

# Shopping and Budgeting Instructors' Guide

Participants practise basic math skills and use them to make wise shopping choices. They exchange ideas about budgeting and saving. They create a personal budget and use a spreadsheet program to create a pie chart.

## Central Idea

We all need money for our daily lives. We can get more out of our dollars by shopping wisely and developing money-saving habits.

## Warm-up

Play a buying/selling game. This could be a board game, like *Monopoly*, or *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, which you may be able to find in second-hand stores or garage sales. If you have fast Internet access, you could have pairs play an online game like Coffee Shop or Lemonade Stand at [www.coolmath-games.com](http://www.coolmath-games.com). Take some time to explore this game first so you can guide them through it. You can stop the games at any convenient point. Finish off with a group discussion about what was learned in the games. How does this game differ from real life? (An alternative, and shorter, warm-up is to have participants try the Change Maker activity at this site: [www.funbrain.com/cashreg/index.html](http://www.funbrain.com/cashreg/index.html)).

## Which One is Cheapest?

This activity will practise division skills. If necessary, give a quick review of when we use division—to divide something into equal parts, to find out how much one of a group costs, to find out how many smaller bits there are in a big piece. Use these questions:

- If you want to divide 20 raisins among 4 children, how many will each child get? ( $20 \div 4$ )
- How much does each razor cost in a package of 10, priced at \$3.80? ( $\$3.80 \div 10$ )
- You have a piece of cloth that is 254 cm long. You want to cut it into lengths of 60 cm to make cushions. How many cushions can you make? ( $254 \div 60$ )

Have some real grocery items available as props, for example, baked beans of different brands and sizes. Ask which is the better deal. Give out the worksheet, **Which One is Cheapest?** Calculators can be used, but anyone who wants a greater

challenge should use paper and pencil. After everyone has completed the math, discuss what other things we think about before choosing to buy an item. The larger size may not be practical for a small family. You may have to pay a bit more for the better quality or the better tasting products. The environmentally friendly product may still cost a bit more. Pass around some shopping flyers and have the group browse to find items they consider good bargains.

### **Working with Percents**

On the handout **Working with Percents** you will find a mini-lesson on the meaning of % and some shortcuts for calculating common percents. Go through the steps in detail with the group, perhaps using the flip chart to show similar examples. There is also a note about rounding off amounts to the nearest dollar. If this is a new concept to some you may want to do a separate mini-lesson on this. The shopping flyers you gathered for the last activity will be useful props. (Answers to % problems: 13.50, 15.00, 12.00)

### **GST and PST**

The handout **GST and PST** explains which items have added sales tax, and how to work it out. Use the information and examples at the beginning to help participants get a grasp of the process. As a group, look through the shopping flyers and identify which items will have GST and PST added. (Answers to sales tax problems: 22.59, 12.06, 14.32)

### **Ground Rules for Allowances**

Remind the group that they pass on many skills to the children in their care, including how to shop wisely and manage money. Ask if anyone gives their child an allowance. Choose one participant to lead a discussion about allowances for children—*At what age should children start receiving allowances? How much is appropriate? Should the allowance be given as payment for doing chores? Should parents control how children spend their allowance? Should they be encouraged to save money?* (You could give a few tips on how to get a group discussion going and how to encourage everyone to take part.) Give the group the task of agreeing on a set of **Ground Rules for Allowances**. Another group member could record the rules on flip chart paper.

### **The Flyer as a Learning Tool**

Give out **The Flyer as a Learning Tool**. Ask parents to brainstorm other activities to add to the list.

**Household Tips**

If you have access to a library, gather several books that give money-saving tips, household hints and recycling ideas. Give the group time to browse through and find ideas that interest them. If it is not possible to find enough books, you could have participants search the Internet using key words like “money saving budget tips”, etc. Here is a useful site:

[www.householdtipsonline.com](http://www.householdtipsonline.com) (but watch out for the ads).

Participants can either share ideas around the table, or they could write out their favourite ones and share them via mail, as in the next activity.

**Addressing an Envelope****&****Writing a Personal Letter**

Nowadays many of us use phones and e-mail to communicate and as a result, the skill of writing letters by hand is being forgotten. In this activity, participants will write letters to each other and mail them. (You may have to supply the stamps.) Be aware that some participants may not want to share their home addresses with others so give everyone the option of using the address of the learning centre. When they have had a chance to write down some of the good shopping-household-recycling tips from the last activity, give the handouts **Addressing an Envelope** and **Writing a Personal Letter**, along with envelopes and writing paper. Go through the information, explaining as you think necessary. Then pair people up and ask them to write a letter to their partner giving a few useful tips. Finally, they stamp their letter and go off to mail it.

**The Ads are Out to Get You****&****Rules for Advertising to Kids**

Give the handout **The Ads are Out to Get You**. Look at the Aylmer advertisement together and discuss how ads can persuade and/or mislead us into buying a product. Talk about how ads use persuasive language and subliminal messages. Pass around a variety of teen, fashion and parenting magazines and give the group time to browse for ads that persuade or mislead. They could make notes and then share ideas afterwards. For take-home work, give the fact sheet **Rules for Advertising to Kids** and ask them to look closely at the advertisements that their children are exposed to in the media. Are the rules being followed?

**Monthly Budgets**

Everyone can benefit from keeping track of how their money is spent. Introduce the idea with the help of the worksheet **Monthly Budgets**. If participants are not sure of the exact amounts they spend in different categories, they can estimate. This activity may inspire them to start keeping accurate records of their money matters. (Remind the group that details of a person's income are usually kept confidential.)

**Make a Pie Chart**

After making their budgets, participants could try presenting it in the form of a pie chart. Instructions on how to do this are found in the handout **Make a Pie Chart**. You may need to give a lot of help in this part of the activity if people are not familiar with Microsoft Excel.