

Comparing video game subscriptions

Students read a scenario, compare the cost of video game subscriptions, and analyze the benefits and drawbacks of each option.

Learning goals

Big idea

Researching your options can help you make informed buying decisions.

Essential questions

- How does comparison shopping help you make choices about what to buy?
- What should you think about before you decide what to buy?

Objectives

- Calculate the costs of three levels of video game subscriptions
- Identify benefits and drawbacks of each level

What students will do


- Analyze the costs of three levels of video game subscriptions.
- Identify one benefit and one drawback of each level.

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: Middle school (6–8)

Age range: 11–14

Topic: Spend (Buying things)

School subject: CTE (Career and technical education), Math

Teaching strategy: Simulation

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Understand, Apply

Activity duration: 45–60 minutes

National Standards for Personal Financial Education, 2021

Spending: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-5, 8-1, 8-2, 8-3, 12-1, 12-2, 12-3, 12-9

Saving: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 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 "[Teaming up to build a budget](#)" 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.
- Make sure students have access to calculators.

What you'll need

THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- [Comparing video game subscriptions \(guide\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_comparing-video-game-subscriptions_guide.pdf](#)

STUDENT MATERIALS

- [Comparing video game subscriptions \(worksheet\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_comparing-video-game-subscriptions_worksheet.pdf](#)
- Calculators

Exploring key financial concepts

When you want to buy something, researching more than one product or brand and comparing features, benefits, and costs can help you better understand your options. Comparison shopping – the practice of comparing prices, features, benefits, risks, and other characteristics of two or more similar products or services – may help you make more informed buying decisions and help you stay within your budget. Comparison shopping is a good practice when you buy anything, but it's especially useful when you buy something expensive.

TIP

Because product prices and features change, students should be encouraged to always look for the most up-to-date information.

Teaching this activity

Whole-class introduction

- Ask students to share if they play video games at home.

- Explain to students that video game companies sometimes will offer subscriptions to let people play their games.
- Introduce students to the idea of comparison shopping and discuss why it can be helpful to do some research when buying expensive items.
- 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.
 - **Subscription:** An agreement that you make with a company to get a publication or service regularly and that you usually pay for in advance.

TIP

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

Individual work

- Distribute the “Comparing video game subscriptions” worksheet.
- Students will work independently to complete the worksheet.
- They’ll read a scenario about video game subscriptions.
- Students will review the subscriptions’ options and calculate their costs.
- Students will use their calculations to complete the “What can Valerie afford?” section.
- They’ll then answer the reflection questions.

Wrap-up

- Bring the class back together and ask volunteers to share their answers to the worksheet questions.
- Ask volunteers to share their answers to the reflection questions.

Suggested next steps

Consider searching for other CFPB activities that address the topic of spending, including buying things. Suggested activities include “Using a buying plan” and “Exploring price changes.”

Measuring student learning

Students’ answers on their worksheets and during discussion can give you a sense of their understanding.

This answer guide provides possible answers for the “Comparing video game subscriptions” worksheet.

Keep in mind that students’ answers may vary. The important thing is for students to have reasonable justification for their answers.

Answer guide

1. How much does each level cost **per month**?

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| ★ Bronze | \$10 (each month) | Total: \$10 |
| ★ Silver | $\$25 \div 3$ (months) | Total: \$8.33 |
| ★ Gold | $\$50 \div 12$ (months in a year) | Total: \$4.17 |

2. How much does each level cost **per three-month period**?

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------------------|
| ★ Bronze | $\$10 \times 3$ (months) | Total: \$30 |
| ★ Silver | \$25 (each three-month period) | Total: \$25 |
| ★ Gold | $\$50 \div 4$ (three-month periods in a year) | Total: \$12.50 |

3. How much does each level cost **per year**?

| | | |
|----------|---|---------------------|
| ★ Bronze | $\$10 \times 12$ (months in a year) | Total: \$120 |
| ★ Silver | $\$25 \times 4$ (three-month periods in a year) | Total: \$100 |
| ★ Gold | \$50 (annually) | Total: \$50 |

If Valerie uses all the money she saved...

4. Can she afford the Bronze level? **Yes**

How many months could she get? **4.5 months or 4 months with \$5 left over**

What’s one benefit and one drawback of the Bronze level? **Answers will vary**

5. Can she afford the Silver level? **Yes**

How many three-month periods could she get? **One**

What’s one benefit and one drawback of the Silver level? **Answers will vary**

6. Can she afford the Gold level? **No**

If not, what would be one advantage of waiting until she has enough money to pay for this level? **Answers will vary**

What’s one benefit and one drawback of the Gold level? **Answers will vary**