

Follow the Money

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Parents tell us that it is not always easy to engage their kids in conversations about money. Sometimes they just forget to explain a money decision while out on a shopping trip. Either they don't have time to explain, or they just don't want to engage their kids in a particular money decision because they feel it would be too hard.

There's an alternative and very effective way to engage your kids in money conversations, one that feels more neutral and less weighted with family baggage: reading books together. You can choose a comfortable time for reading, when things are quiet and your kids are paying attention. Reading together often leads to more in-depth discussion and exploration of money topics.



One of our favorite books for fun, engaging money conversation starters for young readers (age 4 through 8) is [Follow the Money](#) by Loreen Leedy. The book follows a day in the life of a quarter, starting from being stamped out at the U.S. Mint and making a full circle – being spent, lost, donated, and many other adventures – all the way back to the bank the quarter started out in after it was minted..

When To Do It

Bedtime reading, Saturday or Sunday quiet time

What To Do

[Follow the Money](#) offers lots of money starter topics for you and your kids. You can choose one subject as a jumping-off point or read the book from cover to cover. We recommend that you read it through once, and then revisit the book when you have a new need to explain a particular money topic, or if you encounter a real-life lesson to be learned that could be supported by revisiting the book.

Quick Synopsis

The book creatively uses money to indicate page numbers, and walks young readers through these money basics:

- Which presidents are on the coins and bills
- How much money is in different rolls of coins
- Understanding coupons and sales
- How much you get back in change when you use different currency to pay different prices (addition and subtraction)
- Different ways you can use money

You'll recognize a few of the Money Wisdom budget basics:

- Planning to save up enough for a toy
- Spending money on treats for yourself (OK as long as you have the money set aside)
- Donating some of your money to those in need

What You Will Need

The book [Follow the Money](#)
Time(s) to read all or parts

Talk About It

If you first read the book from start to finish, you can ask your kids to tell you what they learned. Have them share their favorite part of the book and why they liked it so much. You can also ask which was their least favorite part and why.