

Behavioral Interventions and Strategies Series:

Economic Simulation



The Economic Simulation System uses pretend money to create a mini-economy in the classroom. Good behavior is rewarded by getting “paid” and the money students earn can be used to purchase a variety of items such as small toys, school supplies, and privileges. An Economic Simulation system is useful for reducing frequent, minor misbehavior such as off-task behavior, calling out, teasing, and leaving assigned seats.

Option 1:

The simplest form of this system involves a response cost component with each student receiving a specific amount of money in the bank at the beginning of the day/week. During the week, a behavior recording chart is used to record inappropriate behaviors for each student. Each incidence of misbehavior costs the student 1 dollar. At the end of the week, students are “paid” from the bank. For example, students with no recorded behavior infractions receive 10 dollars, students with one infraction receive 9 dollars, and so on. Students can use their money on items in your student store such as pencils, stickers, and certificates for privileges and rewards (computer time, homework pass, eat lunch with the teacher, etc.). Give bonuses to students who continuously follow rules or show marked improvement in their behavior.

Option 2:

A more complex system for Economic Simulation includes extra payment for completion of academic work or demonstrating responsible behavior. Students can also earn extra money for engaging in specific behaviors chosen by the teacher. To incorporate these components into the Economic Simulation system, positive behaviors must be recorded as well. Continue to subtract 1 dollar for inappropriate behaviors.

When beginning this system, students may require daily payouts until they get used to the system. Once students understand the system, payday can be reduced to being weekly.

Keep in Mind

- Consider the following additions to the system
 - Establish savings accounts for students to save money for bigger rewards
 - Establish checking accounts for students to use
 - Charge students rent for desks or supplies
 - Pay students extra for special projects
 - Establish charitable foundations students can contribute money to
 - Assess taxes on the money students are paid
 - Give each student a job they are paid to complete

Materials

- Money
- System for tracking behavior and students accounts
- Student store and rewards/reinforcers

References:

Sprick, R. (2009). *CHAMPS: A Proactive Approach to Classroom Management* (2nd ed., pp. 131-133). Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.