

muse®

On the Money

A well-known idiom offers “a penny for your thoughts.” This issue of *Muse* presents students with the opportunity to contemplate how value is determined in different economic systems and how monetary units are established. Historic and futuristic forms of payment are studied in these engaging and relevant articles.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What forms of currency exist?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about traditional and contemporary forms of payment.
- Students will learn how revenue is generated from a free video game.
- Students will learn how tulip bulbs were once a form of currency.
- Students will compare and contrast the meanings of different financial terms.
- Students will obtain and record relevant information.
- Students will explain the sequence of the historic “tulip mania” episode.
- Students will create a timeline depicting the evolution of our monetary system.
- Students will develop and conduct a debate.
- Students will study the parts and life cycle of a flower bulb.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core STEM skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

- **The Future of Money**
Expository Nonfiction, ~950L
- **Fortnite Frenzy**
Expository Nonfiction, ~750L
- **Fortunes Blossomed**
Expository Nonfiction, ~750L

The Future of Money

pp. 12–15, Expository Nonfiction

Kaa-ching! Students will look beyond their piggy banks to discover various methods of saving, spending, and budgeting their money. This article examines traditional methods of payment, in addition to technologically developing forms of currency.



RESOURCES

- Funny Money

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about traditional and contemporary forms of payment.
- Students will compare and contrast the meanings of different financial terms.
- Students will create a timeline depicting the evolution of our monetary system.

KEY VOCABULARY

- budgeting** (p. 13) allowing a specific amount of money for a particular purpose
- cryptocurrency** (p. 15) a digital or virtual form of currency that has no regulating authority
- financial** (p. 12) relating to money matters
- interest** (p. 14) a small percentage of money charged for the privilege of borrowing money

<http://www.cricketmedia.com/classroom/Muse-magazine>

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What forms of currency exist?

As a prereading activity, do a simple budgeting activity with the class. Ask students to consider what expenses a family incurs over the course of a month and list them on the board. Be sure they've included items such as housing, food, bills, and entertainment. Give the students a set amount of money (\$2,000) to budget and allow children to share their work. Present the budgeting apps in the text box on page 14 of the article and encourage students to review them for homework.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key vocabulary terms and definitions on the board. Have the students use resources to define them and then post the given definitions. Reveal the title of the article and have the class predict what components might make up "The Future of Money." Read the article and then revisit predictions.

READ & DISCUSS

Divide the class into four groups and assign them each a different question to discuss. Reconvene and have each group share the main points of their conversation. The class should be taking notes so that after each group has shared, the students will have thorough answers to each question.

- How has technology made banking more flexible?
- What are the functions of a bank?
- Explain budgeting and how it can be helpful.
- What are the advantages and disadvantages to using cryptocurrency?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Compare and Contrast

INSTRUCT: Students will compare and contrast the meanings of different financial terms discussed throughout this article. Instruct pairs of students to reread the text and to underline information that defines each term. Introduce the graphic organizer, *Funny Money*, and have the partners record similarities and differences on their chart.

ASSESS: Collect the *Funny Money* worksheet and review. Be sure the students met the objective of correctly comparing/contrasting the financial terms. Meet with a small group to remediate, if necessary.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students use information from the article, as well as from other sources to create a timeline that depicts the evolution of our monetary system. Children should clearly label dates and events, and create an appropriate title for the timeline. Encourage students to learn more by bringing the completed timeline home to discuss with a person of another generation. Allow them to share the information gathered.

Funny Money

Study the forms of currency examined in the article, "The Future of Money."

Record how the financial terms listed in the first column are similar and how they are different.

Financial Terms	How are they alike? (Compare)	How are they different? (Contrast)
deposit and withdraw		
credit and debit		
physical wallet and digital wallet		
traditional money and cryptocurrency		

Fortnite Frenzy

pp. 26–30, Expository Nonfiction

A hot air balloon carries the Battle Bus over the map, 100 players drop from the sky, and the game has begun. Students will be thrilled to study the monetary logistics of the Fortnite video game craze and to learn how Epic Games has made billions of dollars from a “free” game.



RESOURCES

- Fortnite Fortunes

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how revenue is generated from a multiplatform free game.
- Students will obtain and record relevant information.
- Students will develop and conduct a debate.

KEY VOCABULARY

- controversial** (p. 27) a prolonged public dispute
- microtransaction** (p. 29) a business model where online gamers can purchase virtual goods
- revenue** (p. 28) the amount of money that a company receives during a specific period

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What forms of currency exist?

Motivate the students to study this topic by posting the following word problem on the board: *The article we are about to read states that the average player buying goods in the game Fortnite spends an average of \$84.67 every month. How much money would this player spend in a year?* Encourage students to discuss the game and to work together to solve the problem. (Answer: \$1,016.04)

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Review the key terms and definitions with the class. Guide students to notice that each word belongs in a different part of the alphabet. (Beginning: A–I, Middle: J–R, End: S–Z) Have them write these headings at the top of their paper and put each word in the correct category. As a post-reading activity, have students add other gaming/finance words from the article to their list in the correct columns.

READ & DISCUSS

Read the article aloud with the students and lead a class discussion based on the following prompts.

- Explain how Epic Games makes millions of dollars daily if Fortnite is a free game.
- Who is Tyler Blevins?
- Why do gamers spend money during the game?
- Do you think there is a moral issue with gaming companies purposely making games more addictive? Why/Why not?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Obtaining Information

INSTRUCT: Elicit from the students that this article contains information to help the reader understand how a free game can generate huge profits for its creator. Distribute copies of the *Fortnite Fortunes* graphic organizer and have the class reread the article independently. Instruct them to underline relevant information and to thoroughly complete each section of the organizer.

ASSESS: Circulate and have conversations with the students as they are completing their work. Collect and review their organizers. Arrange peer remediation groups if necessary.

EXTEND

Language Arts Divide the class into two teams and inform the students that they will be using information from the article to conduct a debate. Choose teams to represent the following opposing viewpoints: *Fortnite is worth the extra money that gamers are spending vs. Fortnite is fueling addictions and ripping off players.* Remind students to develop opening and closing arguments, to provide clear examples, and to use persuasive language.

Fortnite Fortunes

Use information from the article, "Fortnite Frenzy," to record relevant information.

What is the objective of the game?

How does this "free game" make so much money?

Fortnite

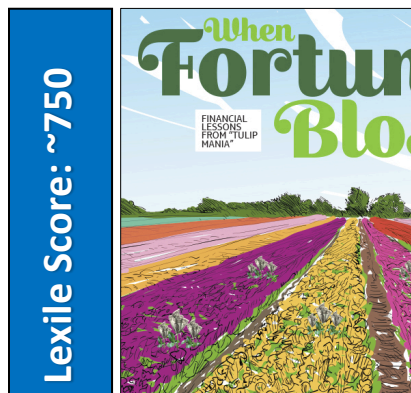
How is Fortnite a game within a game?

Give details about two of the gamers discussed in the article.

Fortunes Blossomed

pp. 32–35, Expository Nonfiction

Travel back in time to the 1600s and discover how tulip bulbs became an unlikely form of currency in the Netherlands. Students will examine the lessons learned from “tulip mania,” and be presented with similarly based modern-day economic systems.



RESOURCES

- Money Doesn't Grow on Trees

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how tulip bulbs were once a form of currency.
- Students will explain the sequence of the historic “tulip mania” episode.
- Students will study the parts and life cycle of flower bulb.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **currency** (p. 33) a system of money in general use in a particular country
- **guilder** (p. 33) the basic monetary unit of the Netherlands (until the Euro), equal to 100 cents
- **investment** (p. 35) a monetary asset purchased with the idea that it will become profitable
- **market** (p. 33) a place where forces of supply and demand operate

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What forms of currency exist?

Create a word web on the board and post the conversation question from this issue (“What forms of currency exist?”) in the center. List student responses and add further details after reading and completing the READ & DISCUSS questions.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Invite pairs of students to use resources to find definitions for the key vocabulary terms. Upon completion, post the definitions provided so that students may check their work for accuracy, as some of these words have more than one meaning. Student pairs will choose an additional 16 (finance/bulb-related) words from the article. They will then create a word search puzzle using all 20 words. Share puzzles with another class for use as a prereading exercise for this article.

READ & DISCUSS

Express to students that this article uses text and photographs to help the reader comprehend the information. Use the following prompts to explore further.

- How did tulip bulbs become a source of currency in the Netherlands?
- Which bulbs were the most expensive? Why?
- What is an “economic bubble”?
- The article states (page 33) that “sales turned on hope.” What does this mean?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Sequence / Explanation

INSTRUCT: Review the article on pages 32–35. Elicit from students that there is a specific sequence of events that was responsible for the historic “tulip mania” episode. Have them highlight relevant passages. Distribute the *Money Doesn't Grow on Trees* graphic organizer and instruct students to use details from the text to thoroughly explain the beginning, middle, and end of this unlikely economic system.

ASSESS: Circulate as students are working on the graphic organizer and discuss the information in the article. Direct students having difficulty finding details to reread the text with a partner.

EXTEND

Biology Draw the students' attention to the text box at the bottom of page 34. Read aloud. Discuss the similarities/differences between bulbs and seeds. If possible, bring a flower bulb to class. Have students research the main parts of a bulb (flower bud, basal stem, roots, scales, and tunic) and draw a diagram labeling and defining each part. Encourage students to keep their illustrations neat and to use color.

Money Doesn't Grow on Trees

Use information from the article, "Fortunes Blossomed," to record and explain the events of "tulip mania."

Beginning	Middle	End

**On the back of this paper, write a paragraph explaining what financial lessons were learned from "tulip mania."*