



## Economic lessons in your child's classroom

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our class will implement a classroom economy system during this school year. It's an excellent tool for teaching financial responsibility and many other things, and I think the children will enjoy it. I want to let you know how it works.

Using classroom "currency," students earn money for jobs and pay rent for their desks. They can earn bonus cash by participating in extracurricular activities, helping others, and earning excellent grades. On the other hand, students who don't meet classroom expectations will be fined some of their classroom dollars. That could happen, for example, if they don't complete assignments or don't listen when other students are speaking.

The classroom economy helps children to learn valuable life skills such as organization, the value of saving, and delayed gratification. Rather than being told about the importance of these skills, they actually experience them. In addition, the system fits in well with the other parts of our curriculum.

We'll also have a little fun with it. After paying rent, students can save money to spend at monthly auctions where they get to bid on items everybody likes. The children will certainly enjoy themselves, and I know you will appreciate the skills and knowledge they learn along the way.

Our system is based on the "My Classroom Economy" program developed as a volunteer project by employees of Vanguard, one of the world's largest investment management companies, in partnership with Rafe Esquith, an award-winning fifth-grade teacher who is the author of *There Are No Shortcuts* and *Teach Like Your Hair's On Fire*.

So don't be surprised if your child comes home one day with questions about paying rent, or regrets about overbidding for an auction item. You might find it a great opportunity to have a thoughtful discussion about financial responsibility.

If you have any questions about the classroom economy, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

The Fourth Grade Team  
Somerset Academy Elementary South Homestead

P.S. We would also welcome any small items you would like to contribute to our auctions.