 BY MICHELE WULFF

Hitting the books by surfing the Web: Two updated sites offer free econ resources

Michele Wulff is a former public school educator of 30 years and a 2007 recipient of the peer award "Excellence in Teaching Economics." As an economic education coordinator with the Kansas City Fed, she works to heighten financial literacy throughout the seven states of the Tenth District.

As kids settle into another school year, there are several ways parents can supplement lessons from the classroom at home.

The Federal Reserve offers free, online resources to reinforce economic and financial education concepts for children of all ages. You don't have to be an educator to help your own student learn, and you may even pick up a thing or two yourself. It's easier than ever—all you have to do is log on.

Back in my early teaching days, student research meant multiple library visits to read through stacks of books and periodicals. The preferred reference material of most students was the trusty set of encyclopedias.

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Today, thanks to the Internet, research is a snap for students. The amazing variety of websites and the ability to narrow searches to specific topics is truly an exciting improvement.

The Kansas City Fed offers two websites loaded with economic and personal finance information: FederalReserveEducation.org, a website dedicated exclusively to economic education, and KansasCityFed.org, our organization's website that offers data, research articles, educational resources, events and more for all ages. We've just updated both websites.

FederalReserveEducation.org has streamlined navigation and searches for quicker accessibility. Links include Classroom Resources, Public Resources, About the Fed, and News and Multimedia.

Classroom resources can be found by grade level or by topic, and contain lesson plans, activities, and publications. Educators can search for specific resources that correlate to their content standards. Resources range from articles to interactive games and accommodate many learning styles. Examples include children's literature lesson plans, online videos, and money and banking activities. I recommend these games to develop a child's economic and personal finance savvy: Escape from Barter Island (ages 7-10), Fedville (ages 8-12), and Peanuts and Crackerjacks (ages 14 and older).

Public resources include banking and consumer protection information, such as establishing credit and protecting against identity theft. Free Fed publications are also available on this link. In student resources, Building Wealth is a great personal finance tool for high school and college students as they learn to save, budget and invest on their own. Your teen will enjoy checking out Show Business: The Economics of Entertainment,

and, if you are a trivia buff, you'll appreciate the Fun Facts about Money Web page.

Brush up on the Fed's development by visiting About the Fed. This section includes information on the structure and functions of the Federal Reserve as the nation's central bank.

Current economic events are covered in the News and Multimedia section, which also houses an assortment of videos and games.

KansasCityFed.org is oriented to the region, covering resources tailored for our Federal Reserve District that includes Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. The education link is organized for each of its audiences: educators, consumers and bankers. You can also sign up for a free tour of the Money Museum in Kansas City, or contact us with your questions or comments.

The education link has material for teachers, such as lesson plans, role plays and discussion questions. An archive of *TEN*'s "Common Cents" columns is stored there by topic. These materials could easily be used by parents or bankers who interact with children through tours or classroom visits. I suggest you download our Fifty Nifty Econ Cards to help kids with economic and personal finance vocabulary through fun activities and games. Here, your child also can download word puzzles and quizzes to test his or her knowledge. Try completing one of the crossword puzzles or playing Bingo with your child on Pages 22 and 23.

The Banker Resources section has educational suggestions specifically for bankers visiting the classroom. This Web page also includes links to banking publications and information about our traveling currency exhibit.

The Consumers Help category has helpful links on credit, tours and a variety of publications. Also included is an area for consumers to file a complaint if they are having a problem with their financial institution or to view frequently asked questions.

These websites should prove helpful as a means of developing economic and personal finance expertise for all ages. Enjoy your exploration!

Financial Education Resources

The Kansas City Fed is committed to promoting economic and financial literacy and greater knowledge of the Federal Reserve's role by providing resources for teachers, students and the public.

Economic and Personal Finance Resources:

Fifty Nifty Econ Cards at KansasCityFed.org introduce economic and personal finance vocabulary to kids through use of teacher- or parent-guided activities and games. For ages 6 -12.

NewMoney.gov shares information on new currency designs and security features added to thwart counterfeiting. For ages 14 and older.

Building Wealth on FederalReserveEducation.org helps consumers develop financial goals through saving, budgeting and investing information. For ages 16 and older.

For more free activities, videos, curriculum and other resources, go to **FederalReserveEducation.org** and **KansasCityFed.org.**

Bingo!

Get a game of economics Bingo going! Use coins as markers and see who will get the first Bingo while learning economic concepts at the same time. Read each word meaning and have kids mark the matching concept. Here is one card to get you started. You can customize and print more Bingo cards at FederalReserveEducation.org/resources.

SUPPLY	LOSS	PRICE	GOODS
SPECIALIZATION	EARN	CHOICE	ECONOMICS
BARTER	SURPLUS	FREE SPACE	SERVICES
EXPORTS	CONSUMER	OPPORTUNITY COST	INTERDEPENDENT

Bingo words (with example explanations)

LOSS - the money a business loses after it pays its production costs

SUPPLY - the amount producers are able and willing to produce and sell at all possible prices at a given time

OPPORTUNITY COST - the next-best choice that you gave up

SERVICES - activities that can satisfy people's wants

EARN - to receive money for doing work

ECONOMICS - the study of production, consumption and distribution of goods

SURPLUS - having more goods, services or resources available than you want

BARTER - to trade goods and services without using money

PRICE - the amount that people pay when they buy a good or service

EXPORTS - the goods and services that producers in one nation sell to buyers in other nations

GOODS - things that can satisfy people's wants

CHOICE - to make a decision

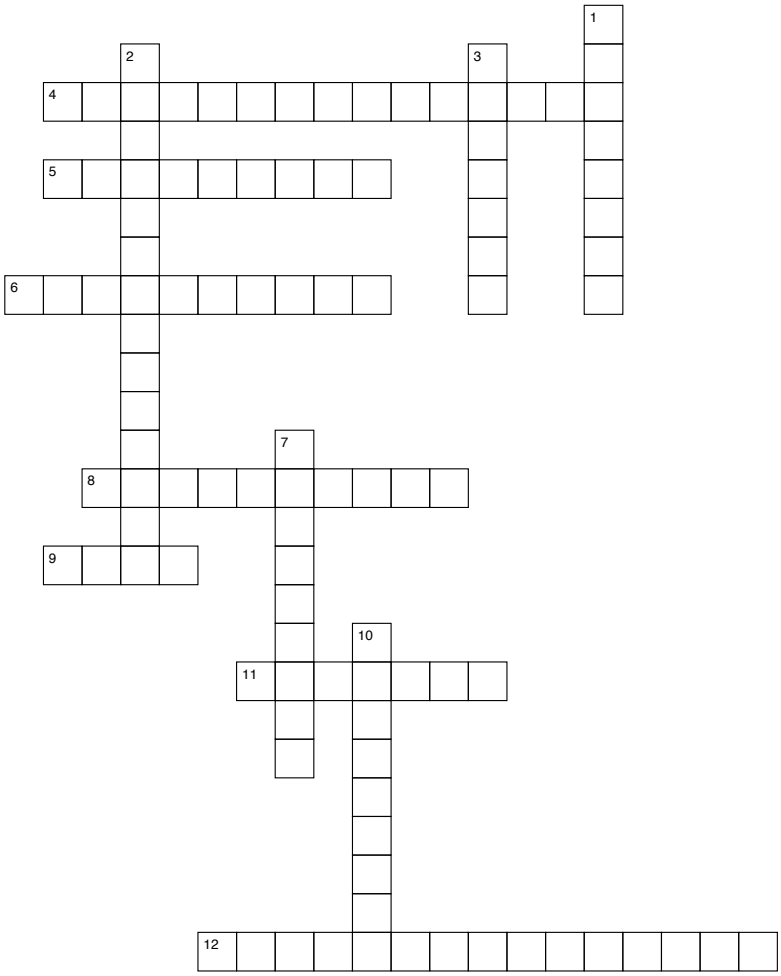
SPECIALIZATION - when people produce only some of the goods and services they consume, then trade with others to get more of the things they want

CONSUMER - people who buy and/or use goods and services to satisfy wants

INTERDEPENDENT - when people and nations depend on one another for the goods and services they want

Crossword Puzzle

Test your economics knowledge! You can customize and print more crossword puzzles and word scrambles at FederalReserveEducation.org/resources/fiftynifty. Click "Puzzles." Check your answers for this puzzle, too. The puzzles are applicable for kindergarten through sixth grade.



Word Bank

incentive
opportunity cost
employment
specialization
withdrawal
division of labor
deposit
bank
producers
account
interest
consumers

Across:

4. the next-best choice that you gave up
5. something that influences the behavior of people
6. an occupation by which a person earns a living
8. money taken out of a bank account
9. a business that provides money services, such as cashing checks, making loans and paying interest on accounts
11. money put into a bank account
12. when workers perform part of a production task

Down:

1. payments made for the use of money
2. when people produce only some of the goods and services they consume, then trade with others to get more of the things they want
3. a record of money deposited or withdrawn from a bank
7. people who use resources to make goods and services
10. people who buy and/or use goods and services to satisfy wants