

Module 1: Foundations of Personal Finance & Budgeting

SUGGESTED PACING: 3–5 Class Periods (135–225 mins)	CORE STANDARDS: Scarcity, Opportunity Cost & Budgeting
PROGRAM TARGET: High School Personal Finance	COMPANION WORKTEXT: Module 1 Student Companion

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How does creating a structured monthly budget provide financial freedom and empowerment rather than restriction?

Key Learning Objectives:

- Define core budget components: Net Income, Fixed Expenses, Variable Expenses, and Savings Goals.
- Differentiate between mandatory needs and flexible wants to evaluate financial trade-offs.
- Apply the 80/10/10 budgeting guideline (80% needs/wants, 10% savings, 10% debt/goals) to real-world scenarios.

TEACHING ROUTINES: 4-STEP POINT-OF-USE INSTRUCTION

1. CONNECT (Start Up Routine)

Entry Diagnostic & Money Mentor: Lead a 3-question entry quiz evaluating personal spending habits (daily beverages, entertainment, long-term savings speed). Ask students to identify a trusted 'Money Mentor' in their family or community to observe real-world budget discipline.

3. ACTIVE CLASSROOM (Simulation)

30-Unit Budget Allocation Game: Distribute 30 income tokens across 8 budget categories (Housing=10, Transport=5, Health=2 as fixed baselines). Introduce a mid-game curveball (job shift reducing income to 25 units); students justify required budget trade-offs.

2. INVESTIGATE (Guided Reading)

Family Budget Breakdown: Examine the Average American Family Budget graphic (Housing 33%, Transportation 17%, Food 13%). Guide students in distinguishing fixed obligations (rent, auto insurance) from variable choices (groceries, streaming services).

4. DEMONSTRATE & SYNTHESIZE

Student Companion Activities 1–3: Students complete Activity 1 (Needs vs. Wants Classification), Activity 2 (1-Week Spending Log & Budget Adjustment), and Activity 3 (6-Month Goal Savings Plan for Derek or Mariana scenarios).

POINT-OF-USE TEACHER SUPPORT & DIFFERENTIATION

Learner Category	Instructional Strategy & Pedagogical Guidance
Extra Support	Model the basic cash flow equation: $\text{Income} - \text{Expenses} = \text{Net Cash Flow}$. Use pre-filled T-charts to classify household items (car loan = fixed/need; gaming subscription = variable/want).
On-Level / Extension	Analyze Budget Boosters strategies (cash-only days, 24-hour rule for non-essential purchases). Challenge students to alter assumptions in Activity 3 using spreadsheet formulas (e.g. 8% vs 4% savings return).
Multilingual Learners	Provide cognate support for key financial terms (presupuesto / budget, gastos / expenses). Utilize sentence frames: 'I chose to reduce _____ because it is a variable want.'
Common Misconception	'Having a budget means scrimping and never having fun.' Reframe: A budget is a plan that guarantees guilt-free spending on wants by allocating funds after needs and savings are met.

STUDENT COMPANION WORKBOOK ACTIVITIES (MODULE 1)

Activity 1: Needs vs. Wants Audit	Activity 2: 1-Week Spending Log	Activity 3: 6-Month Savings Plan
Students categorize 15 real-world spending scenarios into mandatory needs vs. flexible wants, establishing trade-off priorities.	Students track daily personal expenditures, compute total variable outflow, and construct a revised personal weekly budget.	Students evaluate case studies (Derek or Mariana) to calculate emergency fund milestones and set up automated savings routines.

TEACHER REFLECTION & CLASSROOM NOTES