

Expect the Unexpected

- I. All About Me: Have students fill out their spending grids. Read to them the following prompts:
 - a. Fill out 3 boxes with hobbies that you spend money on. [examples: movies, books, paintball]
 - b. Fill out 3 boxes with items you don't want to live without. [examples: phone, Nintendo, bike]
 - c. Fill out 3 boxes with "categories" you spend money on. [examples: food, clothes, entertainment]
 - d. Fill out 3 boxes with future purchase goals. [examples: car, college, gaming system]
- II. Share Out: Ask for volunteers to share a couple of things that made it onto their grids. As ideas are shared, allow students to modify their grids if something someone else shares inspires them.
- III. Brainstorm: Have students spend 2-3 minutes brainstorming things that pop up that cost money. These can be teenager-specific or life events that might occur to adults. If there is a place to do so, write these ideas where everyone can see them. If not, share them aloud.
 - a. Examples:
 - Job loss
 - Car accident
 - Medical/dental emergencies
 - Floods, fires, or other natural disasters
 - Invitation to go on a trip
 - Breaks – furniture, windows, etc.
- IV. Crash and Burn: Read out the following prompts. Instruct students to follow the instructions they hear.
 - a. Flushhhhhhh! Oh, no! You dropped your cell phone in the toilet. It stops working, and your parents refuse to buy you a new one. Now you have to save up. Cross out one item on your list that you will give up in order to save for the new phone.
 - b. You lose your job! Cross off 4 boxes.
 - c. Crack! The baseball you threw breaks your neighbor's car window, and now you have to pay for it. Cross off one item on your list so that you can afford to pay.
 - d. A natural disaster hits your hometown, but the damage does not affect every household the same. If your last name begins with a vowel, your family home is in shambles. You must cross out 4 of your remaining boxes. If your last name starts with M, S, or W, the disaster destroyed a lot of your family's possessions. You must cross out 2 of your boxes.
 - e. The flu hits, and you didn't get your flu shot. To pay for your medical bills, you'll have to give something up. But some of you have insurance that will pay some of the costs. If your first name starts with A-M, cross out 2 of your boxes. If your first name starts with N-Z, cross out 1.
- V. Reflection: End the activity. Allow the room to settle, as some students may be pretty upset. It's possible that someone has lost everything on his/her grid. Now, ask for a couple of students to share how this activity made them feel.
- VI. Let's Get to the Point: Remind students that unexpected expenses pop up. They can come at any time without warning. Explain that it is important to have an "emergencies" or "unexpected expenses" category in their budget so that they are better equipped to deal with surprising financial situations.