NEW MEXICO 4-H

Aggie Next Step

Banking Basics



Post Secondary Pathways

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AGGIE NEXT Soar Prosper Empower Thrive Post Secondary Pathway Program

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Banking Basics

Lesson Focus

Managing your money is an important skill, whether you are saving, spending, or paying bills. In this lesson, participants will learn about banking services and how these tools can help manage money safely and effectively. Even with apps like Zelle or CashApp, it's important to know traditional banking, including writing checks, so you can make smart choices.

Supplies

- Worksheets
- Handouts
- Pens/Pencils

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- **Identify** common banking services.
- **Explain** the purpose and benefits of writing checks.
- **Compare** different bank account options and choose one that fits their needs.
- **Apply** responsible money management skills by making informed decisions about spending, saving, and using banking tools.

Preparation

Review lesson materials and determine which worksheets and handouts you will use for the lesson. Print enough assessments, worksheets, and handouts for each participant.

Activities

1. Have participants complete the *Pre-Assessment*.

2. Think-Pair-Share – Begin the discussion with this prompt: *You just got your first paycheck. What are your options for storing and using money?* List answers and highlight that most options connect to a bank – even apps.

3. Distribute ***Banking Services Match-Up*** and review the infographic. Then have students complete the match-up activity on the back. Some have more than one answer.

4. Pose this scenario: *You have $25 in your checking account. You swipe your card for $30.*

Q: What happens?
Q: What is an overdraft?
Q: Why do bank fees matter?

Explain overdraft fees, monthly maintenance fees (many banks offer accounts with no monthly fees), and interest (earning vs owing).

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Banking Basics

5. Distribute ***Choose Your Bank*** and review instructions and Bank Profiles. Instruct participants to compare the banks, choose one, and explain their reasoning. Use these additional discussion questions to further the discussion:

Q: Which bank is best for someone who spends money often?
Q: Which bank is best for someone who wants to save money?
Q: Which bank would be easiest if you travel or live far from ATMs?
Q: What questions would ask before opening your account?

6. Distribute ***Using Paper Checks***. Participants should read and discuss the front of the worksheet in pairs or small groups. On the back, guide participants through filling out two sample checks. Although participants may not use checks frequently, it is still essential that they understand the basics of writing a check.

7. ***Exit Ticket*** – Depending on time, this can be done as a class discussion, as an individual worksheet, as homework in class, or during the following class.

8. Have participants complete the *Post-Assessment*.

Reflection

Smart money management depends on understanding your banking options and making careful choices. The decisions you make—how you spend, save, and use banking tools—affect your financial future and confidence with money.



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Banking Basics

Differentiation

Content Support: Highlight key features in the *Banking Services Match-Up Infographic* to help students focus on essentials.

Provide a sample completed check for the *Using Paper Checks* activity as a model.

English Language Learners: Allow verbal responses in place of written ones and pair students with a supportive English-speaking peer.

Provide sentence starters for page 2 of *Choose Your Bank Account*.

2. I chose this bank because I like…
3. One question I would ask a bank teller before opening an account is …

Processing Time: Provide additional think time before students respond or share.

Advanced or Early Finishers: Ask students to research real local banks or credit unions online to compare features and perks. Create a comparison chart and choose which bank they would open an account with and why.

Ask students to reflect on how they would manage their first paycheck using different banking tools.

Ask students to create a poster or infographic listing pros and cons of apps vs traditional checks.

Banking Basics

Resources

Optional Videos

Note: Please preview all videos before showing them to students to ensure they are age-appropriate, relevant, and aligned with your classroom needs.

Checking & Savings Accounts Explained in 3 Minutes
https://youtu.be/iZGljcA3G24?si=lp7P0lABQRgCv8cR

Credit Cards vs Debit Cards (And When to Use Them)
https://youtu.be/sm0FzHMInig?si=D1PQutBLzitxXq0F

Using Credit and Debit Cards | Kids Shows
https://youtu.be/8H9sIwuJJrg?si=GrLH5wkDQZkMjKRO

How To Write A Check in 2025!
https://youtu.be/CPPdkDIQ7Zk?si=H1R-QUNaHwzg8rsN

NM Standards:

NM PED Standards: Career and Technical Education (CTE):
2.1.1: Evaluate and use information resources to accomplish specific tasks
3.1.1: Employ critical thinking skills to solve problems and make decisions

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Standards: Career Ready Practices (CRP):
CRP-3: Attend to Personal Health and Financial Well-Being.

Optional ELA Alignment (Grades 6-12)
SL1: Participate in a range of conversations and collaborations