-1

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 "[Understanding our money choices](#)" activity first may make this one more meaningful.
- Print copies of all student materials for each student, or prepare for students to access them electronically.

What you'll need

THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- [Choosing the perfect trip \(guide\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_choosing-perfect-trip_guide.pdf](#)

STUDENT MATERIALS

- [Choosing the perfect trip \(worksheet\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_choosing-perfect-trip_worksheet.pdf](#)

Exploring key financial concepts

People have a lot of choices about how to spend their money. One thing many people spend money on is a trip to someplace special, which often also is called a vacation. A lot of people save money for a long time so they can afford to take a nice trip. But how do they decide where to go? When you make decisions about how to spend money, it's important to think about your budget, or how much money you have. It's also important to think about what interests you. For example, would you rather go someplace warm or someplace cool? Do you like to visit museums or amusement parks? Do you like driving or flying? Every person will have different interests and wants. When you make choices about how to spend money, remember to compare each option to make the choice that's right for you. This is called comparison shopping. Stopping to think about your choices before you spend money can help you make spending choices that are right for you.

Teaching this activity

Whole-class introduction

- Ask students to share examples of trips or vacations people could take.

- Explain that vacations often cost a lot of money.
- Tell students that our interests can help us make choices that are right for us.
- Be sure students understand key vocabulary:
 - **Comparison shopping:** The practice of comparing prices, features, benefits, risks, and other characteristics of two or more similar products or services.

TIP

Visit CFPB's financial education glossary at consumerfinance.gov/financial-education-glossary/.

Individual work

- Explain to students that they'll match three families' interests to possible trips they could take.
- Give the "Choosing the perfect trip" worksheet to each student.
- Students will read the trip descriptions on the worksheet.
- Then they'll read the description of each family and pick a trip that's right for that family.
- Then they'll write about a trip that's right for their own family.

Wrap-up

- Ask for volunteers to share the trips they chose for each family and why.
- Ask students why one family may choose a trip that's different from another family even though they have the same budget.
- Ask for volunteers to share the trip they chose for their own family and why.

Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other [CFPB activities](#) that address the topic of spending, including buying things. Suggested activities include "[Using a budget to shop for a party](#)" and "[Comparing costs when building a rocket](#)."

Measuring student learning

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