



JA Elementary School Programs JA Ourselves® Helpful Hints

Preparation Checklist:

- Thoroughly read your Guide for Volunteers and Teachers. Spend time planning your sessions and think about relevant stories you can share with students.
- Separate and organize all materials for your sessions into five separate folders, one for each session.
- Visit the online training resources for additional tips: <https://www.jaum.org/volunteer/training-materials/>
- Obtain a class roster when you schedule your classroom visits with the teacher. Instead of “name” table tents, name tags are used for each session. You will need the roster to prepare the name tags for each session. You will also use the roster to fill out the certificates for the graduation on your final visit or print them using the [customizable template online](#).
- If you plan to bring something to hand out to the students, have the item “pre-approved” by the teacher. Most schools are peanut-free and may have other food restrictions as well.

Session 1: JA Ourselves: This or That? Make a Choice

Helpful Hints

- Prepare the name tags prior to arriving at the classroom. (Sessions 1-5)
- Consider using the option in the Volunteer Guidebook to have the students all stand and move for the “choices” activity.
- Identify two items in the classroom that are on opposite sides of the room (ie: clock on that side or the smartboard on the other side). Emphasize the choice is their individual choice, and it is ok if only a few of them choose one when the rest of the class chooses the other. After the first card, tell the students to come back to where they started to “reset.” Resetting after each card will help them to move quickly in this activity.
- Introduce the vocabulary word “money”. Instead of focusing on the students mastering the coin/value recognition, explain that money is something we use to pay for things we buy at stores.
- Consider adapting the Junior Journal balloon activity. Instead of having them color all five balloons, have them choose only one and color it. Tell the students that on each visit, they get to choose and color an additional balloon.
- Show students the postcards with magnets and tell them their teacher will distribute the magnets at the end of the day.

Personal Stories

- Describe a time when you’ve had to make a difficult choice. Share with the students that if they have to make a difficult choice and don’t know what to do, they might ask a family member, their teacher, or a friend to help in deciding.

Potential Challenge

- Students work at very different speeds and some will finish early. Tell the students to go to the cover page and start coloring in just the face. You might consider coloring the shirt on another visit, etc.

Session 2: JA Ourselves: Do I Need What I Want?

Helpful Hints

- Prepare the name tags prior to arriving at the classroom. (Sessions 1-5)
- In the class discussion, students may or may not agree with an item being a need vs. a want. Be sensitive to the reasons students give as to why they consider certain items to be a need or a want. For example, many students will consider a dog a want; however, a service dog could be considered a need to a person who is visually impaired. A bicycle could be a need if that is the only form of transportation a family has and a parent uses the bicycle to get to work; a computer could be a need if it is used for a job or a want if it is used to play games, etc.
- When completing the sticker portion of the activity, be sure to emphasize it's a "toy" car, and the computer is "to play games", this way those items will end up on the "want" side for the activity.

Personal Stories

- Share a time when you really wanted something, but didn't buy it because you had to use the money for something you needed.

Session 3: JA Ourselves: A Penny Earned

Helpful Hints

- Prepare the name tags prior to arriving at the classroom. (Sessions 1-5)
- The vocabulary card defines "earn" as "to get money for a job you did." Consider discussing that earning could also come in other forms: earning five extra minutes of play-time, earning an additional story book being read for doing a chore, etc.

Personal Stories

- Share examples of jobs you did as a youth to earn money.

Potential Challenge

- Some students will finish the maze much faster than others. Ask students to draw a picture of them doing a job where they earned money, or have them continue coloring on the cover page (if it isn't done).

Session 4: JA Ourselves: A Penny Saved

Helpful Hints

- Prepare the name tags prior to arriving at the classroom. (Sessions 1-5)
- Ask the students to define "saving" and ask for examples of things they would save their money for.
- For the dice activity, tell the students they must gently roll the die and it must stay on the table. If excessive rolling and throwing occurs and the die lands on the floor – consider implementing a time out for a new game rule: if the die lands on the floor - the student loses a turn.

Personal Stories

- Share a time when you saved money to buy something important to you. It can be an example from your childhood or adult life.

Potential Challenge

- The students are easily distracted by the pop-up banks. Instead of handing them out, demonstrate how to set them up and then give them to the teacher to hand out at the end of the day. They are difficult to collapse once opened.

Session 5: JA Ourselves: A Penny Shared

Helpful Hints

- Allow ample time (8-10 minutes) for the graduation ceremony at the end.
- Consider asking the students how it makes them feel to “give” and to “receive.”
- Discuss with the students that giving can come in other forms besides money – such as giving of time or a talent.
- Discuss the cycle of growing food, making food, and selling or donating food for people to eat.
- If you discuss what a Food Pantry is, be sensitive that some students’ families may utilize a food pantry and as kindergarteners they may or may not realize it is because they “don’t have enough money”. Many parents with students this age say it’s their “grocery store” so the child doesn’t realize the economic need. Consider not bringing it up unless a student specifically asks and then modify the bullet point found on page 37 to simply say a food pantry is where people can get food if needed.
- If time, consider going through all the individual components needed for things to grow – ask the students to act everything out with you! (Dig a hole, place the seed, replace the dirt, water the plant, make sure it has sun, and protect it from bad weather.)
- After you read the story, ask the students what happens in the beginning, middle, and end. This will provide students with a reference when completing the activity.
- The activity calls for the students to glue the Story Cards into their journals. You may want to emphasize using a small amount of glue (remind the students: “dot, dot, not a lot”) or bring scotch tape to tape the cards into place.

Personal Stories

Conceptually, this story focuses around how people work together, each contributing something unique to a team. Think of a time you were part of a team. Share how each individual team member contributed to the whole team.

Share a time when you have raised or donated money for a good cause.

Graduation

- Make this time special. Call the students up one-at-a-time to receive their certificate and have other students provide applause. Teach them to shake your hand properly (no ‘limp fish’ or ‘super squeezers’) and to shake with the right hand while accepting the certificate with the left hand.
- If you brought in an edible treat, ask the teacher if they can eat it right away. Also, allow time for them to finish the snacks during the JA session time. Please make sure your treat is peanut-free, as this may be a school district policy.