

# ESTIMATING HOW MUCH THINGS COST

LEVEL: **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
AGE GROUP: **STUDENTS AGES 8 AND 9**



## ACTIVITY SUMMARY

During this activity, students become familiar with the prices of consumer goods. They examine flyers from grocery stores and other retailers. They develop guessing games to become more familiar with prices of products that they or their parents use. They end by evaluating their knowledge and preparing a grocery list that stays within their food and budget limitations.

## FINANCIAL AND COOPERATIVE SKILLS

- Determining how much goods and services cost
- Spending sensibly
- Becoming part of a democracy
- Working on a team

 **AGE GROUP**  
Students ages 8 and 9

 **WHEN**  
April and May

 **TIME REQUIRED**  
10 hours and 30 minutes

**AREA OF LEARNING**  
Environment and consumerism

## COMPETENCIES

### DISCIPLINARY COMPETENCIES TAUGHT

| Disciplines | Competencies  | Learning progression   |
|-------------|---|--|
| Mathematics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem solving</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of decimal numbers using a calculator</li> </ul> |

### NON-DISCIPLINARY COMPETENCIES

- Exercising critical judgment
- Acquiring effective working habits

## PREPARATION

DURING THIS PHASE, STUDENTS BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE PRICES OF EVERYDAY CONSUMER PRODUCTS.

### TASK 1 COMPARE THE PRICES OF DIFFERENT ITEMS



**TIME REQUIRED**  
60 minutes



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
The Price Tag Game  
[On desjardins.com](https://www.desjardins.com)

#### TASK 1 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this phase, students will be able to determine the value of everyday items and compare their prices.

#### Instructions

1. Form teams, each with 2 students.
2. Hand out the worksheet for **The Price Tag Game** and explain it to each team.
3. Give the students time to carry out the task described on pages 1 and 2 of the exercise.
4. Go around the room, entering all the prices on the sheet in ascending order, so the students can compare them to the notes they made on their worksheets.
5. Ask the students to comment on the way prices are set for products.

### TASK 2 PREPARE A GUESSING GAME



**TIME REQUIRED**  
120 minutes



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
Store flyers  
Poster board, glue, scissors,  
pencils  
[On desjardins.com](https://www.desjardins.com)

#### TASK 2 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this phase, students will be aware of the real prices of certain products.

#### Instructions

1. Form 4 teams with students from the class.
2. Each student uses store flyers to choose 1 product. He or she then cuts out a picture of the product, glues it to the posterboard, and writes or glues the price on the back.

#### TEACHER'S NOTE

- Prepare the posterboard for each student in advance.
- Ideally, there should be different flyers for each team so students can't see the prices of items other teams choose.
- Our perceptions about price are sometimes influenced by special sales. For instance a child who has shopped with his or her parents for a patio table at the start of the summer may overestimate the cost of the item if the game is played several months later, when prices have been marked down. In addition, children's ideas about prices and the value of money may differ. Consequently they may find it hard to guess the prices of the products shown.

## TASK 2 PREPARE A GUESSING GAME (SUITE)

3. Gather up all the posterboard pieces.
4. Arrange the teams across from one another, with Team A opposite Team B, and Team C opposite Team D. Teams A and B start.
5. Give each team a piece of paper and a pencil.
6. Select 1 piece of posterboard from the lot and show the students the image of the product. Let them confer for a moment before they write down the estimated price of the item.
7. The team that comes closest to the actual price gets a point. The team that has the most points wins.
8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 with teams C and D.
9. Ask the students if it was easy to estimate product prices, and why.

## EXECUTION

### STUDENTS BECOME FAMILIAR WITH GROCERY PRICES AND MAKE SENSIBLE CONSUMER CHOICES.

## TASK 1 ESTIMATE GROCERY PRICES



**TIME REQUIRED**  
120 minutes



#### TEACHING MATERIAL

Grocery flyers  
Glue, scissors, pencils  
[On desjardins.com](https://www.desjardins.com)

#### TEACHER'S NOTES

- Ask the students to bring in several grocery store flyers. Plan to have 32 pieces of white poster board on which to glue the product images cut out of the flyers, and 32 pieces of yellow posterboard on which to write prices.
- While students are working in collaboration, introduce the concept of democracy: If they cannot agree on the price of an item, hold a vote to do so. Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion.
- Note that because some grocery products are sold by the kilo, you'll need to be aware of those situations. It would be interesting to write the unit prices for these products, along with their actual prices. This will let students compare prices and weights—for instance, between carrots and broccoli.

#### TASK 1 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this phase, students will be able to estimate the prices of certain grocery items.

#### Instructions

1. Form the same teams as in the previous task.
2. Tell students the object of the game: Each team must associate the products that are displayed to them with their prices.
3. Give posterboard playing cards to the students (8 per team).
4. Each team chooses 2 sets of 4 grocery products and glues each of them on a piece of white posterboard. On the back, the team glues or writes the prices of the products.
5. For each product, the students write the price on a piece of yellow posterboard.
6. The students mix up the prices and images within the product sets and then attach them using paperclips.
7. Collect all the product-price sets.
8. Have the teams face off: A vs. C, and B vs. D.

## TASK 1

### ESTIMATE GROCERY PRICES (SUITE)

9. Display a set to the first team. Suggestion: display the products and prices on the board.
10. The team should work together to match products and prices. Then reveal the prices by turning the product posterboards over.
11. Teams get points for correct matches. The team that gets the most points wins.
12. Ask the students whether this task was easier than the previous one, and why.

## TASK 2

### BE A RESPONSIBLE CONSUMER



**TIME REQUIRED**  
90 minutes



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
Making Smart Choices  
Overconsumption  
[On desjardins.com](https://desjardins.com)

#### TASK 2 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this phase, students will be able to compare similar products for the purpose of choosing the one that best meets their needs.

#### Instructions

1. Give each student a copy of **Making Smart Choices**.
2. Read the first scenario with them.
3. Give the students a few minutes to make their choices and justify their answers.
4. Have students break into groups to discuss their choices and justifications.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 for the second scenario.
6. After working through both scenarios, discuss good consumer habits with the students.
7. Show the students the **Overconsumption** video and discuss the needs and wants they experience when they go to the grocery store.

## EVALUATION

**STUDENTS MAKE A GROCERY LIST, STAYING WITHIN THEIR FOOD AND BUDGET LIMITATIONS.**

### TASK 1 EVALUATE A PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH



**TIME REQUIRED**  
4 hours



**TEACHING MATERIAL**  
Grocery flyers  
[The Grocery Store](#)  
[On desjardins.com](#)

#### TASK 1 OBJECTIVE

At the end of this task, students will have evaluated their ability to solve a complex problem.

#### Instructions

1. Give each student a copy of **The Grocery Store**.
2. Read and explain the task to the students.
3. Give the students time to work.
4. Once they are done and work is collected for correction, talk with the students about the difficulties they have encountered.

#### TEACHER'S NOTES

- Suggestion: Before beginning this activity, arrange an activity to examine units of weight and volume for certain foods sold at the grocery store. Ask students to bring fruits or vegetables from home so you can identify their approximate weight. Examples include weighing a pepper, bunch of grapes, head of broccoli, tomato, etc. Write the weights of the foods weighed on a piece of paper or the board. This will make it easier for the students to solve the problem. Explain to them how purchases can be made by the kilo, and how to indicate this on their worksheets. For example, if the flyer advertises grapes at \$6.59 /kg: 0.5 kg of grapes at \$6.59 per kilo = \$3.30. Use a calculator to do the math.
- Possible criteria for evaluating this exercise:
  - Students make realistic lists based on the food needs of an 8 to 9-year-old child for 3 days.
  - Students follow recommendations in Canada's Food Guide to develop their lists.
  - Students pay attention to budget limitations.