

PARENT READING GUIDE

# Meet the Money Monsters

 Ages 4+



Consumer Financial  
Protection Bureau



# Welcome




The Money Monsters are a group of creatures who are new to our universe. That means they need to learn about many important things like school, friendship, and financial literacy.

Financial literacy is when you have the knowledge and skills to make money choices that are right for you. The Money Monsters stories introduce children to ideas, habits, and activities that they'll need as they grow up and start to manage their own money. You can find the Money Monster story books at [consumerfinance.gov/money-monsters-stories](https://consumerfinance.gov/money-monsters-stories).



# Introduction

This guide will help you teach your child money management skills while reading the Money Monsters stories. It will do this by:

-  Helping you explain the key ideas covered in the story, and then providing you with signs your child understands the key ideas and can use them in daily life.
-  Providing questions to talk about with your child.
-  Suggesting activities that help your child put ideas and lessons into action.

# Money Monsters stories



**Money Monsters Learn to Save** – Money Monsters practice saving money to buy something special. (See page 5.)



**Money Monsters Learn About Careers** – Money Monsters explore careers they may want to have when they grow up. (See page 9.)



**Money Monsters Learn to Protect Their Things** – Money Monsters find out why it's important to keep their money and valuables safe. (See page 15.)



**Money Monsters Learn What Things Really Cost** – Money Monsters compare the amount of work and money different pets need. (See page 19.)



**Money Monsters Learn to Become Good Borrowers** – Money Monsters discover how to be responsible with other people's things. (See page 23.)



**Money Monsters Learn About Giving** – Money Monsters explore the difference between giving, donating, and sharing. (See page 29.)



**Money Monsters Start Their Own Business** – In this chapter book, the Money Monsters discover that being an entrepreneur can be fun, but it isn't always easy. (See page 33.)

## Before you read

Read the story first yourself. Knowing the story will help you know what comes next. It is important to ask your child questions about the story as you read. Ask what might happen next in the story.

- Choose a quiet time for stories and make it part of your daily routine.
- Find a cozy, quiet place to read.
- Make sure your child can see the pictures.
- Talk about the pictures and characters in the story.
- Read with expression in your voice. Give each character in the story his or her own voice.
- Keep the story time short enough to leave them wanting more.
- Look for ways during the day to bring up the messages in the story.
- Continue to read aloud together even if your child can read alone.

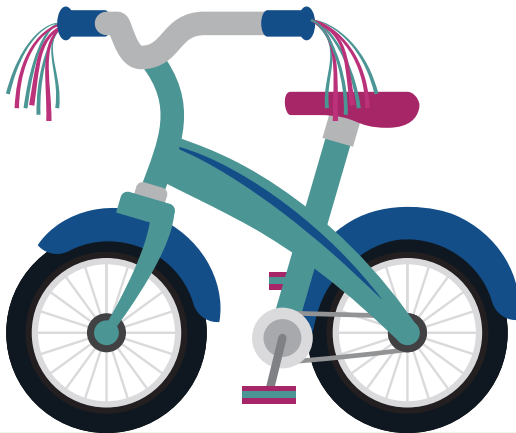
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# Money Monsters Learn to Save

## The story

Ages 5+

Foozil and Gibbins are Money Monsters. They want to buy bicycles, so they earn and save money to reach their goal. Foozil does odd jobs for her neighbors to earn money. Gibbins spends his money. Together they figure out how they can both get what they want.



# ★ Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn to Save*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Saving

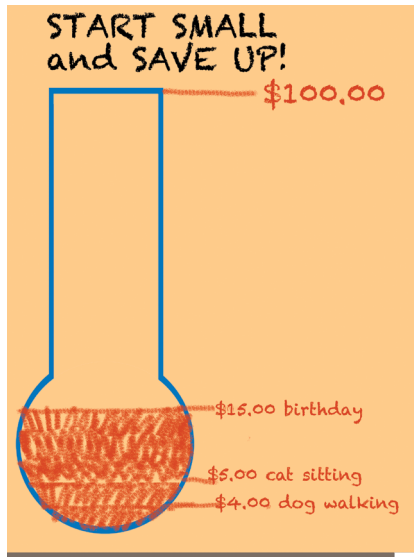
Some things cost more money than we have at one time. Saving means putting some money aside until we have enough to buy what we want.

**How kids show it:** They keep money in a safe place and keep track of the amount saved for future spending. Children ages 7+ can explain why money saved in a bank or credit union still belongs to them.

## 2. Setting goals

A goal is something you want to do or to have. When you set a goal, you make a plan to reach it by a certain time. You then follow the plan until you succeed. Reaching a goal feels good. Celebrate your success and the successes of others.

**How kids show it:** They can follow a multi-step plan to reach a goal (with a little help and encouragement).





### 3. Solving problems

When problems come up, we try to deal with them. Solving problems means finding what works best for us and taking action to make things better.

**How kids show it:** They can describe problems and come up with a few ideas to make things better.

## Something to talk about

The first time you read the story, just enjoy this time with your child. For future readings, here are some things to talk about. You don't have to cover everything each time you read the story. Consider coming back to the story and asking questions to help your child learn about saving money.

As you read the story with your child, ask your child:

- What did Foozil and Gibbins want to buy?
- How did Foozil earn money? What did Gibbins do to earn money?
- How long do you think it took them to save enough money to buy their bikes?
- Has our family saved money for something special?
- What is one thing we could save for as a family?  
How hard or easy would it be for us to save for that goal?

# Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn to Save*.

## **Sing a song about saving**

**Ages 4+**

This activity will help your child learn about saving money. First, sing the lyrics below to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.” Then, sing the song together.

Save, save, save money / At home or in a bank / When you meet your future goals / It’s saving you should thank!

## **Spending and saving choices**

**Ages 6+**

Starting at a young age, children can learn to stop and think so they can choose what’s best for them before they spend money. Ask your child to think of places they like to go (for instance, the park, the movies, the library, the toy store). What do they like to do that costs money? What do they like to do that is free?

## **Start small and save up**

**Ages 8+**

This activity will help your child set a savings goal. Foozil and Gibbins wanted to save money for new bikes. Talk to your child about what they would like to save money to buy. To help remind them of their goal, your child can draw a picture of it, cut out a picture from a magazine, or print a picture from a website. Ask your child to draw the shape of a piggy bank. Be sure they put the total amount they need to save at the top of the picture. Every time they save money for their goal, they can color in part of the piggy bank until they color it all in and meet their goal.

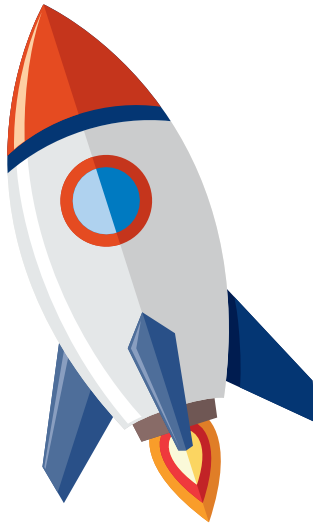
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# Money Monsters Learn About Careers

## The story

Ages 5+

Foozil and Gibbins are Money Monsters. They make lists of all the things they are good at and things they like to do. Then, they go to the library to find out what kinds of careers are good matches for them.



# ★ Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn About Careers*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Earning

People use their time and skills to get money. Paper money and coins have different values.

**How kids show it:** They can identify the different jobs people do to earn money. They can have a safe place to keep money and keep track of how much they have.



## 2. Setting goals

A goal is something you want to do or to have. When you set a goal, you make a plan to reach it by a certain time and follow the plan until you succeed. Reaching a goal feels good. Celebrate your success and the successes of others.

**How kids show it:** They can follow a multi-step plan to reach a goal (with a little help and encouragement).



### 3. Staying true to yourself

Sometimes we might feel left out if we don't have what other people have. Knowing what's important to you and not comparing yourself to others can help you feel good about your decisions.

**How kids show it:** They can name one special thing they like about themselves and one thing that makes each family member special too. (Ages 7+) They can discuss why it's okay that different people use their money for different things.

## Something to talk about

The first time you read the story, just enjoy this time with your child. For future readings, here are some things to talk about. You don't have to cover everything each time you read the story. Consider coming back to the story and asking questions to help your child learn about careers.

As you read the story with your child, ask your child:

- What careers did Foozil think she would be good at? Why?
- What careers did Gibbins think he would enjoy? Why?
- Foozil and Gibbins talked about starting a business together. What kind of business did they talk about?
- In the end, which career did Foozil and Gibbins think they could do together?

# Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn About Careers*.

## **Picture your career**

**Ages 4+**

Thinking about the future is an important part of learning how to manage money. This activity can help children think about what career they might like when they grow up. Ask your child to draw a picture of themselves in their future career. Then, ask why they think they may like that career.

## **Career treasure hunt**

**Ages 6+**

This activity will help your child see all of the different careers the people in their community have. First, ask your child to think of careers that people can have. Make a list with your child. Then, talk with family members about their careers and explore your community. Over the next week, watch for people who are working, like a bus driver or a police officer. Every time you find someone with the career on your list, cross it off. When you have crossed off all of the careers, celebrate!



## Career interview

Ages 8+

This activity will help your child learn about the work you or another family member does and recognize career success. Have your child pretend to be a reporter. As a reporter, have your child learn more about what you or another family member does at their job. This includes work done for pay and work that people do to take care of the family.

Help your child think of questions for the interview. They might ask:

- What is the name of your job?
- What do you do during your work day?
- What is the best thing about your job?
- What is one thing you would like to change about your job?

Try to have a family get-together where your child reports to the family about the job and recognizes your or your family member's success!



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# Money Monsters Learn to Protect Their Things

## The story

Ages 5+

Foozil keeps her money in her pocket, and it falls out. She and her friends search for it. At school, they learn ways to keep their money, and themselves, safe.



# ★ Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn to Protect Their Things*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Know what's important

Knowing what's important to you can help you figure out how to protect it from risks. A risk is something that exposes us to danger, harm, or loss.

**How kids show it:** They tell you about the people, pets, and things in their life that are important to them.

## 2. Keep money safe

You can choose to save your money in many places. At home, you may save your money in a piggy bank. Another safe option is to save your money in a bank or credit union.

**How kids show it:** They keep money in a safe place and keep track of the amount saved for future spending. (Ages 7+) They can explain why money is safe in a bank or credit union.



### 3. Making choices

People make different choices about how to spend money. Taking the time to ask questions, learn about different choices, and compare what's good and bad about each one helps you make the best decision for you.

**How kids show it:** They can look at a few choices and pick the one that is best for them.

## Something to talk about

The first time you read the story, just enjoy reading with your child. For future readings, consider talking about the following things. You don't have to cover everything each time you read the story. Consider coming back to the story and asking questions to help your child learn about protecting their things.

As you read the story with your child, ask your child:

- How did Foozil lose her money?
- What could Foozil do in the future to keep her money safe?
- What are some other things that Foozil and her friends can do to keep themselves safe?
- What is something that's important to you that you would like to keep safe?

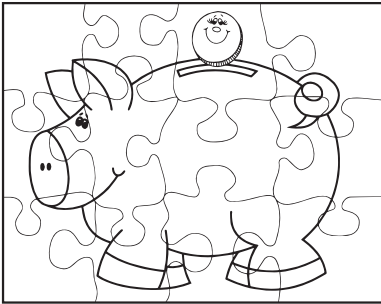


# Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn to Protect Their Things*.

## Piggy bank puzzle

Ages 4+



Print out the Piggy Bank Puzzle activity page below and cut out the puzzle along the lines. Give your child half of the puzzle pieces, and work together to put the pieces in place. Ask your child to name what is in

the picture (it is a piggy bank). Ask what the piggy bank is for (it's a place to put your money). Ask your child how a piggy bank can help you protect your money (it keeps you from losing it). Ask your child to think about other ways they can protect their money.

[Download Piggy Bank Puzzle](#)

## Draw what's important to you

Ages 6+

Knowing what's important to them can help your child figure out how to protect it. Give your child a piece of paper and something to draw with and ask them to draw a picture of something that's important to them. When they're finished, ask them to describe what they drew and why it's important to them. Then ask them what they could do to protect it.

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# Money Monsters Learn What Things Really Cost

## The story

Ages 5+

Gibbins's friends help him think about which pet to choose by reminding him that needs and wants are different and that he has to think about the time and money needed to take care of a pet.



# Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn What Things Really Cost*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Needs and wants

There are things in life that we need and things that we want. Our needs include things we have to have to survive, like food, clothing, and shelter. Our wants may include things we enjoy but can live without, like a new toy, a video game, or a candy bar. Understanding the differences between needs and wants helps you decide what's important to spend money on.

**How kids show it:** They can describe the difference between a need and a want and give examples of both.

## 2. Prioritizing

Sometimes we need to make choices about what we want or do. These choices can change from day to day. Prioritizing is arranging things in order of their importance to us.

**How kids show it:** They can prioritize choices when they want two or more things at the same time.

## 3. Making choices

People make different choices about how to spend money. Taking the time to ask questions, learn about different choices, and compare what's good and bad about each one helps you make the best decision for you.

**How kids show it:** They can look at a few choices and pick the one that is best for them.

## Something to talk about

The first time you read the story, just enjoy reading with your child. For future readings, consider talking about the following things. You don't have to cover everything each time you read the story. Consider coming back to the story and asking questions to help your child learn about what things really cost.

As you read the story with your child, ask your child:

- Did Gibbins need or want a tiger?
- How did Gibbins decide which pet to adopt?
- How can Gibbins's story help you when you need to make choices? What can you think about next time you want to buy something?

## Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn What Things Really Cost*.

### Create a needs and wants chart

**Ages 4+**

Creating a list of needs and a list of wants as a family is a good way to talk about what's important to have and what's nice to

have. You can write words on a piece of paper, draw pictures, or cut pictures out of magazines or newspapers. Work together to sort the list or pictures into needs and wants. Talk about each picture as you sort them. What makes it a need or a want?

You and your child can each create your own list of needs and wants using the pictures. Sort the pictures, and then share your lists. What is different between your list and your child's list? Do you have any of the same things? If so, what things?

### **Friend-to-friend swap meet**

**Ages 6+**

This activity will give your child practice in making decisions.

Get together with some of your child's friends and trade or swap your unwanted stuff for something else. Here is how to do it:

Have a kids' meeting and decide where and when to have the swap meet. Decide how many toys or other items each child can bring to trade or swap. Decide how to do the trading. The children could draw numbers to see who goes first. Decide how many trades to make at each turn. Talk about what other rules you may need.

If you choose to use this activity, also be sure to talk about it with the parents or guardians of all the children who will participate. A decision-making method the children might learn is looking at all possible choices before making a trade. A problem-solving concept learned might be that waiting to choose may mean the item they want is not available because someone else picked it first.



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# Money Monsters Learn to Become Good Borrowers

## The story

Ages 5+

Money Monster Foop borrows a bike from his friend Gibbins and isn't as careful with it as he should be. Foop learns that when you borrow something, it is important to be trustworthy and responsible.



# Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn to Become Good Borrowers*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Sharing and borrowing

There are two kinds of sharing: Something shared that does not have to be returned or paid for is a gift. Something borrowed or loaned must be returned.

**How kids show it:** They can explain the difference between lending and giving something away.

## 2. Solving problems

When problems come up, we try to deal with them. Solving problems means finding what works best for us and taking action to make things better.

**How kids show it:** They can describe problems and come up with ideas to make things better.

## 3. Follow-through

Sticking with a plan to reach a goal can be hard. It takes effort, skill, and sometimes help from others.

**How kids show it:** They can identify who they can turn to for help reaching a goal, or what tools or tricks might help them stick with a plan.

# Something to talk about

The first time you read the story, just enjoy reading with your child. For future readings, consider talking about the following things. You don't have to cover everything each time you read the story. Consider coming back to the story and asking questions to help your child learn about becoming good borrowers.

As you read the story with your child, ask your child:

- Do you think it was a good idea for Gibbins to lend his bike to Foop? Why or why not?
- What was one way Foop showed he was not a responsible borrower?
- What was one way Foop showed he was a responsible borrower?
- If you were Gibbins, would you lend your bike to Foop again in the future? Why or why not?





# Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn to Become Good Borrowers*.

## Borrowing or buying?

Ages 5+

Tell your child that you're going to play a game where you'll ask them if someone should borrow or buy something. Explain that they'll stand if they think the person should buy something and sit if they think the person should borrow something. Read each question from the chart below. As you read the question, remind your child when to stand and when to sit. After your child has decided whether to stand or sit, share the answer from the list with them.



Questions	Answers
1. You go to the library every week to check out books. Do you borrow or buy the books?	Borrow (stand)
2. You and your mom want to go fishing on a lake. Your neighbor has a boat. Does your mom borrow or buy the neighbor's boat?	Borrow (stand)
3. It's your cousin's birthday. Your family wants to get a birthday cake from the grocery store for her. Does your family borrow or buy the birthday cake?	Buy (sit)
4. Your dad says your shoes are getting small and you need to go to the store for new ones. Does your dad borrow or buy new shoes for you?	Buy (sit)
5. Your friend comes over to play and brings along her new crayons. The two of you decide to use her crayons to color. Do you borrow or buy her crayons?	Borrow (stand)
6. Your family's TV stopped working and needs to be replaced. Does your family borrow or buy a TV?	Borrow or buy (sit or stand)

## Planning to be a responsible borrower

Ages 6+

Tell your child that you're going to help them write a letter to someone asking to borrow something. Ask them to think of an item, like a toy or book, they'd like to borrow from a friend or family member. Tell them to write a note to the friend or family member describing what they want to borrow and how they will keep it safe and return it on time. For younger children, you can ask them to draw the item and then tell you what they would do to keep it safe.



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# Money Monsters Learn About Giving

## The story

Ages 5+

Money Monster Gibbins learns about giving when his friend Foozil helps him think about how he can donate his time and belongings to other people.



# Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn About Giving*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Giving

When we have more than we need, it's important for us to try to help others. For example, someone might support an animal shelter. Or someone might support an organization that finds cures for diseases. Giving something to help a person or organization is also called donating.

**How kids show it:** They can make a list of places where they might want to give money.

## 2. Volunteering

When we donate our time, we're volunteering. Many people volunteer by doing something they're good at. A person who can fix houses may volunteer with an organization that builds homes for people who need them.

**How kids show it:** They can think about things they're good at and make a list of how they can use those things to help other people.



### 3. Sharing and giving

It's important to know that donating isn't always the same as sharing something. When you donate something, you give it away and you don't get it back.

When you share something like a toy or a book with someone, you give it to the person, but you get it back.

**How kids show it:** They can give an example of something they have shared and something they have given away.



## Something to talk about

The first time you read the story, just enjoy reading with your child. For future readings, consider talking about the following things. You don't have to cover everything each time you read the story. Consider coming back to the story and asking questions to help your child learn about giving.

As you read the story with your child, ask your child:

- What does Foozil tell Gibbins he can do with his extra toys?
- How did Gibbins use his time to help others?
- Ask your child to remember when they gave something to someone else. How did it make them feel?

# Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Learn About Giving*.

## **Practicing giving**

**Ages 4+**

Tell your child that they're going to practice giving something to another person. Ask them to draw a picture for a friend or family member. Ask them to imagine how the friend and family member will feel when they receive the drawing. Ask your child to think about how they will feel when they give the drawing to the friend or family member.

## **Making a plan for giving and volunteering**

**Ages 7+**

Work with your child to make a list of ways they can give and places they can give or volunteer using pages 7 and 8 of the *Money Monsters Learn About Giving* story.

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# Money Monsters Start Their Own Business

## The story

Ages 9+

In this chapter book, the Money Monsters discover that being an entrepreneur can be fun, but it isn't always easy.



# Key ideas

Below are key ideas in *Money Monsters Start Their Own Business*. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use these ideas in their daily lives.

## 1. Follow-through

Sticking with a plan to reach a goal can be hard. It takes effort, skill, and sometimes help from others.

**How kids show it:** They can identify who they can turn to for help reaching a goal or what tools or tricks might help them stick with a plan.

## 2. Prioritizing

Sometimes we need to make choices about what we want or do. These choices can change from day to day. Prioritizing is arranging things in order of their importance to us.

**How kids show it:** They can prioritize choices when they want two or more things at the same time.

## 3. Setting goals

A goal is something you want to do or to have. When you set a goal, you make a plan to reach it by a certain time. You then follow the plan until you succeed. Reaching a goal feels good. Celebrate your success and the successes of others.

**How kids show it:** They can follow a multi-step plan to reach a goal (with a little help and encouragement).

# Something to talk about

The *Money Monsters Start Their Own Business* book has questions at the end of each chapter that you can discuss with your child. Consider checking in with your child as they're reading or listening to you read the book and asking them the questions listed after each chapter.

You also can use some of the situations in the book to start a conversation with your child about peer pressure, social media, reaching goals, or other topics you think are important. Here are some example questions:

- In chapter 1, Gibbins said Marco, Jaden, and Scott teased him about his clothes, so he thought about buying clothes that would help him fit in. If a friend told you that, what would you say to them?
- In chapter 5, Gibbins asked Foozil to check their YakGram social media account later so she could focus on washing dogs. What are some things people can do to use social media wisely?
- In chapter 10, Foozil made a thank-you card for E.G. Is there someone in your life you feel thankful for? What are some things you could do to thank them?
- Throughout the story, many people helped Foozil and Gibbins reach their goal of raising \$1,000 for the animal shelter. Who are some of the people who helped and how did they help? What do you think would have happened if Foozil and Gibbins didn't get any help? Why do you think it's important to get help when you're trying to reach a goal?



# Something to do

Use the activities below to help your child continue to learn about and practice the key ideas in *Money Monsters Start Their Own Business*.

## **Congratulating yourself**

**Ages 7+**

Explain to your child that setting goals also includes celebrating your successes and the successes of others. Ask your child to think about something that they did lately that made them proud. This might include finishing a project at school, learning a new skill like riding a bike or cooking a meal, or helping a friend or family member. Ask them what steps they took to accomplish their task and how they felt when they succeeded.

Give your child a piece of paper and ask them to fold it in half. Give them colored pencils, crayons, or markers and ask them to make a card to congratulate themselves for their accomplishments.

## **Developing business ideas**

**Ages 9+**

Work with your child to complete the mind map on pages 30-31 of the *Money Monsters Start Their Own Business* book to think about a product or business they could create.



# Meet the Money Monsters

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau created the Money Monsters story series to help children develop financial literacy skills. The stories focus on important money concepts like borrowing, earning, protecting, saving, and spending. The stories are part of a larger set of activities and resources available for elementary school students.

The Money Monster books are:

- ★ **Money Monsters Learn About Careers:** Money Monsters explore careers they may want to have when they grow up.
- ★ **Money Monsters Learn to Become Good Borrowers:** Money Monsters discover how to be responsible with other people's things.
- ★ **Money Monsters Learn to Protect Their Things:** Money Monsters find out why it's important to keep their money and valuables safe.
- ★ **Money Monsters Learn to Save:** Money Monsters practice saving money to buy something special.
- ★ **Money Monsters Learn What Things Really Cost:** Money Monsters compare the amount of work and money different pets need.
- ★ **Money Monsters Learn About Giving:** Money Monsters explore the difference between giving, donating, and sharing.

They're new to this universe and have a lot to learn about money. Read all about their money adventures at [www.consumerfinance.gov/money-monsters-stories](http://www.consumerfinance.gov/money-monsters-stories)



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Fall 2022