

Play the Market

Gain a basic understanding of the stock market by fantasy investing.



Ages: All ages

Time: 75 minutes (15 minutes each day over 5 days)

Materials Needed:

Internet access, spreadsheet software, printer (optional)

Instructions:

1. Participants can work individually or as a team. Preface the activity with a brief discussion of the stock market. Begin by asking if anyone can describe what the stock market is and/or does. Be sure to keep the descriptions age-appropriate. Explain that participants are going to have the opportunity to invest money in the stock market. Although the money will only be pretend, they will track how well they might have done if they had invested for real!
2. Have participants open the spreadsheet software (Excel) and create a spreadsheet with 8 columns. Keep the first column label blank. Label the second column "Purchase Price", label the next five columns with the days

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of the week plus the word “Close”, i.e. Monday Close.

Label the final column Gain/Loss.

3. Have participants go to a financial exchange website such as NASDAQ or NYSE and find a company they would like to invest in. For older participants you may wish to allow them to invest in more than one company. Have the participants find the symbol for the company (ex. DIS for Disney) and place it in the first column, second row of the spreadsheet.
4. Next, instruct participants that they have \$100 they can use to purchase stocks. They may purchase as much stock as possible with the \$100. Have participants record how many shares of stock they “purchase” and what price they would pay for the shares in the spreadsheet. For example, if Disney shares are \$22.00 each, 4 shares could be purchased for \$88 dollars.
5. Have participants save their spreadsheets and check back each day to determine the previous day’s closing price. Each day they should enter it into the spreadsheet. On the last day, have participants calculate how much they may have potentially gained or lost on their purchase.
6. Finally, engage participants in a brief discussion about the process. How did they feel about the process? If the stock price went up, were they happy? If the stock price went down, were they upset? How do they think this relates to what they have been hearing about the economy in the news?

Submitted By:

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