

Writing a personal savings statement

Using the strategies of expository writing, students create a personal savings statement sharing their personal beliefs about saving money.

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


- Create a well-crafted expository paragraph that describes why saving money is important to you
- Begin to plan for spending and saving decisions that are aligned with personal goals and values


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:

 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, Social studies or history

Teaching strategy: Direct instruction, Personalized instruction

Bloom's Taxonomy level: Create

Activity duration: 45-60 minutes

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.

What students will do

- Write a topic sentence that presents their values or ideas related to saving money.
- Write and organize at least three supporting sentences that broaden and deepen the points made in their topic sentence.
- Write a concluding sentence that summarizes key points or revisits ideas from the topic sentence.

Preparing for this activity

- While it's not necessary, completing the "[Storing my savings](#)" or "[Evaluating savings scenarios](#)" 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.

What you'll need

THIS TEACHER GUIDE

- [Writing a personal savings statement \(guide\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_writing-personal-savings-statement_guide.pdf](#)

STUDENT MATERIALS

- [Writing a personal savings statement \(worksheet\)](#)
[cfpb_building_block_activities_writing-personal-savings-statement_worksheet.pdf](#)

Exploring key financial concepts

Saving money is a strategy for achieving financial goals that is appropriate for people of all ages. To stay motivated to save money, it helps to have a clear idea of what is worth saving for. Saving is a personal experience. Different people are motivated to save for different things. Teens who save money can use it for travel and transportation, clothes, communication or technology costs (cell phone, laptop, etc.), or education. 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

TIP

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

what is more important when alternatives compete for our time, our energy, and especially our money. Expressing your own values around saving and identifying what's important to you will help you make spending and saving decisions that are aligned with your personal goals and values.

Teaching this activity

Whole-class introduction

- Ask students to share some things people save money for.
 - Answers may include a car, a vacation, a cell phone, or a home.
- 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.

TIP

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

Individual work

- Distribute the “Writing a personal savings statement” worksheet.
- Students will complete the worksheet on their own.

- Explain that they'll write a personal savings statement as an expository paragraph, which has three parts:
 - A topic sentence that presents their topic or main idea. In this case, they will describe what their core values are related to saving money.
 - At least three supporting sentences that provide evidence or examples to reinforce their topic sentence.
 - A concluding sentence that summarizes key points or revisits ideas from the topic sentence.
- Optional: You may have students use their worksheet as a first draft and turn their response into a more formal paragraph submission.

Wrap-up

Bring students together to discuss how writing their personal savings statement helps them to express their personal beliefs about saving money.

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 ["Saving each payday"](#), ["Setting a SMART savings goal"](#), and ["Understanding who shapes your money decisions"](#).

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.

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

SCORING RUBRIC

Criteria	Possible points	Points earned
Grammar/style: Uses correct grammar and appropriate sentence, paragraph, and writing conventions.	15	
Vocabulary/word choice: Selects words and phrasing that get their points across effectively.	15	
Topic sentence: Clearly presents a main idea for the paragraph.	20	
Supporting sentences: Includes at least three sentences that provide evidence or examples to reinforce the topic sentence.	30	
Concluding sentence: Summarizes key points or revisits ideas from the topic sentence to bring closure.	20	
Total points	100	