

Welcome to the Money Tree Game!



Looking for a fun interactive way to teach children about the basics of supply and demand? You have found it! This game helps explain why communities cannot simply print more money whenever they run out. Having too much money is meaningless if there are not things and services to purchase. Money is a tool, and the Money Tree Game helps children see how the tool works.

How to Play

Step 1

Gather a group of five to ten children. (The smaller number should be easier to monitor. If doing so in a classroom, allow the other students to watch the game to give their feedback.)

Step 2

Create a stack of fake one-dollar bills. Consider creating or printing about fifteen fake dollars per child participant.

Step 3

Create or assemble a fake tree that will be the money tree. This tree could be flat on a piece of paper or built out of materials like wood, pipes, or whatever fun ideas you come up with. The larger the group of participants, the larger the money tree will need to be.

Step 4

Set up one or multiple tables near the money tree and assign adult volunteers to work at the tables. Place various toys/games/food/candy items on the table that the children will be able to purchase using the dollars from the Money Tree. Assign a cost to each of the items on the table. For example, candy could be \$1. Cookies could be \$2, and a toy could be \$5.

Step 5

Have enough items so that the total cost is 5 times the number of participants.

Step 6

Create a list of chores that the children can do to earn money. Do not show the children this list until after Step 7 is complete.

Step 7

Gather the children around the tree and have one adult volunteer read the following statement:

Welcome, young children! I invite all of you to see
The majestic, magnificent money-making tree.

Together, you and your friends have a choice
you can make.
This tree is full of money that everyone can
take.

And inside this room, you can buy all that you
can bear.
The game ends when there's nothing left to buy
anywhere.

BUT if before the last purchase, all of you agree
to give everything you bought back and all your
money,

you will have another option: To earn your own
cash.
Just work the jobs listed here and build up your
own stash.

You can earn money for yourself or to help a
friend.
What you decide to do, we will find out in the
end.

There is one last rule: When finished, you all
must agree
on the choice you feel is most fair to everybody.

Step 8

Signal for the children to start collecting
money from the tree. Don't tell them how
much they can take.

Step 9

Have the volunteers at the tables
encourage them to come over and
purchase items. Allow the children to
purchase whatever they want. If only a
few children end up with all the items,
that is ok. The goal is to see how the
children react when almost all the items
are purchased. See what they decide to
do. If they begin to fight as the last few
remaining items are left, remind them
that they have another choice.

Step 10

Regardless of what they decide to do in the
end, take time after the game is over to
discuss with them the following questions:

1. What lessons did you learn from the
game?
2. Did the money tree lead to everyone
being happy?
3. Did everyone get something that they
wanted?
4. Is it fair if only some people get to use
the money tree and others do not?
5. Is it ok to buy things for other people?

Discover what creative answers the children
have in store!

We hope you enjoy The Money Tree Challenge!



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