

Grades 4-5

Lesson 2



CHECK IT OUT!

A look at checks and how to keep a register

Rationale: This lesson is intended for elementary students in fourth through fifth grades during a forty minute time period. The lesson teaches students the parts of a check, how to write a check, and how to manage a check register. The activities rely on a variety of interactive and visual formats designed to be interesting and fun.

Lesson Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Write practice checks.
- Complete a practice check register and describe its importance.
- Distinguish between deposits/credits and payments/debits.

Materials:

- Plain envelope
- Resource Files: Play Money, DAMPER cards, Blank Check (1/student), DAMPER Check (1/student), Sample check register (1/student), Blank Check Register (1/student)
- Check Register Worksheet (1/student)

**Materials not attached to this file may be found in a separate resource file.*

Setting the Stage:

Background Builder #1: Show students an envelope stuffed with play money. Elicit from students the dangers of sending large sums of cash (bills and coins) through the mail. Make sure that they understand that it could be stolen, expensive to mail if heavy, and impossible to reclaim if it gets lost. Ask students if they have ever received money in a card via the USPS. Ask if anyone has ever received a check?

State the Objective: tell the students what they will be able to do upon conclusion of the lesson.

“At the end of this lesson, you will be able to write a check and keep track of activity (deposits and debits) in a checking account.”

The Lesson Procedure:

People can use a bank account to pay for goods and services. For example: paying phone bills, buying a gift, etc.

Paying by check is a safe way to pay for things through mail because you give permission to only one company or one person to receive a specific amount of money. Give six volunteers the six pieces of paper with the scrambled letters D-A-M-P-E-R and have them build one word using all of the letters to display in front of the class.

Explain how the word DAMPER is useful while displaying an overhead sample of a check and labeling the following parts:

- **D** Date – The date the check is issued
- **A** Numerical Amount – This is the amount of money to be paid to Payee
- **M** Maker - This is the person responsible for the amount shown above. A signature is used to approve the money written in the Amount Box.
- **P** Payee – This is the person getting the money written in the Amount Box.
- **E** Endorsement – This is a signature of the person cashing or getting the amount in the Amount Box.
- **R** Routing Number – Identifies the bank to which the check belongs.

Checks come in many styles and colors, but you must pay to buy them since they are personalized. At Commerce Bank a customer's first order of checks is FREE

Now it is time to have the students practice writing a check. Distribute a copy of a sample check and a blank check to each student. Instruct students how to fill out each part of a check and the importance of being exact when writing a check.

Ideas for writing a sample check:

1. Pay to the order of a local gym or swimming pool for \$250, regarding yearly membership.
2. Pay to the order of a local retailer for \$65 regarding a new pair of sneakers.
3. Pay to the order of a local cable company or satellite provider for \$75 regarding monthly service.
4. Pay to the order of an Internet provider for \$25 regarding monthly service.
5. Pay to the order of a book club for \$15 regarding books purchased.

As students complete the blank check worksheet, circulate throughout the class, complimenting students who are completing the work successfully, answering questions, and offering help to anyone who may require it.

Things can become disorganized if you do not keep track of your money and your checks. When you open a checking account, you receive a check register. This is the place to record every check you write, every ATM withdrawal you make, and every deposit that you make. You will always know if you have enough money to pay for the checks you have written, so that you don't overdraw your account and get into serious financial trouble. When you write a check, you must subtract the amount you spent from your balance. A deposit means you can add the amount to your balance. Careful arithmetic is very important!

Distribute blank check registers. Proceed to discuss the aspects of an entry in a check register: the check number, the date it was written, the description of the check or deposit, the amount of the check or the deposit, and the balance forward. Ask students to point to each part as it is described.

Distribute the worksheet, "A Very Special Gift". Allow students to work in pairs to complete this activity using a calculator. You may want to check with all students after the first entry is made on the check register.

Closing the Lesson:

Review with students why people use checks to pay bills (i.e. safety, convenience) and the importance of keeping accurate records in the check register. Review the difference between a deposit/credit and a payment/debit. See the suggestion page for "Ways to End and Review Lessons", for additional ideas.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Principles and Standards for School Mathematics, 2000.

Number and Operations – (Students will) Understand meanings of operations and how they relate to one another.

Number and Operations – (Students will) Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.

Communication – (Students will) Organize and consolidate their mathematical thinking through communication.

Communication – (Students will) Use the language of mathematics to express mathematical ideas precisely.

Connections – (Students will) Recognize and use connections among mathematical ideas.

Representation – (Students will) Create and use representations to organize, record, and communicate mathematical ideas.

Ways to End and Review Lessons

Beach Ball Toss: Write end of lesson review questions on a beach ball. When it's tossed the individual who catches it must read and answer the question written under their right thumb.

Sample Questions:

- Who is the maker of a check?
- Who endorses the check?
- Why is a routing number important?
- Do you subtract or add when you've written a check?

Interview: In pairs of two, students interview one another with regard to lesson content. When both pupils have had ample time to interview, they must summarize the partner's feedback in either written report or oral format.

Sample Questions:

- How would a checking account be useful for you?
- Why is it important to keep a check register?
- Would you expect to make more deposits or debits?
- Student generated questions should also be encouraged in place of or in addition to the ones listed above.*

Quiz the Teacher: Students have the opportunity to flip roles and ask the teacher the questions typically asked of them. Questions need to be generated by each student.

Storyboard: Have students write and illustrate a storyboard. A piece of paper is folded into 6 or 8 squares, which are filled with a picture and caption for each square. The story should be an example of how checking could be useful in each student's life.

Creative Writing: Develop any of the following items that demonstrate knowledge of lesson content: Advertisement/Brochure/Riddles. Focus on any new piece of information learned. This will differ from one student to another.

Directions: Read the following story about a brother and sister saving for a very special gift. Record the deposits, debits, and balance brought forward on your check register. You may use a calculator to check for accuracy. Be sure to check all work.

A Very Special Gift

Shakira and Josiah knew their grandparents would be celebrating 50 years of marriage very soon. A party was being planned to celebrate the event. As brother and sister, they decided to join in saving over the course of one month so they would be able to buy a wonderful gift for their grandparents in honor of the event. To earn money, Shakira decided to baby-sit, while Josiah agreed to mow lawns. As a first step, the two opened a bank account so they would have a safe place to store the money they expected to earn. When the account was opened, they learned how to keep a checkbook register so they could keep track of deposits and withdrawals while watching their money grow.

Shakira and Josiah opened the account with a \$25 deposit on July 1st. On July 6th, Shakira earned \$30 babysitting for the neighbors' young children. On July 7th, Josiah wrote check #101 for \$10 to buy gas for the lawnmower. Josiah mowed two lawns on July 14th for which he received \$40. Shakira wrote check #102 for \$7.50 on July 21st to pay for transportation to and from a babysitting job. She earned \$25 for that babysitting assignment completed on the day the check was written. Josiah wrote the next check on July 27th for \$14.75 to gas up the lawnmower for the next day's jobs. He was able to earn \$60 on July 28th mowing three lawns. How much was in the account on July 31st to be spent on the anniversary gift?