Teacher's Guide · Grades 7–8

A plug-and-play financial-literacy unit — four short readings, a workbook, a quiz, and an optional practice app. Mapped to the Ontario Mathematics curriculum (2020), Strand F. No finance background needed.

What this is

A ready-to-run mini-unit that builds the money habits behind Ontario's **Financial Literacy strand**: spending on purpose, budgeting for a goal, understanding interest, and the difference between saving and investing. Four plain-English readings, each ending in a checkpoint problem, plus a quiz. Everything is free at `travisvaluation.ca/learn`.

What your students will be able to do

- Tell a **need** from a **want**, and name the trade-off (opportunity cost) behind a purchase.
- Compare methods of payment — and explain why credit is borrowed money.
- Build a simple **budget** that meets a savings goal, and explain "save first, spend second."
- Calculate **simple and compound interest**, and explain why starting early matters — and how the same force works against a borrower.
- Explain the difference between **saving and investing** and the idea of risk and return.

Ontario curriculum alignment

This unit maps to **Strand F: Financial Literacy** in the Ontario Mathematics curriculum (2020), Grades 7 and 8. Expectation wording is condensed; confirm against the current curriculum before submitting for approval.

IN THIS UNIT	GRADE · CODE	ONTARIO STRAND F EXPECTATION (CONDENSED)
Session 1 — needs vs. wants, trade-offs	**Gr 7 F1.4**	Identify societal and personal factors that influence financial decision-making, and describe their effects.
Session 1 — methods of payment (foundation)	**Gr 6 F1.1**	Describe the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of payment for purchasing goods and services.
Session 2 — budgeting for a goal	**Gr 7 F1.3**	Create, track, and adjust sample budgets designed to meet longer-term financial goals.
Session 2 — a plan with income & expenses	**Gr 8 F1.2**	Create a financial plan to reach a long-term goal, accounting for income and expenses.
Session 2 — a balanced budget; tracking	**Gr 8 F1.3**	Identify ways to maintain a balanced budget and use tools to track all income and spending.
Session 3 — simple & compound interest	**Gr 8 F1.4**	Determine the growth of simple and compound interest at various rates, and explain the impact interest has on long-term financial planning.
Session 3 — interest & the cost of borrowing	**Gr 7 F1.5**	Explain how interest rates can impact savings, investments, and the cost of borrowing over time.
Session 4 — saving vs. investing	**Gr 7 F1.5**	Explain how interest rates can impact savings and investments over time.

ONE HONEST NOTE ON SESSION 4

Session 4 stays **in-strand**: it teaches saving vs. investing, risk/return, and diversification through **index funds** (Gr 7 F1.5) — not individual stock-picking, which Ontario saves for high school. Students learn "don't put all your eggs in one basket," the safe first step, rather than betting on single companies. Valuing individual companies is deliberately left as a bridge to the Grade 9 program.

Your materials (all free, all printable)

- **4 session readings** — Money & Smart Spending · Budgeting · Compound Interest · Saving vs. Investing
- **Student Workbook** — one checkpoint page per session, to collect and mark
- **Quiz** — a final assessment covering all four sessions (answer-key version on request)
- **Optional: the app** — at `travisvaluation.ca/learn`, students can run a practice portfolio with fake money (a natural extension for Session 4)

A suggested game plan (about one week · ~40-min periods)

DAY	IN CLASS	CHECKPOINT
1	Read *Money & Smart Spending*. Sort real examples into needs vs. wants; discuss a trade-off.	Workbook p.1
2	Read *Budgeting*. Build Sam's budget together, then each student drafts one for a goal.	Workbook p.2
3	Read *Compound Interest*. Work the $100-at-10% table by hand; discuss the debt trap.	Workbook p.3
4	Read *Saving vs. Investing*. Match goals to saving or investing; (optional) open the app.	Workbook p.4
5	Review and the Quiz. (Optional) students build a practice portfolio and explain one choice.	Quiz

Short on time? The four readings + the quiz make a solid two-to-three-day unit on their own.

How to assess it — grade the thinking

At this level, the goal isn't a "right" portfolio — it's **reasoning**. Grade the workbook checkpoints, the budget task, and the quiz. If you use the app, grade the *explanation* a student gives for a choice, never who ends up with the most pretend money (that just rewards luck).

CRITERION	EXCELLENT (4)	DEVELOPING (2)
Needs vs. wants	Sorts correctly and explains a trade-off in their own words.	Sorts unevenly; no trade-off named.
Budget task	Balanced budget that reaches a goal; "save first" applied.	Numbers don't balance or no savings.
Interest	Calculates compound interest correctly; explains why time matters.	Confuses simple and compound.
Saving vs. investing	Matches goals to the right tool and gives a reason.	Guesses without reasoning.
Workbook + Quiz	Complete and correct.	Incomplete.