

The Constitution and Money

These are just a few ideas to get your students thinking. Take these ideas and develop your own lesson plans. Submit your ideas or lesson plans to the PBA to share with other teachers.

What does the Constitution have to do with money?

Refer to Article 1 section 8

Though formally established by act of Congress during the first session of Congress in 1789, many functions of the Department of the Treasury were being carried out even before the signing of the Declaration of Independence 13 years earlier.

Which denomination of money contains the first three words of the U.S. Constitution Preamble?

The ten dollar bill contains several “symbols of freedom” including the first three words of the U.S. Constitution preamble - “We the People.”

What symbols of freedom are printed on the one dollar bill, the five dollar bill, the ten dollar bill the twenty dollar bill?

Did you know you can see President Lincoln sitting in the Lincoln Memorial on the back of a penny?

Most students can see him without the aid of a magnifying glass but you may want to provide a few just in case.

What is the connection between learning about money and good citizenship?

In order to stay ahead of counterfeiting, the United States government continues to redesign our paper money. As part of the introduction of the redesigned currency, the United States government has developed an extensive public education effort aimed at informing the public, target industries and key stakeholder groups about the new designs so they can help spot counterfeit money.

Visit the two U.S. Department of Treasury Web sites listed below to get lesson plans, access an interactive online tool to help your students explore the new security features on the new money and learn lots more about money and being responsible citizens.

United States Department of Treasury Web site
<http://www.treas.gov/education>

Interactive site showing the security features on the new money
<http://www.bep.treas.gov/newmoney>

USA Today also has numerous resources on “The New Color of Money” and other math and economic lessons.
<http://www.usatoday.com/educate/newmoney/index.htm>

Two lesson plans for middle and high school students developed by economic education specialists at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis appear below. These lessons meet national standards in history and economics.

Abraham Lincoln and the Five Dollar Note

Grade Level: 5-8

Lesson Description: In this lesson, students participate in a puzzle activity to identify leadership characteristics that Abraham Lincoln possessed. They review the changes in the redesigned \$5 note and consider how Lincoln’s leadership characteristics contributed to the fact that he is pictured on the \$5 note. Students look at a timeline of Lincoln’s life and identify significant events in his road to the White House. They play a game to review content learned in the lesson.

Currency and the Fed

Grade Level: 8-12

Lesson Description: In this lesson, students consider who is pictured on the different denominations of U.S. currency and why. They participate in an activity to identify functions of basic, everyday items and then identify and explain the functions of another basic, everyday item—money. Students learn some basic facts about money as well as some basics about the Federal Reserve System. In addition, they describe the Federal Reserve’s role in the distribution of money by identifying features of the \$5 note.

http://www.stlouisfed.org/education/lesson_plans/econhistory.html