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AUTHOR Boston-Hall, Charmaine  
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## ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the Career Development Classroom Money System, a curriculum created specifically for young people, as well as the teachers, administrators, and school officials confronting the difficult tasks of helping them reach social, economic, and personal achievement. The Classroom Money System is a comprehensive, competency-based program designed to help young people succeed in mathematical computation in the classroom, the community, and the workplace. The program includes a flexible, interactive curriculum for grades 3 through 8. The goal of the Classroom Money System is to provide children an opportunity to hone in on real-life money skills that they will be required to use in the real world. The system offers students from diverse needs and abilities an opportunity to learn money management skills at their own pace through a variety of means tailored to their learning styles. (GCP)

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# Career Development Classroom Money System

by

Charmaine Boston-Hall

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# Career Development Classroom Money System

**Charmaine Boston-Hall**  
*Chicago Public Schools*

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## The Need

The journey toward personal growth and enhanced productivity in the workplace is filled with obstacles for many young people: challenges that not only threaten their futures but the economic and social health of our nation. The Career Development Classroom Money System was created specifically for these young people as well as the teachers, administrators and schools confronting the difficult task of helping them reach social, economic and personal achievement.

The Classroom Money System is a comprehensive, competency-based program designed to help young people succeed in mathematical computation in the classroom, the community and the workplace. The program includes a flexible, interactive curriculum for grades 3 through 8. The goal of the Classroom Money System is to provide children an opportunity to hone in on real-life money skills that they will be required to use in the real world.

The Classroom Money System is a way to bring joy and excitement to the classroom instantly. This wonderful system opens the eyes of young learners. This is a system of classroom management that gives the teacher power without intimidation. This learning tool empowers young learners in a controlled environment that fosters ownership.

The system does not preclude the teacher's establishment of clear rules and procedures. Within its design is a clear step-by-step approach to establishing rules while fostering the feelings of ownership within the student.

The Career Development Classroom Money System was first implemented in 1982 in Chicago Public School's Edward F. Dunne Elementary School and Spencer Elementary School. The flexible program can be used in dropout prevention efforts, school-to-work transition programs, and as an enhancement to alternative education initiatives.

The Classroom Money System offers students from diverse needs and abilities an opportunity to learn money management skills at their own pace through a variety of means tailored to their learning styles.

## The Curriculum

First and foremost, it must be emphasized that math computational skills are tools required for real-life situations. It is a continuous process that should be developed sequentially. Many math computational difficulties can be prevented if there were proper supplemental activities prior to instruction. The Career Development Classroom Money System deals with the practical procedures that can be used within a school environment to improve math computational skills. Before math computational skills are used to any great extent, the child must have the necessary background experiences in basic math computation

to go along with and supplement the teacher's classroom instruction. Teachers who have facilitated the Classroom Money System have found that with many students, math computation skills can be taught faster by using remedial easy and interesting materials that provide the student with social activities and academic success.

We usually teach to three major domains:

- Cognitive - knowledge and intellectual skills
- Affective - interests, attitudes, values, appreciations, and adjustments
- Psychomotor - manipulative and motor skills

Of the three domains, most of the objectives of the Classroom Money System fall into the cognitive and affective domains. One approach to setting both cognitive and affective objectives was to ask teachers who have facilitated the Classroom Money System for their insights. These teachers have watched students march through the Classroom Money System and enter the real world. They have had an opportunity to interact with the employers of their graduates and obtain feedback about the math computational skills of students in the real world.

Another approach used in developing the Classroom Money System was to refer to a publication by Bloom, Hastings, and Madaus, *Handbook on Formative and Summative Evaluation of Student Learning* (1971), which has some very interesting comments about affective objectives. The authors believe that the cognitive domain is a building block for affective domain objectives. They believe that the cognitive beginning is the lowest level of an affective hierarchy, since the student is only aware of a phenomenon through an expression of feelings. Next, the student reacts to the phenomenon, conceptualizing behaviors and feelings and organizing them into a structure. Finally, the student reaches the highest level of the affective hierarchy when the structure becomes a part of his or her perspective on life.

### **The Classroom Money System**

The Classroom Money System is based on classroom play money that is generated by the teacher and kept in a safe secure place as any valuable would be. The next component is the job system. The jobs vary from the usual classroom jobs such as passing out materials to classroom attorneys and accountants. The final component is discipline, which is based on monitoring the display of the positive character traits needed for everyone to get along.

Setting up the entire system may seem complicated but can be done on as simple a level as the teacher can handle depending on the students involved. Once the money is printed out, the teacher can begin to distribute it for any number of reasons such as a reward for coming to school. The job chart is easy to implement also. Simply pass the blank chart around and let them choose jobs at random. If, however, the teacher wants more control over the job choices there is a job application that can be filled out and turned in. The teacher makes the choice from the several jobs chosen by the student based on the child's qualifications. The job of passing out such an inexpensive yet so rewarding token to children as play money gives the teacher a positive, simple way to build on good behavior as well as teach critical thinking skills and the importance of working together.

### *Making The Money*

There are several ways to come up with play money for the system. One simple way is to make copies of the money, using a unique color of paper to discourage copying. Counterfeiting is always a consideration. Eventually someone will try to copy the money. Stamping all money with another colored stamp also discourages copying. Also, laminating the money is another way to offset counterfeiting.

### *Distribution of The Money*

Money can be distributed for many different things. Students can earn money for perfect lines in the halls, complete class work, cooperating in group activities, silent reading and good behavior. On the other hand money can be charged for behavior mistakes, lack of homework and borrowing supplies.

### *Checks*

The checks are an important part of the system. The blank checks can be filled out by the accountants and distributed in the place of the money. This method gives the lesson of reading and understanding checks and how they are written. It is also a place value exercise in reading the number in word form and standard form.

### *Classroom Bank*

The classroom bank can be as simple as two desks pushed together with a bag of money bound in denominations of 1's, 5's, 10's and so on. When the bank is open there should be at least one security guard there to watch the money and monitor the banking activities. Additionally, money can be borrowed from the bank.

### *Job Chart*

The job chart can be implemented by simply passing a blank job chart (listing the various classroom jobs) around and letting students choose the jobs at random. If the teacher wants more control over the job choices there is a job application form that can be used. The entire system has a "Want Ads" section. All of the jobs in this particular section are not necessary for the smooth running of the classroom, but they are recommended. Although students may not choose every job it is interesting to see where their interests lie and how they make the job work. Special abilities and creativity often surface in the classroom work place.

### *Job Descriptions*

- **Checkers:** collect and distribute materials. They can also stamp papers when there is a time limit.
- **The Librarian:** makes a display of the new and most popular books, keeps the sign-out sheet for books checked out and reminds students to return books.
- **Bankers:** cash checks, make loans, and make change. It is important to choose an honest student for this job. Get references for bankers before trusting them with the money.

- **Accountants:** write out checks and make ledgers for paychecks(optional).
- **Receptionists:** sit near the door for half of the day and greet visitors with the proper salutations and take messages for the teacher to cut down on interruptions.
- **Tour Guides:** take visitors on a tour of the classroom and explain the money system and the jobs.
- **Attorneys:** write up claims and accusations. They also defend clients in the classroom court.
- **The Time Keeper:** rings the warning bell 3 minutes before the period ends and rings the final bell at the end of the work period. This student must be able to tell time on an analog clock.
- **Maintenance Workers:** oversee the general neatness of the classroom, sweep and clear areas after craft activities.
- **Suppliers:** hands out supplies, manages the pencil sharpener and keeps a debt list for students who borrow basic supplies like pens and notebook paper.
- **Store Managers:** sells the store items when given a winning ticket for good character.
- **Reporters:** write articles and publish the classroom newspaper.
- **Bulletin Board Monitor:** put up and remove papers on the bulletin boards. They may even plan or design a board.
- **Security Guards:** guard the bank and the classroom store when open.
- **Technicians:** play the music during the transition periods and all other mechanical items in the classroom.
- **Classroom Journalists:** write a classroom journal page each day for the classroom journal. They are encouraged to look for positive news items that happened in class that day. The daily classroom journal is kept in the class library and available for everyone to read.
- **Marker Recorders:** mark papers that have simple answer keys and check off papers to make sure all have been collected.
- **Line Monitors:** lead the lines to the directed destinations. No one is to walk ahead of the line monitors.
- **Mathematicians:** are in charge of the math center. They also facilitate peer-tutoring in math when needed.
- **Scientists:** are in charge of the science center.

The money system is a community that can run quite smoothly when the children know their roles and are free to do them. The list of jobs is long and the idea of all those students up and away from their desk at various times may sound like chaos. Most jobs can be done during the orderly traditional classroom setting. Others are best done at a time set aside once a week for Career Development and Character Education. This forty minute a week period can satisfy the students and keep them motivated and trying to earn money all week.

During the Career Development period the following activities can run:

### *The Wheel of Fortune*

The Wheel of Fortune is just a spinner on a circle with different denominations of money such as, \$450 or \$999, that students can win when they land on a number. Students

usually prefer winning money as opposed to shopping in the store. This keeps the store stock in place longer. The directions for the Wheel of Fortune are as follows:

- Present the Wheel Attendant your ticket.
- Spin the wheel and it must go all the way around.
- Win the amount of money that you spin.
- Write your spin on the back of the ticket and turn it into the attendant.

### *The Classroom Store*

The classroom store is a box of inexpensive toys and items that are of interest to the age group of the students. The store is more window dressing than anything because the money is the real toy to the children. Running the store is simple.

- Go to the classroom store with your Good Character Traits Ticket.
- Choose a toy that you want to purchase and find out the price.
- Count your money and if you have enough, make your purchase.
- Give your ticket to one of the store clerks.

The Classroom Money System instructional approach is experiential; that is, students learn by interacting with one another and by relating subject matter to real life situations. The lessons also prepare students with maturity skills necessary to compete in the workplace. Students are involved in setting up their own classroom bank account from classroom jobs. Depositing money earned on classroom jobs is very motivating. It teaches children the value of savings and helps them practice math in a productive way. Students will learn to be more money-smart as they grow.

## **Multiplication Contests and Learning Centers**

### **Multiplication Contest Rules**

- Players sit in a circle and call the answers to flash cards.
- If correct, the player gets a point from the scorekeepers.
- Winners get the biggest prize, 3 times the flat fee.
- Timekeepers do not get paid.
- All participants make money if they stay in for all three rounds.

### **Learning Centers**

- Students are to do the activities in the given center.
- Students are paid at the completion of the activity with classroom money or a check given by the mathematician or the scientist.

### *Publishing*

The journalist and the reporters use the computers to write news stories. Using the suggested classroom newspaper layout the writers write articles.



### *The Big Raffle*

Raffle tickets are sold. A variety of items can be raffled off. This is a good way to get the money back. These are the procedures for the raffle:

- Students purchase a raffle ticket when the tickets go on sale.
- Sign your name to the ticket in ink.
- Put your ticket into the raffle jar when it is time.
- When the teacher gives the signal, do the finger drum roll. (use fingers not fists.)
- Stop the drum roll when the name is pulled into the air.
- If your name is pulled, come up and choose a prize.

The prizes are classroom money, treats or toys.

### *The Bank*

The bank is any place that the money is set up for transactions. The bankers put their desks together and security guards sit on either side. Students line up in a straight line and wait their turn at the bank. Town Meetings The class officers follow the preset agenda and conduct a meeting addressing the successes and concerns of the students.

### *Bake Sales and Candy Stores*

Bake sales are easy to do and the children love them. Students are given the opportunity to open a store for the bake sale and sell whatever baked goods that they want. It is best to stipulate packaged goods only. Some school districts have rules about serving food cooked at home. Students set up their stores with signs advertising their goods and set the prices.

Although pro-social behavior is fostered by the activities and roles played in the system, other behaviors do surface. As in society as a whole, people do not always follow the rules or obey the law. Teaching pro-social skills and spending time developing the rules with the class are valuable and sound based on the research. Combining these techniques with the money system will serve to expedite the process of building pro-social skills. Using the money, the jobs, the teaching of procedures and developing the rules as a class are all important tools for the diverse classroom of the twenty-first century. The level of involvement that students experience in the system seems to distract students from inappropriate ways to gain recognition. Teaching students to take part in a democratic process and the responsibility of managing an income are precious tools.

My recommendation is to have this system used school-wide. I have found that this system can turn the uncooperative and disruptive student into an important person in the money system and extinguish some of the negative ways these students try to gain recognition.

On its journey toward becoming a mandated, recognized career development program, the Classroom Money System has encountered many obstacles. In several schools, introducing the Classroom Money System to grade level chairpersons, to share its potential with their respective teachers was a problem. Unfortunately, working in teams to utilize a new program does not come naturally to educators socialized to be strong individualists, suspicious of new programs.



Some classroom teachers were adverse to any such new program. Still, despite adversity our grand plans in terms of promulgating the Classroom Money System totally transformed some classrooms that adopted the program.

As a result, we've learned that the best way to achieve change has proven to be gradually, through groups and individuals who champion a cause and spread their enthusiasm to others. Not everyone will be able to embrace the concept of the Classroom Money System. Even though that may be the case, administrators who are not able to change their management style, and teachers who resist change must all be treated with care and respect.

### Summary and Conclusion

Improving our teaching can be focused on tuning our present skills or on learning new (to us) ways of teaching. When tuning our skills as teachers, we should try to become more affirmative, involve students more, manage logistics more efficiently, induce students to be more productive, and understand better the subject matter we teach. In short, we should work on our craft. By trying a new system and fine tuning our skills, we will consolidate our competence, and we will likely increase our effectiveness.

The time for fine tuning our skills and utilizing creative career development activities is **now**. And I am certain that by facilitating the Classroom Money System students will travel through their learning experiences empowering themselves, gaining proper preparation and resources to complete the their learning journey in the real world.

Career education programs should, and will, continue to enjoy a reputation for being creative, agile, responsive, flexible, and adaptive to diverse student populations. Subsequently, students who have been immersed in career development activities will fare better in the "real world" than students who were not provided an opportunity to participate in career development.



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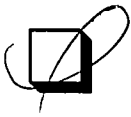


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