

# Teach the Teacher: **The 21st Century Student's Guide to Financial Literacy - Getting Personal**

## Course Introduction

Hi Teachers. Welcome to the first of 19 “Teach the Teacher” podcasts for the **The 21st Century Student's Guide to Financial Literacy - Getting Personal**. Since you're listening to this, I assume you've been selected by your school or district to teach a course on personal finance and money management and you've selected this as your resource.

I'm Susan Mulcaire, the instructional designer of this curriculum. I'd first like to thank you for selecting the program and to assure you that this course should serve your financial literacy course goals very well and meet most if not all of your state's financial literacy standards.

Some of you are probably familiar with our middle school resources which we published under the name of Tween Publishing. Tween's website is [www.middleschoolguide.com](http://www.middleschoolguide.com). C21Publishing is Tween's high school cousin. It came about when high schools wanted to use our resources, but for obvious reasons “Tween” Publishing was a problem so we spun some things into C21. For example, we gave our popular middle school study skills program a slightly different, more mature look and made some minor changes to content so it would appeal to older students. We did the same with our college knowledge program.

This program -- this financial literacy program focuses on grades 8 to 12. We have a website dedicated specifically to this course. It is [www.financialliteracylessons.com](http://www.financialliteracylessons.com). We duplicated the lesson resources on Tween's website, but the primary site for this course is [www.financialliteracylessons.com](http://www.financialliteracylessons.com). It's a good idea to bookmark that site because if you are teaching this course, you will be accessing it often. Also, I recommend checking the site now and then for new content. When I come across articles or information that is of interest or use to financial literacy students and their teachers, I post them on the Resources page and upload the links. Also, follow us on **Twitter** because I tweet when something new goes up. We also post to Pinterest though not as consistently as we should!

A few notes about this course before we get started:

One of the things I strive to do when I design curriculum is to cover all the bases. I don't want to develop a half-baked curriculum that leaves unanswered questions and requires a lot of follow up by teachers to fill in gaps or create worksheets or projects, so I really tried to make this curriculum **comprehensive**. I have included worksheets, practice activities and assessments and lots of ideas for extra projects and practice. It took thousands of hours to create, so it's comprehensive, classroom ready and pretty turnkey.

That being said, however, I dislike and actually resent curriculum that is too scripted. So, as we progress through the materials, you'll see that the basic financial literacy principles are well covered and that there's solid instruction in place for teaching the subject, there is also a great deal of instructional freedom to explore topics more deeply

and to differentiate. As we go through the lesson plans I'll show you where this can happen.

Another note: As I was researching and writing this program, I thought, I really want to include podcasts for teachers. There's a lot of evidence that financial literacy is not as embraced as it should be by the educational community, because very few teachers feel competent to teach it. That is completely understandable! The recent Champlain College Financial Literacy Report Card tells us that 77% of Americans live in a state that has earned a C or below on financial literacy -- so, obviously financial literacy is just not a part of our everyday lives. It's a subject most people are weak on and teachers are no exception. The Teach the Teacher podcasts are designed to help you quickly master the content and gain confidence and competence so you can move to the classroom to pass this knowledge on to your students. I recommend **reading through the lesson plan first**, then listening to the podcast. After that take some time to **go back and reread the lesson plan**, working through the instructional activities, and reading through the practice activities. If you any questions, I can be contacted through the website and also at [financialliteracylessons@gmail.com](mailto:financialliteracylessons@gmail.com) or [financialliteracylessons@gmail.com](mailto:financialliteracylessons@gmail.com). My number is also on the website if you feel like you need to talk through some aspect of a lesson. If you have a question, it's very possible that another teacher has the same or similar one. It helps us all be better teachers if I get the question and have chance to respond and even post the question and answer on the website so everybody has the benefit of the information.

I also produce a quarterly newsletter called **The Financial Literacy Teacher** with lots of good information for financial literacy teachers. If you haven't already signed up for that newsletter I highly recommend doing so. You can opt to receive it in the mail or a digital copy -- or both.

Let's get started learning how to teach "The 21st Century Student's Guide to Financial Literacy - Getting Personal". Please go to page 3 of the Instructor's Guide which, as you can see, is the Table of Contents

So here's a rundown on the course structure: This course is divided into 3 thematic units. The theme of Unit 1 is Earning an Income. The theme of Unit 2 is Building Wealth. And the Unit 3 theme is Protecting and Preserving Wealth. Each unit consists of 6 lesson plans -- I "tried" to make the lesson plans and the units fairly consistent in terms of time to teach and amount of content although there are a couple of lessons that are longer than most.

On page 6 there's an **Annotated Lesson Plan**. All of the lessons in this course are set up identically. On the right side of lesson plans are references to the classroom slides. All classroom slides can be found at [www.financialliteracylessons.com](http://www.financialliteracylessons.com). The slides generally don't contain a lot of content. They're designed to keep students focused on the topic as you move through instruction. There are about 6-8 classroom slides per lesson. Below the slides is the "suggested" five day pacing guide. I doubt you have 5 days a week to teach this course, but I wanted to break the lessons into segments so that you can plan for instruction a little bit better, combine things in different days or move things around.

Below that is the **Materials list**. Materials are going to be pretty much remain the same throughout all of the lessons: you'll need to have online access to demonstrate skills and check out lessons resources.

Each lesson identifies **Supplemental Resources**. For example, you may be required in the lesson to demonstrate an amortization schedule. Now, you may have a favorite amortization schedule calculator that you always use and that's fine, but we've suggested some supplemental resources to use to complete the instructional demonstration activities within the lesson. It's just to save you the time and effort of having to go find the resources yourself.

Also included in the supplemental resources are some interesting websites that students might like exploring and websites or resources that would be of use to students in preparing their **Debate-Persuade-Inform** activity, which I'll get to in a few minutes.

The **lesson objectives** correspond with the learning goals in the student workbook.

Moving on to page 7 of the Annotated Lesson Plan, let's look at **Gaining Attention**. Each lesson begins with an informal discussion of something related to the lesson topic. This is obviously to build context, wake students up, encourage participation and activate schemas.

So moving down to **Presentation of Content**: lessons are based on direct instruction. This was done because most of the teachers who are teaching this program are picking it up for the first time - and probably reaching financial literacy for the first time, so they are learning from the instructor's guide. You can see that my instructional target is not just students but also preparing teachers to teach, I wanted to be as direct as possible. Once you have a good handle on the content, feel free to get more creative with how you present it.

Moving to **The Big Picture** - this is the lesson closure. It summarizes key points of the lesson. It's included as text in the student workbook, and also as a classroom slide.

Moving down to **Let's Practice**: There are generally two practice activities for each lesson. **Activity A** is usually in-class practice, sometimes whole class, but you can have students work independently or in teams. **Activity B** is usually completed by students at home, but it could be a project completed in pairs or teams. Activity B should be carefully previewed because it may be something that could take several days to complete. For example, one lesson's Activity B requires students to work as a class to create survey questions for interviewing small business owners. Then they work in teams to interview small business owners about the challenges and rewards of running a small business.

A **Debate-Persuade-Inform** activity is included in each lesson. It usually explores an issue that is of political or economic significance to students' financial futures. This is an area where you can differentiate since some of the topics are quite sophisticated, and some are not as sophisticated. Also, students can present their opinions or findings in some format other than an essay or a debate so for this we recommend some curated

**digital tools and resources.** I'm trying to squeeze as much learning into the lessons as possible and with the **Debate-Persuade-Inform** activity I tried to hit two targets: one is to have students **learn about a particular important issue**, the other was to improve their college readiness by picking up some digital skills for **creatively presenting** on a topic. For example, for one lesson, students learn about identity theft and use an interactive poster site to create a poster showing how best to protect yourself from identity theft. Another lesson has students using a podcast site to create a podcast discussing Wall Street reform. Note that **The Debate-Persuade-Inform** activities are optional. But even if you don't require students to complete the activity, it's a good idea to at least have them have them **read the materials in their student text anyway**, just to familiarize themselves a bit with the issues because they are of significance in their lives. They will hear about these issues in the future and just knowing even a little bit about them helps develop a schema and gets the matter on their mental radar. That will help them pick up on these topics more easily as they get older and get into college.

Let's move to **Next Lesson's Ponder and Predict**. This is an introduction of some problem or topic related to the next lesson, just to sort of get them thinking about and predicting what's upcoming. How would the information in this theme logically progress?

**Assign** tells you what students should read in their workbook to prepare for the next lesson. There's also a **blog question**. Again, this is optional, but it's a kind of fun way to prompt students to share their experiences with money or thoughts about their financial future. For example, they ever have a bad experience lending money to a friend? or, When they retire what's their dream retirement location? Do they want to be on a beachy tropical island? Would they like to live in mountains? The blog is intended to get them engaged with the course topics.

At the end of each unit are the **Lesson Resources**. So for lessons 1 thru 6, the sources will be at the back of Unit 1.

Finally each chapter/lesson includes an **assessment**. Just a warning - the student work book contains the answers to these assessments and all Activities in the back of the book. If you don't want students to have access to the answers you'll need to have them tear them out. The assessments are not long -- so you can complete them in class and the answer sheets helps, I think, move the process.

That wraps up our introduction to "The 21st Century Student's Guide to Financial Literacy - Getting Personal". Our next podcast will be an introduction to Lesson 1: **Getting Personal. You and Your Money**. Thanks for listening!

[www.financialliteracylessons.com](http://www.financialliteracylessons.com)