

Lunch Money

By Andrew Clements

About the Book

Greg loves money. When he notices his classmates' ready supply of change for lunchtime treats, he's sure it's the key to reaching his get-rich goal. But Principal Davenport disapproves of peddling toys at school. So Greg invents the Chunky Comic. Who could object to selling books? Greg is frustrated by competition from another comic book maker, his longtime rival, Maura. But when Mrs. Davenport bans comics altogether, the two form an unlikely alliance and make their case to the school committee. The experience teaches Greg a lot about Maura, his principal, and the challenges of running a school system. Most important, Greg discovers that making money is much more satisfying if at least some of it can be used to help others.

Prereading Activities

The following activities contained in this section address the following Common Core State Standards: (RL.4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (RL.4 – 6, 10) (RF.4 – 5.4, 5) (SL.4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (L.4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (W.4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (W.4 – 6, 10) (CCRA.R. 1 – 4, 6) (CCRA.W. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8)

1. Define the word *money*. Make a list of all the words you know that are used for the word *money*. Is money always in the form of paper and coins? What are some ways that you can purchase something without actually using money (i.e, barter, exchange, etc.)?
2. Look at the cover and title of *Lunch Money*. What do you think this book is going to be about and why? As a class, make a list of clues that led you to this decision.
3. What are some things that money can't buy? How important are those things to you? Is it more important for you to have money and the things it can buy? Brainstorm a list of what you can buy with money and what you can't. Prioritize your list.
4. On the front cover of the book there is a boy with a comic book on the face of the dollar. Research who is on the face of the different dollar bills we have in circulation and how they were chosen. If you could put the face of someone on a dollar bill, who would you choose and why?
5. What is an allowance? Are you required to do chores to get your allowance? Make a class chart of chores and allowance amounts. What types of things can you do if you want to earn extra money? Turn and talk with your neighbor and share ideas that might work at home or in your neighborhood and other possible places. Use this website to help kids brainstorm money-making ideas:
<http://content.moneyinstructor.com/656/ways-kids-make-money.html>
6. Research what your school or school district's policy is on selling things at school. Is it allowed? Why or why not? What types of things do you think should be allowed to be

sold at school? What happens to money that is raised at school? How could you influence what is sold at school?

7. What is your goal when you make money? Save, spend, donate, or other? If you had \$100, what would you do with it? What do you want as a career when you grow up? Is this a career where you could make a lot of money? Is making comic books a good career? Why or why not? Research famous entrepreneurs from your state, their products or services, and the process that individuals went through to become successful.
8. *Lunch Money* is the story of a boy who has ideas about running his own business. What kind of ideas do you have for a business? What would it take to make your business a success? How does your idea become real?

Discussion Questions

The following discussion questions contained in this section address the following Common Core State Standards: (RL.4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (RL. 4 – 6, 10) (RF.4 – 5.4, 5) (SL.4 – 6.4, 5, 6) (L.4 - 6.4, 5, 6) (W.4 – 6.4, 5, 6) (W.4 – 6, 10) (CCRA.R. 1 – 4, 6) (CCRA.W. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8) (4.OA.2-3) (5.OA.2) (5.NBT.5) (5.NF.6) (6.NS.2-3)

1. In Chapter 2, Greg makes an interesting discovery about school and quarters. What is it that he actually figured out? Why is this an exciting moment for Greg? Use examples from the story to support your answers. Using the same idea that Greg had, calculate how many quarters might be in your school (grades 4 – 6).
2. Mr. Z is described in the beginning pages of Chapter 7. Look at the way the author has used descriptions—time and place and math—to give us a complete picture of this teacher. What do we learn from this description about Mr. Z and why he likes numbers? Does his reaction to Maura giving Greg a bloody nose fit his description? Cite examples from the story to support your answers. Write a description about a teacher the way the author describes Mr. Z.
3. Are Greg and Maura good business partners? Why or why not? What qualities make a good partnership? Do Greg and Maura share those qualities? What did they have to learn about each other in order to work together? Are these the same kind of qualities you look for in a friend? Are Greg and Maura friends? How can you tell? Find examples in the story to support your answers.
4. Read the following passage about Greg’s ideas on money and success:

“Until his big blowup with Maura, and then his run-ins with Mr. Z and Mrs. Davenport, the question of money had been simple for Greg. In fact, it hadn’t even been a question. Money was money, and money was great. It was good to make it, good to have it, good to save it, and it was always good to want more and more and more of it. Money? Simple.”

Greg thinks that money is everything, but is it? How did Greg’s attitude change about money from the beginning of the story to the end? What is this change? Is it a good or a bad change? What do you think Greg learned? Can you find other passages in the story that show how Greg’s attitude is changing and why?

5. Chapter 16 is titled “Art and Money.” In this chapter we find that Greg feels one way about making comic books and money and Maura feels another. What is their conflict? How do they resolve it? Compare and contrast their points of view. Is one way better than the other? Which point of view do you agree with? Can you have one point of view without the other? Cite evidence from the story that supports each point of view and how Greg and Maura make them come together.
6. What is the difference between a comic book and a graphic novel? Is there a difference? Why does Mrs. Davenport think they are “bad toys”? Why would it be okay to ban selling comic books at school if they promote reading? Have students explore this explanation about graphic novels and comic books at this site:
http://archive.hbook.com/magazine/articles/2006/mar06_brenner.asp
7. Greg learns about banking and interest. It’s important to Greg that his money is safe and that he has access to it when he wants it. Is it safer for Greg to put his money in the bank or in a piggy bank? What would you do? How important is money to you? Check out the following resource on safe places for keeping money:
<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lid=455&type=student>
8. Greg and Maura had to figure out how to work together and how to make their production of comic books more efficient. In the first half of *Lunch Money*, Greg and Maura were working against each other. Later, they are working together. What caused this change? What happens when the two start working together? What role did Mr. Z play in getting them to work together? How important is math to all of this? Include examples from the story to support your conclusions. Check out the following resource on production and time management:
<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lid=539&type=student>
9. Andrew Clements peppers his writing with idioms. What are idioms? How do they help us to understand characters and situations? The following are some examples of idioms:
 - i. Greg Kenton had heaps of talent.
 - ii. School was like a giant piggy bank, loaded with quarters.
 - iii. Mr. Z’s face went pale as paper.Find more idioms to describe each character in the story. Write the page number and what it’s really trying to tell us about the character.
10. Andrew Clements writes many stories about school kids—their hopes, dreams, troubles, and talents. Make connections and compare and contrast the book *Lunch Money* with some of Clements’s other school stories: *The Landry News*, *The School Story*, *The Janitor’s Boy*, *A Week in the Woods*, *No Talking*, *Frindle*, *Lost and Found*, etc. How are the plots, main ideas, characters, and settings the same? How are they different? Why do you think Andrew Clements is so popular and appealing for readers?

Activities

The following activities contained in this section address the following Common Core State Standards: (RL.4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (RL.4 – 6.10) (RF.4 – 5.4, 5) (SL.4 – 6.4, 5, 6) (L. 4 – 6. 4, 5, 6) (W.4 – 6.4, 5, 6) (W.4 – 6.10) (CCRA.R. 1 – 4, 6) (CCRA.W. 1, 3, 4, 6, 8)

1. The story of *Lunch Money* is about comic book creation. Make your own comic book creation using the following resources. Use the instructions and advice Greg gave Maura to create your idea:
 - a. <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/books/comicbook/> This site has an excellent step-by-step explanation of how to make your own comic book.
 - b. Comic Creator: This website provides ready-made characters and backgrounds. Kids can choose their favorite pictures and make their own comic book.
<http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/comic/index.html>
 - c. Students can learn about the process of publishing a comic book on this website
<http://members.shaw.ca/creatingcomics/publishing.html>
2. You have been asked by Greg and Maura to help with a presentation for school board members about your comic books and selling at school. Create an infographic or PowerPoint presentation that shows your comic book-making process and your selling plan. Base your infographic or PowerPoint on the arguments made in the story and add any suggestions you might have. Present your infographic or PowerPoint presentation to the class. <http://piktochart.com/>
3. One of the conflicts in the story is between Greg and Maura and Mrs. Davenport. Mrs. Davenport is against selling anything at school, including Greg's comic books. Greg wants the school board to see his point of view, and Mrs. Davenport wants Greg and Maura to see hers. Choose one side of the conflict (Greg and Maura's or Mrs. Davenport's) and write a persuasive essay defending your side. Use quotes from the story to support your arguments.
4. How does one idea change Greg's future? How do ideas become real? Can ideas change lives? Research in the library and on the Internet ideas that became real and how they changed lives. Brainstorm as a class about people and ideas to help you get started.
5. The United States Mint site for kids is an interactive website that contains games, time lines, cartoons, and more, based on money. Have students go on the site and make a time line about the history of money and how it evolved. <http://www.usmint.gov/kids/>
6. Chunky Comics has become a huge success. Write a newspaper article about Greg and Maura several years in the future. Are they still working together? What other ideas have they tried? How have their dreams changed, or have they? What other ideas have been successful? What have they learned about themselves and having a business? Do you think they will still be doing this ten years in the future? Why or why not?

Lunch Money Word Bank: Tier 2 Vocabulary

(http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_A.pdf pg. 33)

amateur

initiative

Cro-Magnon

marauders

optical illusion

nautilus

irrational

contritely

derailed

agenda

tycoons

noble

economy

colleague

literacy

arbitration

This updated guide was written in 2014 by Sharon Haupt, District Librarian, San Luis Coastal Unified School District, San Luis Obispo, CA.

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