

The History of Money
Adrian Tennant**Activity 1**

Look at these sets of words. Which one is the odd one out in each set?

1. coin, note, save, cheque
2. spend, find, buy, sell
3. loan, income, salary, wage
4. price, cost, value, barter
5. save, steal, borrow, lend

Activity 2

Read the text and complete with the phrases from the box. Be careful!
There are two extra phrases.

as a means of exchange	is called bartering
blank pieces of paper	to help facilitate trade
cut into small pieces	to use one particular object
has something you need	used to buy goods
introduced by shopkeepers	using metal coins

The history of money

More than 2,000 years ago the Romans were (1) _____ similar to those we use today. Many of these early coins were made in the temple of the goddess Juno, or Moneta. It is from the name "Moneta" that we get the word "money".

In most societies objects were used (2) _____. Perhaps a good hunter had more animal skin than he could use and his neighbour, a fisherman, too many fish. Both soon realised that the best thing to do was to exchange what they did not need. This method of paying (3) _____. However this system has some problems. Firstly, you need to find someone who (4) _____ and wants what you have, and secondly, how do you decide on the 'value' of the items. For example, how many fish are equal to one loaf of bread?



To overcome these problems some societies tried (5) _____. For example, in Russia and Scandinavia animal skins were widely used, in Mexico cocoa beans, salt in Nigeria, coloured beads in Africa and North America, and cattle in many countries. These early forms of money were (6) _____, pay for marriages, fines and debts. But it was still difficult to measure their value accurately and keep some of them for a long time.



So, finally a number of societies began to use another kind of money. These were precious metals which were (7) _____ and weighed. Later on these 'coins' were stamped with a figure or symbol so that people could determine how many coins it took to pay for a particular object or service.



It was only around 400 years ago that paper money came into general use in most countries. However, historians believe that the Chinese were printing paper money over a thousand years ago. The first official European bank notes were issued by the Swedish Stockholm Bank in 1661. Of course today not only do we use banknotes but we use 'plastic' money in credit cards and cheques which are written out on (8) _____, a little like an IOU note.

Activity 3

Read the text again and answer these questions.

1. Where does the word *money* come from?
2. What were the two problems that a hunter could face when trying to barter his animal skins for something else?
3. Where did they use the following items as a form of money?
 - a) beads
 - b) beans
 - c) animal skins
 - d) salt
4. Why were coins stamped with a symbol?
5. Who were the first people to use paper money?
6. When was the first paper money issued in Europe?
7. What do we use to pay for things nowadays?

The History of Money

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Level

Intermediate/Upper Intermediate

Topic

History of money

Subject(s)

Business studies/History

Time (approx)

Activity 1: 10 minutes

Activity 2: 15 – 25 minutes

Activity 3: 10 – 15 minutes

Preparation

All activities: One photocopy for each student.

Activity 1

- 1 Take out some money (either a coin or a banknote), show it to your students and ask them what it is. Elicit the word *money*.
- 2 Ask students what money is used for and elicit the ideas of *buying* and *selling* things i.e. exchanging the coin or banknote for something – an object or a service.
- 3 Check students understand the idea of *Odd one out* – i.e. a group of words where some are connected as they have the same or similar meaning or belong together and one doesn't. If you need to, illustrate with the first set on the worksheet.
- 4 Hand out the worksheet and get the students to complete the activity.
- 5 Put them in pairs and get them to check their answers together.
- 6 Monitor and help where necessary.

- 7 Check the answers as a class. However, if someone can give a good reason for a different word being the odd one out, don't say they are wrong, but accept it as an alternative.

Answers

- 1 *save*
- 2 *find*
- 3 *loan*
- 4 *barter*
- 5 *steal*

Activity 2

- 1 Tell the students they are going to read a text about *The history of money*. They shouldn't try to understand every word, but should try and understand the main points.
- 2 Hand out the worksheet and give the students three or four minutes to read through it quickly.
- 3 Put the students in pairs. Tell them to turn the text over, so they can't see it, and then to tell each other what they can remember.
- 4 Monitor and help (by prompting) where necessary.
- 5 Ask them what was missing from the text – they should be able to tell you that some words, or short phrases, were missing.
- 6 Explain that you want them to complete the text using the phrases from the box. Make sure they realise there are eight gaps and ten phrases – so two of the phrases aren't needed.
- 7 Get the students to turn over the texts and try to complete the gaps.
- 8 Monitor and help where necessary.
- 9 Put the students in pairs and get them to check their answers together.
- 10 Check the answers as a class.

Answers

- 1 *using metal coins*
- 2 *as a means of exchange*
- 3 *is called bartering*
- 4 *has something you need*
- 5 *to use one particular object*
- 6 *used to buy goods*
- 7 *cut into small pieces*
- 8 *blank pieces of paper*

Activity 3

- 1 Hand out the worksheet and ask the students to read the text again and answer the questions.
- 2 Put the students in pairs and get them to check their answers together.
- 3 Monitor and help where necessary.
- 4 Check the answers as a class.

Answers

- 1 *From the name Moneta (another name for the Roman goddess Juno)*
- 2 *Finding someone who has what you want and wants what you have and deciding on the 'value' of the items*
- 3 *a) Africa and North America;
b) Mexico (cocoa beans);
c) Russia and Scandinavia;
d) Nigeria*
- 4 *So people could know (determine) the value of each coin*
- 5 *The Chinese*
- 6 *1661*
- 7 *'plastic' money (credit cards) and cheques (as well as coins and banknotes)*

Useful websites

Three websites that contain lots of information on the history of money.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/28718/history.html>

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ab14>

<http://www.projects.ex.ac.uk/RDavies/arian/llyfr.html>