Financial Skills for Families

A Native community is more than the sum of its parts. It embodies the mystique of community, the circle of inclusion. Within each member it generates powerful feelings of cultural solidarity. That precious spirit cannot survive without the underpinnings of economic development. But the development must be for everyone—not for just a few. That is the Native understanding.

This financial skills curriculum is for Native communities. Our purpose is to:

Enable community members to realize their traditional values by learning financial skills that will help each person make informed financial decisions for themselves, their family, and their community.
In 2000, First Nations Development Institute and the Fannie Mae Foundation developed a personal financial skills curriculum, Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families, designed to help Native people to take control of their financial future.

The Training Resource Guide for Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families is designed for trainers who are interested in implementing a financial skills program in Indian Country. This guide is intended to provide the community of trainers with a framework as well as a forum to learn from one another’s experiences. We expect that you will adopt and adapt its contents to meet your participant and program needs.


Section 1 provides information about the development of the Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families curriculum. This information will be most useful for trainers who are introducing the curriculum into a community that is not familiar with the materials. Whether you are presenting to the tribal council or your department manager, we want you to feel knowledgeable about how and why these materials were created. In addition, we have made suggestions about the type of information you might gather to establish the need and benefits of a personal finance program.

Section 2 presents information about using the curriculum as a teaching tool. Specific recommendations are made to assist instructors with their preparation. A participant skill assessment that can be used to evaluate participants’ financial skills both before and after using the materials is included. Based on our experience, we have also assembled suggestions regarding teaching techniques for Native adult learners.

Section 3 offers suggestions for teaching each of the six sessions in the curriculum. This section is organized to provide you with feedback based on instructor and participant experiences, suggested games and teaching techniques for core concepts and exercises, and commonly asked questions and answers.

Section 4 presents suggestions for planning training sessions and recommendations for developing relationships with community and industry partners. A detailed list of supplies and readiness checklist is also included.

Section 5 is the appendix and offers additional resources that trainers have found useful, including worksheets, websites, templates for flyers, and a participant session evaluation.
To teach financial skills, instructors do not have to be experts in personal finance, banking, or Native adult education. However, as an instructor, you will want to approach and prepare for this kind of teaching by

- Familiarizing yourself with the curriculum content. We highly recommend reviewing the materials carefully, preparing the exercises for participants, and practicing the presentation of each session prior to delivery.
- Inviting people like bankers, credit counselors, elders, or Native adult educators to assist with your sessions. These people can help answer participant questions and clarify ideas. Including representatives from local organizations will also encourage participants to develop relationships with people who can serve as ongoing resources after the sessions.
- Approaching each session as a learning opportunity. If you are open and prepared to learn with and from your participants, they are more likely to share their knowledge and experiences. Challenge your participants to bring new ideas to each session.
- Adapting the materials to meet your participants’ needs as well as developing your own creative teaching techniques that reflect your community’s life experience.
# Table of Contents

**Introduction**

**Section 1: Curriculum Development** ............................................................ 1

**Section 2: Using the Materials** .......................................................................3

**Section 3: Curriculum Exploration** .............................................................11

**Section 4: Planning Training Sessions** .........................................................29

**Section 5: Additional Resources** ....................................................................32

Appendix A: Building Native Communities Participant Assessment ..........32
Appendix B: Welcome Letter and Agenda ..........................................................33
Appendix C: Icebreakers .................................................................................35
Appendix D: Indigenous versus Native economic models .........................40
Appendix E: Session Evaluation .......................................................................41
Appendix F: Credit Bureau Letter .................................................................42
Appendix G: Priorities and Values Auction Items List ....................................43
Appendix H: Check Cashers Versus Banks ......................................................44
Appendix I: Researching a Checking or Savings Account Exercise .............45
Appendix J: Questions You Might Ask if You Are Applying for A Credit Card ............................................................46
Appendix K: Example Credit Report Request Letter .................................47
Appendix L: Jeopardy Questions ......................................................................48
Appendix O: Readiness Checklist ....................................................................51
Appendix P: Example Flyers .........................................................................53
Appendix Q: Supplies List ...............................................................................54
Appendix R: Additional Resources .................................................................55
Why do Native people need personal financial skills education?

Many Native American people have little experience managing their financial assets. A lack of personal financial skills results in families living paycheck to paycheck, failure to qualify for home mortgages, and victimization by predatory lenders. In 1999, the National American Indian Housing Council found that 68 percent of their survey respondents were victims of predatory lending. In fact, the study found that some Native people are paying as high as 25 percent interest on installment loans.

Self-reliance in Native communities starts with personal financial skills. People need information and experience to manage their family budgets, operate businesses, achieve financial goals, use credit wisely, get approved for home mortgages, and grow their community assets. Personal financial skills are about more than money. People's abilities to manage the flow of money through their households are tied to their ability to care for themselves, their family, and their community.

Partnership initiates Native financial skills curriculum

Recognizing the need for personal financial skills education in Indian Country, First Nations Development Institute and the Fannie Mae Foundation partnered to develop an educational curriculum specifically for Native people.

First Nations Development Institute is a nonprofit organization whose goal is to assist Native communities in controlling their assets and building capacity to direct their economic future. First Nations assists community members in identifying assets and building economic models to create and retain wealth in ways that reflect the culture and desire of the people in those communities. The strategy involves participating in grassroots asset-building projects that build capacity for self-reliant economies.

The Fannie Mae Foundation creates affordable homeownership and housing opportunities through innovative partnerships and initiatives that build healthy, vibrant communities across the country. The Foundation is committed to preparing the next generation of homeowners by breaking down barriers to information about financial management and credit.

Specialists in Native education and financial skills develop curriculum

With a desire to create a uniquely Native financial education tool, First Nations and the Fannie Mae Foundation brought together a team of specialists with backgrounds in Native education and financial skills. Representatives from the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, HUD, the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, First Nations Development Institute, the Fannie Mae Foundation, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, Lakota Fund, and the New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund contributed to the development of the materials.
These experts understood that the materials must be accessible within Native communities. An underlying goal of this curriculum is to empower Native people, particularly in relation to personal financial management. Therefore, the curriculum approaches financial skills from a Native perspective, building upon and reinforcing traditional values and knowledge. This is not difficult since similar skills are utilized in Native resource management:

- awareness of resources
- saving
- budgeting resources
- using innovative new tools to maximize resources

Tribes throughout North America and Hawaii have been practicing these resource management skills for generations, ensuring the survival of their people. The curriculum seeks to connect people’s ancestral experience with the acquisition of new skills. Each session in the curriculum uses Native resource management skills as the foundation. New financial skills are introduced in a way that builds off of these traditional values and skills.

There are six session in the curriculum:

- Building a Healthy Economy
- Developing a Spending Plan
- Working with Checking and Savings Accounts
- Understanding Credit and Your Credit Report
- Accessing Credit, Part I
- Accessing Credit, Part II

Once the materials were drafted, all six sessions were piloted at sites within the Fond du Lac Tribe and Navajo Nation. The pilots ensured that the content spoke to a diverse audience of Native people and that the format could be easily adapted to the unique culture and needs of each community.

Curriculum artwork

The photographs included throughout the curriculum were generously shared by the National Museum of the American Indian. These photos depict Native artwork and scenes from across North America and Hawaii. The cover photo is of the Commemorative Quilt of the National Museum of the American Indian, 1997. Twenty Native artists made the quilt. Each session in the curriculum highlights a different block from the quilt and provides an explanation written by the artist.
The Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families curriculum Instructor’s Guide is organized to lead trainers through the materials. Each session uses a similar format:

- Each session begins with an overview that summarizes the content.
- Session objectives for the instructor are clearly defined.
- Specific instructor preparation is outlined.
- The participant session opens with a prayer and possibly an icebreaker.
- The participant session objectives are outlined.
- The first exercise is rooted in Native traditional resource management.
- Traditional resource management is related to a financial management skill.
- A financial management skill is introduced.
- Exercises reinforce the financial skill.
- Actions are discussed to incorporate the financial skill into participants' lives.
- Summary points conclude each session.

The Instructor’s Guide will lead you through each session in the Participant’s Workbook. The materials are presented with each Participant’s Workbook page being placed directly across from suggested instructor text for specific concepts and exercises. The Instructor’s Guide provides you with discussion questions, answers to exercises, and other suggestions for each session. As an instructor, it will be up to you to use this material as a springboard for your own creativity and teaching style.

Training preparation

Preparation is critical to the success of your training. It can take two to eight hours to prepare for each session, depending on your experience presenting these concepts. Session preparation differs considerably depending on whether you are an insider or an outsider to the community.

Community insider preparation

Most trainers will include the following in their preparation:

- Reviewing the traditional concepts.
- Reviewing the financial concepts.
- Assessing participant financial skills.
- Developing teaching tools and community-specific examples.
- Recruiting participants.
- Sending participants a welcome letter and copy of the curriculum.
- Preparing and checking supplies.
- Practicing the session presentation.
Reviewing the traditional concepts

Depending on your background, you may or may not be knowledgeable about traditional resource management practices in your community. This material will be most effective if you are prepared to share examples of your community’s unique history and culture. Work with community resources such as elders or a community historian to bring your people’s stories to the sessions. Encourage participants to speak with members of their family or community and bring new ideas and information back to the sessions.

Reviewing the financial concepts

You do not need to have a background in banking or finance to teach this curriculum. However, you should take the time to familiarize yourself with the financial concepts that are discussed. If you have any questions or are uncomfortable with the concepts, consider inviting a financial expert (e.g., banker, nonprofit credit counselor, staff from tribal finance department) to assist you. Participants will benefit from the opportunity to develop relationships with community representatives who may be ongoing resources for their financial needs.

Assessing participant financial skills

Your preparation will be greatly enhanced if you are aware of participants’ level of knowledge about personal financial skills. This information will help you tailor the sessions to participant needs. You may or may not have a sense of participants’ personal financial skills based on previous contact with the group. Either way, you can conduct a participant skill assessment prior to the first session. To assist you, we have included an example participant assessment as Appendix A: Building Native Communities Participant Assessment. You can use this same assessment after you complete the curriculum to measure the growth of participants’ knowledge.

Also, be aware that some participants may have learning disabilities or be uncomfortable with basic reading and math skills. Be sensitive to people’s skill level and never force participation. Having participants work in small groups may help to alleviate some of these issues by creating an environment where peers can assist each other.

Developing teaching tools and community-specific examples

Spend time looking at the teaching techniques and additional exercises we have included in this Training Resource Guide. Think about your participant group and effective strategies to connect with their life experience, learning styles, and interests. Try to learn as much as you can about the types of jobs the people have, their salaries, stores they shop in, and what they buy. Use this information to develop community-specific examples and exercises. You will want to prepare your teaching tools and community-specific examples before each session. Make sure that you have examples prepared for each exercise in case participants are unable to come up with their own ideas. Be creative and don’t hesitate to modify your techniques based on participants’ reactions and suggestions.
Recruiting participants

Unless you are integrating this curriculum into an existing program, you will need to recruit participants. Recruiting participants is always easiest if there is a reason or reward associated with participation. For instance, this curriculum can be made a part of an existing homeownership, employment, or adult education program. Or you may find yourself recruiting participants on a volunteer basis. If this is the case, we highly recommend that you work with community programs to publicize the benefits of the program and supply free food! See Section 4: Planning Training Sessions for specific marketing techniques.

Sending participants a welcome letter and curriculum

Prior to the session, send the participants a letter reminding them of the date and time of the session (see Appendix B: Welcome Letter and Agenda). You may also want to send each participant a copy of the Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families Participant's Workbook and an agenda for the session. By sending the curriculum ahead of time, you can encourage participants to glance through the materials before they attend the session. If you think that the size or content of the curriculum will intimidate participants, you may choose not to distribute the materials.

Preparing and checking supplies

Prior to each session, you will need to prepare your supplies. A list of supplies is included in Section 4: Planning Training Sessions. If you are using a flipchart or overhead transparencies, make sure to prepare them ahead of time. You might consider using two flipcharts, one with prewritten material and another for brainstorming and participant comments. We also suggest that you place your overheads in clear plastic folders to protect them from wrinkling and preserve them for future use. You also might consider bringing toys for your participants to play with during the session. Silly Putty, Koosh balls or other small toys can help participants feel more comfortable and give them something to do with their hands while they listen to your presentation. Before each session, check your supplies to ensure that everything is in the order you desire.

Practicing the session presentation

Practice is the best way to prepare yourself as an instructor. Despite your level of experience, take the time to practice your presentation. If possible, incorporate your teaching tools into your practice so that you are comfortable with the flow and transitions you will use during the actual session. We recommend that inexperienced trainers facilitate a practice session with a volunteer audience, such as family and friends, who will provide candid and constructive feedback. If possible, inexperienced trainers should attend another trainer's sessions or co-train with a more experienced trainer to increase their comfort level with the materials. If you are co-training, it is particularly important that you practice with your partner. Agree on transitions between you and your partner. Make sure that your styles blend for the benefit of the participants. The more comfortable you are presenting the material, the easier it will be for your participants to grasp the concepts and enjoy the session.
Community outsider preparation

As an outsider to a community, you need to take special steps to prepare for teaching this curriculum. It is important that you partner with a community-insider who will provide you with logistical assistance, cultural insight, and navigation through community dynamics. You will need to go through the same preparatory steps as community-insiders with a special focus on learning about the community. Learn about cultural values, practices, culturally appropriate behavior, and common experiences for your participants. Learn acceptable ways to interact with people and become sensitive to their preferences. For instance, some communities have very soft handshakes or believe it is inappropriate for a woman to look a man in the eyes. Pay attention to the ways that people interact with each other and their comfort (or discomfort) with your style.

We highly recommend that you co-train the sessions with a member of the community. This is particularly important if you are non-Native since this curriculum is meant to reinforce a community’s traditional practices and values. Your co-trainer may play a central or minor role in the training, but he or she is critical to providing credibility and ensuring that the training reflects the experience of your participants.

Session Time

The time you will need to teach each session depends on your participants. Depending on the knowledge level and experience of your group, a session can take anywhere from an hour to a week. On average, most instructors take two to three hours per session. It is important to allow enough time for discussion and interactive exercises. As an instructor, you need to gauge your participants' comfort and understanding of the concepts presented in each session. Pay attention to body language and repeatedly ask if participants would like you to slow down or go into further detail. Take the initiative to approach several participants during each break and ask them individually how the session is going. You may want to offer participants additional take-home exercises to practice new financial skills or provide office hours to answer specific or personal finance-related questions. As an instructor, you must always remember to build each session around your learners' needs. Take time to make sure your participants understand the lessons and are having a positive experience.

Training Adult Learners

Adult participants enter a learning environment with their own set of experiences. As an instructor, you may find yourself helping participants to overcome fears, insecurity, or bad experiences in managing their finances. To create a positive experience, try to keep the sessions hands-on and interactive. Provide participants with time and exercises that encourage bonding. The group will get more out of the curriculum if they act and feel like a team. As participants feel comfortable, they will begin to open up and share their experiences and feelings.
Teaching techniques

Trainers have found the following techniques effective with this curriculum. Often participants will benefit from having the same concept presented in several different ways. Specific exercises and suggestions for each session will follow in Section 3: Curriculum Exploration. We encourage you to develop your own creative learning tools and we look forward to learning from your success.

• **Expectations.** At the beginning of each session ask participants to share their expectations for the session. List these ideas on a flipchart. Go through each participant expectation and affirm that it will be covered in the session. If a participant is interested in something that is not going to be covered in the session, make him or her aware of it at this time. If possible, arrange for the participants to receive the desired information or incorporate the issue into a future session.

• **Icebreakers.** Icebreakers are participant exercises that promote comfort and interaction between people. They can be used at the beginning or in the middle of a session to help participants relax, get to know one another, or move around. A list of potential ice-breakers is included as Appendix C.

• **Indigenous versus western economic models.** At the beginning of your program, develop a comparison between indigenous and western economic models (see Appendix D). Discuss how each reflects values that influence the way people work to achieve their goals. Neither model is right or wrong. Hang the comparison on the wall and utilize it throughout the program. As you progress through the sessions, you can return to this illustration to stay grounded in the Native approach to achieving financial security for individuals, families, and the community.

• **Magic wall.** The magic wall is a visual technique to present ideas and concepts. As a trainer, you will need to prepare a large piece of nylon fabric (9 feet by 5 feet) by spraying it with mount adhesive. Both the fabric and the adhesive can be found at a fabric or craft store. The fabric can then be hung on the wall and used to post ideas and exercises. It is particularly effective if you select a bright-colored piece of fabric and choose colorful paper to post.
• **Small group activities.** Whenever possible, ask participants to complete exercises in pairs or small groups. This assists people in overcoming their fears and learning from their peers. Participants generally feel more comfortable working together and then sharing their answers with the larger group.

• **Discussion questions.** Introduce ideas and concepts by asking participants to share their thoughts and experiences. Use open-ended questions that begin with how, what, where, when, or why. There are many discussion questions incorporated into the Instructor’s Guide. Try to develop additional questions of your own to prompt participation.

• **Games.** Interactive games are a great way to keep participants involved in the session. You can adapt any popular board game or game show to create a session exercise. "Jeopardy" has been very successful with past sessions. Participants seem most comfortable when they compete as teams, and they always appreciate winning small prizes. You can create a game for any of the sessions.

• **Role-playing.** Use role-playing to increase participants’ comfort level interacting with financial institutions or other parties. Role-playing can include anything from mock interviews to "what would you do" scenarios.

• **Index card answers.** This tool enables participants to maintain their anonymity while participating in a group exercise. This is particularly effective for exercises where participants are asked to share personal information.
  - Give participants index cards (or similar-sized cut paper) and ask them to answer questions from an exercise, writing the answer to one question per piece of paper.
  - Write each question from the exercise on individual pieces of paper and hang them on the wall.
  - Ask participants to hang their answers below the appropriate question on the wall.
  - As you read through the answers as a group, participants usually discover that they have more in common with their peers than they expected. This approach gets participants moving around the room and helps them to feel comfortable sharing their personal experiences with the group.

• **Journal.** You might consider asking participants to keep a journal as you work through these materials. At the end of each session, provide participants with time to record their thoughts and the most important concepts they have learned. For participants who are uncomfortable sharing their ideas with the group, this can be an effective tool to keep them involved and participating in the session.
• **Art.** If your participants are visual learners, create opportunities for them to artistically illustrate concepts in the material. In particular, the traditional resource management components of the curriculum lend themselves to visual presentations. Encourage participants to develop illustrations for any of the concepts in the curriculum (e.g., a map of how money is spent in their household).

• **Puzzles.** Another way to stimulate your visual hands-on learners is by using puzzles. You can develop a crossword, find-a-word, or jigsaw puzzle. For example, you can make a jigsaw puzzle to reinforce any concept in the curriculum. You can retypew the content you desire (no more than a single page) on your computer in a large font size (e.g., 14 or 16). Paste the page to a thin piece of cardboard or poster-board. Then cut it up into puzzle pieces. If you make a number of copies, you can have participants work in small groups to complete the exercise.

• **Field trips.** If possible, coordinate a field trip to a financial institution. Work with the financial institution to create an experience where participants are able to see how the organization works. If possible, provide participants with an opportunity to practice completing paperwork related to opening an account or applying for a loan.

• **Interviews.** Participants can interview financial institution representatives or each other to get practice asking and answering questions.

• **Storytelling.** Storytelling is a traditional Native teaching tool. If there are storytellers in the community, you may want to invite them to participate in your sessions. These community members can make a powerful contribution by sharing community stories that may support many of the ideas and concepts necessary for responsible financial management. You can also encourage participants to share personal stories, such as "your most embarrassing money story." This type of bonding exercise can get the group talking after a break or during lunch.

• **Follow-up.** Participants will learn new financial skills and incorporate them into their lives most effectively if there is reinforcement and follow-up with the concepts. Follow-up can be done in several ways:
  • At the beginning of each session, you can summarize what was covered in the previous session and ask if there are any questions.
  • Provide office hours where participants can come to ask questions or get individual assistance with their personal financial issues.
  • Partner with an organization that will provide office hours on the reservation to assist participants.
  • Telephone or send a follow-up letter to participants reminding them about future sessions and the personal assistance that is available.
Certificate of Completion

A certificate of completion is included in each Participant’s Workbook. Collect the certificates before you distribute the materials. At the end of the program, present each participant with a signed certificate. Consider having a party or potluck to celebrate participants’ accomplishment.

Glossary

A glossary of common financial terms is included in the back of the Participant’s Workbook and the Instructor’s Guide. Encourage participants to use this as a reference tool.

Session Evaluations

At the end of each session, leave enough time for participants to evaluate the session. Some participants will prefer to complete a written evaluation, and others would rather participate in a group discussion. Appendix E: Session Evaluations includes both a written evaluation you can photocopy for participants as well as a list of discussion questions that you can use to gather feedback. Listen carefully to participants’ feedback because you can always find ways to make your training more effective and improve as a trainer.

Credit Bureau Letter

The completion of this curriculum demonstrates a participant’s commitment to better financial health. Every consumer is allowed a 100-word statement on his or her credit report. Consider assisting participants in writing a letter to each of three credit bureaus requesting that a statement be placed on their credit report signifying their accomplishment. Future creditors will then see the steps that they have taken toward strengthening their personal financial management skills. Appendix F: Credit Bureau Letter is a sample you may use to assist participants.
In this section, we’ll share what trainers have learned using this curriculum. By session, we’ll discuss instructor and participant experiences, games and teaching techniques for the core concepts, and commonly asked questions.

This section will be most useful if you have already reviewed the six sessions in the curriculum. We suggest that you have the curriculum close at hand as a reference tool while you review the suggestions in this section of the Training Resource Guide.

Session 1: Building a Healthy Economy

Session description

This session lays the conceptual groundwork for the curriculum. Participants will

• Discuss the traditional resource management practices in their community.
• Evaluate the economic dynamics of their community.
• Identify actions to build a healthier local economy.

Instructor and participant experiences

The Circle of Life Exercise is a core component of this session and the curriculum. It is an opportunity for participants to reflect on traditional resource management practices in their community. We have found this exercise to be highly stimulating, so you will want to give participants plenty of time to discuss and work through it. Most participants enjoy sharing and/or learning about this aspect of their community’s lifestyle. You will need to understand your community’s Circle of Life and what aspects of these traditional ways are still practiced. For instance, across North America and Hawaii, some communities still live very traditionally, and there are some communities whose lifestyle revolves around two seasons instead of four.

For some participants, this exercise reminds them that they are removed from their own culture. This can stimulate feelings of anger or sorrow. Encourage participants to express their feelings and be prepared to share some examples of traditional resource management.

Also, be prepared to encounter participants who do not believe in preserving traditional ways. We encourage you to listen to their perspective and then warmly communicate the purpose of this particular curriculum. Such participants may or may not want to participate in this learning opportunity.

The Local Economy Exercise is intended to assist participants in their understanding of the concept of an economy as well as to give insight into the dynamics of their local situation. In many areas there are few community-member-owned businesses. Remind people to include home-based business in their economic portrayal of the community. Participants will understand these concepts best if you provide examples of each type of business in their community. This discussion can get emotional
as people realize and think about their community’s economic self-reliance. Other discussion topics that may arise include the tribe’s support of small businesses, the cost of products at small community-member-owned businesses versus larger chains, and the need for small business education. Provide participants with the time to have these discussions, yet focus on action steps to move in a positive direction rather than developing a defeatist attitude. If this is difficult, move on to the next concept as a way to refocus the discussion.

Plugging the Leaking Economy presents the financial impact of supporting local businesses. Many participants have never considered this idea and will enjoy the exercise.

Make sure to take the time to complete the Strengthening the Local Economy and Taking Action sections of the Participant’s Workbook. It is very important that the session end focusing on short- and long-term actions, steps that individuals and the community can take to strengthen the community’s self-reliance.

Games and teaching techniques

The Circle of Life can be explored in small groups or with all participants. There are a number of ways to approach this exercise:

• Divide participants into several small groups and ask each to develop a Circle of Life. After some time, bring the groups together to share their work. You might even develop one large Circle of Life for the community that combines their efforts.
• Work with the entire group to create a Circle of Life. Prior to the session, develop an outline of the Circle of Life to use with your magic wall. Come prepared with paper, and hang participants’ ideas around the circle.
• Invite a community elder or historian to participate in the session. Prepare them ahead of time so they can share stories about traditional resource management practices. Work through the exercise after their presentation or as a homework assignment.
• Make this exercise an ongoing part of your sessions. Ask participants to speak with family and community members to gather more information and continue to add to the circle. Some groups have even chosen to create a mural as an ongoing group project.

The Local Economy Exercise is an opportunity to explore the businesses operating in a community. You can approach this exercise in several ways:

• Discuss this exercise as a group and record participant ideas on an overhead projector or flipchart.
• Divide participants into small groups and ask them to develop a drawing that depicts their local economy.
• After participants have outlined the businesses in their community, consider facilitating a discussion around the questions below. Use different-colored arrows to signify where money is entering and leaving the community.
  • "Where do you work within these circles?"
  • "Where do you go shopping?"
Plugging the Leaking Economy is an opportunity to role-play, the following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Prepare for this exercise by bringing or making $40 (preferably eight $5 bills) in play money.
2. Divide the group in half. Ask one half of the room to represent community-owned businesses and the other to represent outside businesses.
3. Select a participant to be a community member with $40 to spend.
4. Ask the participant to first spend all $40 at the outside businesses.
   a. How much money is retained in the community when the shopper is finished?
5. Ask the participant to spend all $40 at community-member-owned or tribally-owned business.
   a. How much money is retained in the community when the shopper is finished?
   b. How much money would it have taken to support these businesses if community members were not supporting each other?
6. Have one of the community businesses then spend the money they were paid to purchase additional services. For instance, the owner of a community-member-owned restaurant who was paid $20 might spend $10 at a community-owned gas station, whose owner might spend $5 at a community-owned video store, whose owner might hire the daughter of the original person who had $40 to babysit.
7. Encourage participants to discuss their thoughts and feelings about the economic impact of supporting community-member-owned businesses.

Commonly asked questions

The following are questions that have come up during this session. Often, there are no right or wrong answers to participant questions. Try to take questions that you are asked and pose them to the group for discussion before you share your opinion.

Question: How can we support community-owned businesses when prices are higher than at the large chain stores?

Answer: When money is spent in the community among community businesses, it eventually comes back to you in some way (e.g., community employment, infrastructure etc.) Therefore, you need to think of this money as having a larger impact than your purchase. Creating economic development starts with individuals taking action.

Some community businesses or businesses in adjoining communities might consider purchasing items in bulk so that the items can be sold at more competitive prices.

Question: What can we do to encourage the tribe to support community-owned businesses instead of solely contracting with outside service providers?

Answer: Encourage participants to bring this issue up with tribal council members. This topic can become a community-wide discussion.
Session 2: Developing a Spending Plan

Session description

This session introduces financial skills. Participants will

- Connect Native resource management practices with financial budgeting skills.
- Identify financial goals.
- Become aware of the flow of money through their households.
- Take control of the flow of money through their household by developing a spending plan.

Instructor and participant experiences

While Session 1 revolved around discussion and group interaction, Session 2 has participants doing much more work on their own. Make sure that participants can clearly see the connection between traditional savings practices and budgeting. For some participants, understanding the flow of money through their household is a new exercise. The concepts and worksheets may overwhelm them. Assure participants that developing and maintaining a spending plan is hard work for everyone. It takes time, commitment, and discipline to create and use a tool that will help you achieve your financial goals. As a trainer, it is very important to read participants' body language and circulate through the room to answer questions, offer support, and encourage participation.

Since this is the most challenging session in the curriculum, some instructors have suggested dividing the session into two classes. The first session can take participants through the Money Tracker Worksheet, and the second can cover the balance of the exercises. This approach gives participants more time to digest the material and gather needed personal information. Welfare to work participants may need even more time to work through this session. No matter how you choose to teach this session, try to allocate time at the beginning of each of the subsequent sessions for participants to share their experiences working with a spending plan.

Some participants may have emotional reactions to the spending plan process. For this reason, take some time to discuss the emotional side of managing your money. Ask participants to share the feelings that they associate with strong and weak money management skills. If this is a particularly important issue for your participants, you may want to get additional assistance from a nonprofit credit counseling organization. Many of these organizations have developed an array of exercises to address these issues. You may also want to revisit this discussion when you work through Session 4: Understanding Credit and Your Credit Report.

Games and teaching techniques

The Priorities and Values Auction Game can be used to set the stage for developing a spending plan. It is an energetic way to get participants thinking about their values and setting priorities. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:
1. Prior to the session, make or purchase play money. Divide the money evenly between several envelopes (e.g., $100 per envelope).

2. Make several copies of the Priorities and Values Auction Items List (see Appendix G: Priorities and Values Auction Items List). Some instructors make or gather small tokens to represent each item on the list.

3. Divide the participants into small groups, and give each an envelope of money and the Priorities and Values Auction Items List.

4. Explain that you are holding an auction and that participants can bid on all of the items on the list. Give them some time to set priorities as a group.

5. Ask one participant to act as the banker. After each sale, this participant should collect the payment and give the purchaser a token to represent the bought item.

6. Hold an auction. Go through the items and sell them to the highest bidder. If there is no interest in a particular item, move on quickly.

7. Tie the game back to developing a spending plan. Discuss the importance of working to make your spending habits reflect your priorities and financial goals. Ask participants to share their thoughts and feelings.
   a. "How did you decide what to bid on?"
   b. "Did your choices reflect your values?"
   c. "When you spend money, do your choices reflect your values? Your priorities?"

The $500 Gift Exercise is another way to get people thinking about their priorities. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Prior to the session, make or purchase play money.
2. Give each participant $500 when you begin the session.
3. Facilitate a brainstorming session with participants about how they would spend their $500. Write their ideas on a flipchart and hang the pages in the room.
4. Let participants keep their $500 for the entire session.
5. Facilitate another brainstorming discussion at the end the session. See how participants' choices for spending the $500 might change after developing their spending plan. Discuss participants' thoughts and feelings.

Develop a visual aid to assist participants with the flow of the worksheets and to chart their progress. You can use the magic wall for this illustration. The following steps can be used to facilitate this explanation:

1. Make cards for the magic wall that represent each section of the spending plan process (e.g., track, assess, save, take action) and the various worksheets. We recommend printing these cards on a Macintosh computer with a font larger than 48 points or handwriting these cards in large print.
2. Make a smaller "check mark symbol" card for each worksheet.
3. Organize the worksheets on the magic wall by section.
4. Place a "check mark" next to the worksheets as participants complete them.

Develop a completed set of spending plan worksheets that reflects participants' experience. Participants will be able to understand the spending plan process more easily if you share an example with them. Consider developing a fictitious character whose life experiences (e.g., salary, spending habits) are similar to participants'. Complete the spending plan worksheets as the character and make a copy for each participant. Participants can use this example as a model to complete their own spending plans.

Provide each participant with an extra set of spending plan worksheets. A spending plan will be most effective if it is completed as a family with accurate information. Encourage participants to take the additional set of worksheets home to finish.

Offer participants an opportunity to review their spending plan with a counselor. In the weeks following this session, participants will benefit from an opportunity to privately review their spending plan with an expert who can answer their questions. Consider using an outside resource (e.g., nonprofit credit counseling organization) to assist you with this process.

Commonly asked questions

The following are questions that have come up during this session. Often, there are no right or wrong answers to participant questions. Try to take questions that you are asked and pose them to the group for discussion before you share your opinion.

**Question:** How do I handle requests from friends and family members to borrow money while I am trying to develop and maintain a spending plan?

**Answer:** There is no right or wrong way to handle these requests. If you regularly give or loan money to family members and friends, it is important to include this as an item in your spending plan.

**Question:** How do I deal with my spouse or significant other when they don't keep to our spending plan?

**Answer:** It is important that a spending plan be a family effort. We encourage you to include the members of your family from the start so that everyone is setting financial goals together. If the members of your family care about achieving the goals, it is easier to work together and maintain a spending plan. If your spouse or partner is feeling deprived based on the budget you have set, you may need to adjust your spending plan and incorporate a small amount of money for their personal use. Hopefully this will help to avoid the large spending sprees that stem from feelings of deprivation.
Session 3: Working with Checking and Savings Accounts

Session description

This session deals with managing your money. Participants will

• Connect the results of good resource and financial management to providing for the community.
• Learn about checking and savings accounts.

Instructor and participant experiences

Participants will likely have varying levels of experience working with checking and savings accounts. Many people who use checking and savings accounts do not manage their accounts properly. Encourage participants with experience to use this session as a review to strengthen their account management skills. Have participants work in small groups to complete the exercises in this session. Try to balance the groups with people who have more and less experience with checking and savings accounts.

As you begin to talk about checking and savings accounts, participants may share their experiences working with financial institutions. Try to avoid “bank bashing” and redirect conversations toward positive experiences and recommendations. Encourage participants with unresolved issues to follow up with the financial institution’s customer service department.

Even if participants have experience with checking and savings accounts, they are usually interested in topics such as endorsements and forgery. Few participants are aware of the different types of endorsements and how specific endorsements can protect their deposits. Many participants also find the topic of forgery interesting. People share stories and warn each other against leaving their checkbook unattended.

Introduce using a check register, reading an account statement, and balancing a checkbook as a process. Balancing a checkbook is easier if you have a clear understanding of the skills that are involved in the process.

When you discuss bouncing checks, some participants will try to blame others for their mistakes. Instead, try to focus the discussion on the negative consequences of bouncing checks such as the money wasted in fees, the long-term affect on your credit report, and the embarrassment a person feels when local businesses will no longer accept his or her checks.

Games and teaching techniques

Encourage participation and sharing in the Managing Your Money Exercise by using the index answers technique discussed in Section 2. Participants will overcome their insecurities as they realize how much they have in common with other participants.
Invite a representative from a financial institution to participate in the session. You may need to schedule this visit several weeks or months in advance. Try to contact a financial institution that works with the community since it will have experience working with Native people and may be more willing to assist you. If you are able to arrange for a financial representative to join your session, make sure the participants are prepared to ask questions.

Check Cashers Versus Banks is an exercise to explore the costs of cashing checks at check-cashing stores. If participants do not have choices about where they conduct their financial transactions, then focus the discussion on access to financial services. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Make copies of Appendix H: Check Cashers Versus Banks.
2. Start the discussion by asking participant
   a. How many of you receive a paycheck?
   b. How do you cash your check? Use your check to make payments? Save?
3. Ask participant volunteers to read the story about Alice and Juanita.
4. Facilitate a discussion using the questions that follow the story.

Bring examples of a check, deposit slip, check register, and account statement for participants to examine. A local financial institution may be able to provide you with examples if you are uncomfortable using your own. Make sure that participants understand how to read an account statement. Point out the directions for balancing your checkbook that are provided on the back of all account statements. If possible, offer participants an opportunity to ask personal questions about their account statements after the session.

Researching a Checking or Savings Account Exercise can be used as a small group activity or homework assignment. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Make a copy of Appendix I: Researching a Checking or Savings Account Exercise for each participant.
2. Gather marketing materials about checking and savings accounts from several financial institutions.
3. Ask participants to work in small groups and use the materials to complete as much of the Researching a Checking or Savings Account Exercise as possible. Since much of this information is not provided in the marketing materials, ask participants to record similarities and differences between accounts on a flipchart.
4. Assign the completion of the Researching a Checking or Savings Account Exercise as a homework assignment. Ask participants to contact at least two financial institutions.

You can use the Working with Checking and Savings Accounts Game as a review of the concepts discussed in this session. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Provide each participant with a small piece of paper.
2. At the end of the session, ask each participant to write down a question related to the concepts discussed. You may want to include several of your own questions.
3. Collect all of the questions.
4. Divide the group into teams.
5. Quiz the groups using the collected questions and keep score between the teams. Participants should not answer their own questions.

Commonly asked questions

The following are questions that have come up during this session. Often, there are no right or wrong answers to participant questions. Try to take questions that you are asked and pose them to the group for discussion before you share your opinion.

Question: What can you do if your account application is denied?

Answer: If your application is denied, it is probably because you have mishandled an account in the past. Financial institutions across the country report forced closures and mishandling of accounts to a national company, Chex Systems. Information about a poorly handled account will stay on this system for five years. If your account application is denied and you would like to work toward opening a new account, consider taking the following steps:

- Contact your former financial institution to pay off any outstanding balance on your old account.
- Provide the new financial institution with proof that you have settled your old account.
- Work with your new financial institution to establish your ability to manage an account. Be prepared to start with a savings account and work toward opening a new checking account.
- Contact a local credit counseling organization to discuss your personal situation.
  - A local listing of counselors can be found at www.homebuyingguide.org. Click on one of the three guides, and then click on "download PDF." Enter your zip code. Select the option that will provide you with a list of counselors.

Question: What if I can’t seem to manage a checking account?

Answer: Don’t. If managing a checking account does not work for you, then develop another money management system that does. The most important thing is to pay your bills on time.

Question: What is direct deposit and how is it beneficial?

Answer: If you sign up for direct deposit, payroll earnings, Social Security benefits, retirement earnings and other checks you receive on a regular basis can be automatically put into your account. Direct deposit can help you reduce your banking fees, use your spending plan, and save money toward your savings goals. Because your money goes directly into your account, it is often easier to put aside savings and manage the flow of money through your household. It also spares you the inconvenience of having to pick up and deposit your checks in person.
Question: What are the advantages and disadvantages of having direct payment?
Answer: You can arrange to have payments (e.g., credit card bills, utilities, mortgage) directly deducted from your checking or savings account. The advantages to this approach are that your bills are paid on time, and there is no mail cost or inconvenience traveling to a payment location. The disadvantages are that you do not review the bill before it is paid and you must ensure that there is enough money in the account when the deductions are made. Most companies will tell you the exact date each month that the deduction will be made, so that you can plan accordingly and record the transaction in your account register.

Question: What can you do if your spouse or partner does not enter transactions into the check register?
Answer: Involve your spouse and family members in the development of your spending plan. If everyone wants to achieve the same financial goals, family members are more likely to work together. You may also want to create a space (e.g., empty shoebox, bowl, etc.) where everyone agrees to place receipts for credit card, check, and debit purchases as well as ATM withdrawals. Once a week, make a habit of filing these transactions in the proper places.

Question: Why are large checks not deposited immediately into my account?
Answer: The financial institution is waiting for the check to "clear" from the account that it was written on. The financial institution is ensuring that they will be able to collect the check amount from the check writer's account before they give you access to the funds.

Question: What do I do if I do not think the people at my financial institution are helpful?
Answer: The people at your financial institution are there to assist you with your financial needs. If you have one unsatisfactory experience, you might try working with another employee at the organization. If you are repeatedly dissatisfied, look into switching financial institutions.

Session 4: Understanding Credit and Your Credit Report

Session description

This session introduces the concept of credit. Participants will

• Discuss the transition from a subsistence economy to a market economy.
• Learn about the concept of credit.
• Learn how to read and work with credit reports.
Instructor and participant experiences

Most participants have been looking forward to this session. Introducing the concept of credit requires a discussion about the transition from a subsistence economy to a market economy. When Native people were isolated on reservations in the early twentieth century, they could no longer support themselves in traditional ways. Credit became a tool to support and build the community.

Another traditional value that you can tie into this discussion is the importance that Native people place on keeping their word. If possible, use an example or story from your community to support this idea. Make sure to make the connection between this value and the importance of paying bills or other debts on time.

Encourage discussion about needs versus wants and appropriate uses for credit. Talk to participants about the cost of using credit to make a purchase. Some participants may be willing to share personal stories about the cost of misusing credit. Assist participants in brainstorming ways to evaluate whether it is worth using credit to make a purchase.

After you discuss the concept of credit, you will introduce the types of credit. Most participants are not familiar with the formal names for different types of credit. Use the examples in the Instructor's Guide to connect each type of credit with what it is typically used to purchase.

Next is the discussion about credit reports. This can be a sensitive subject. Encourage participants to work in groups to complete the Reading Your Credit Report Exercise. It is important that participants feel empowered to positively affect their credit history. Spend time carefully walking through the types of information contained in a credit report as well as the steps to correct errors. Be prepared for people to bring up their personal experiences.

To expand upon the explanation of credit bureaus, you can relate credit bureaus to the community. Most people in a community know who and who not to lend money to based on their experience being repaid. Credit bureaus are like a memory bank and help potential creditors understand your history of repaying bills.

Make sure that participants realize that being denied credit entitles them to a free copy of their credit report. However, they must ask the agency that produced the credit report for a copy within a specific time period, usually 60 days.

Warn participants against advertisements that claim that they can clean up your credit report for a fee. These are scams. It takes time and effort to work through issues on your credit report. There is no such thing as a "quick fix."
Games and teaching techniques

Help participants to understand the different types of credit by gathering marketing materials from several financial institutions, credit card companies, and utilities. Make sure that participants can recognize examples of installment, revolving, and service credit. Try to collect marketing materials that are different and detailed enough for participants to compare loan products offered by different financial institutions.

The Using Credit Exercise is a great way to get participants thinking about situations where they would and would not use credit to make a purchase. Every participant will have different answers to this exercise because each person’s financial management style is different. Our choices reflect our personal values and priorities. Encourage participants to listen to each other’s choices without judgment.

Questions You Might Ask If You Are Applying For A Credit Card is an exercise that participants can use to learn about different credit cards. This exercise makes a good homework assignment. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Gather credit card application forms from the mail and financial institutions.
3. Ask participants to answer the questions using information from the applications. If they are unable to answer a question from the information provided, encourage them to use the toll-free number provided by the credit card company to complete the exercise.
4. Discuss participants’ findings as a group. Make sure to talk about the characteristics of a good credit card such as a low interest rate and a minimal annual fee.

Work with participants to write a letter to each of the credit bureaus requesting a copy of their credit report. While participants may want a copy of their credit report, they may not take the initiative to order it after the session. Use Appendix K: Example Credit Report Request Letter to assist participants with this process.

Provide participants with an opportunity to privately review their credit report and ask questions. You may want to invite a representative from a local nonprofit credit counseling organization or financial institution to hold "office hours" in the community for a number of weeks following the session.

Develop a "Jeopardy!" game to reinforce the concepts discussed in the session. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Refer to Appendix L: "Jeopardy!" Questions for suggested game card values and questions.
2. Use folders or folded paper as game cards. Make or purchase play money.
3. Create your game cards and topic areas. Hang them on the wall or the magic wall where participants can see them. If you will be reusing the game over time, you might consider using a piece of poster board and attaching Velcro to the back of each of the game pieces.
4. Divide the group into teams.
5. Play the game and keep score.
6. Award small prizes to the winning team.

I Can't Pay This Bill - What Should I Do? is an exercise to get participants thinking about how to manage credit and negotiate with creditors. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Ensure that the story in the exercise adequately reflects participants' life experience. If it does not, then modify the story. See Appendix M: I Can't Pay this Bill - What Should I Do?
2. Make several photocopies of the exercise for participants.
3. Divide participants into small groups and ask them to complete the exercise. Provide each group with a piece of flipchart paper to record their answers to the questions.
4. Ask each group to present their answers.
5. Discuss participants' thoughts and feelings as a group.

Divide participants into groups to review the Tips for Creating, Maintaining, and Reestablishing Your Credit History. Ask each group to brainstorm actions for several of the tips. Then have the groups present and discuss their suggested actions.

Commonly asked questions

The following are questions that have come up during this session. Often, there are no right or wrong answers to participant questions. Try to take questions that you are asked and pose them to the group for discussion before you share your opinion.

Questions: What actions can you take if a collection agency is bothering you and your family?

Answer: Collection agencies should respect the following requests:

- Please do not call me at work.
- Please do not call me more than once a week.
- Please do not call my home after 7 p.m. on the Sabbath.

It is best if these verbal requests are followed by a written request. If your desire is not respected, we suggest that you tell the collection agency that you will report them to the Better Business Bureau. Also, remember that a collection agency must take a payment of any amount despite their claims of all or nothing. Any payment shows good faith. In this same regard, never make a good faith payment with a post-dated check.
Question: Whom can you contact to get assistance with your credit issues?

Answer: Some Native communities have credit resources (e.g., loan fund, credit assistance department, housing counselors) that will assist community members. If a community-based program is not available, there are also several national nonprofit organizations that you can contact for a local referral. People's experience with these organizations varies, so be sure that you understand all of the terms and conditions of the working relationship before you commit to a program. National credit counseling organizations include

- National Foundation for Credit Counseling 1-800-388-2227
- Myvesta.org 1-800-680-3328
- Money Management International 1-888-845-9606
- American Financial Solutions 1-800-570-3462

Question: What is the difference between the three credit bureaus? Which one is better?

Answer: There are no definable differences between the three major credit bureaus. Theoretically, they all could have the same information about your credit history. In reality, many creditors only report to one or two of the agencies, so the information about your credit history is likely not to be consistent between them.

Session 5: Accessing Credit, Part I

Session description

This is the first of two sessions addressing the lending process. Participants will

- Recognize the Native strength in adopting new ideas to benefit the community.
- Learn about the lending process.

Instructor and participant experiences

Show that credit can be used to benefit the community by discussing other new ideas that have improved people’s lives. You can research community-specific examples by talking to an elder or a community historian.

The discussion around Karla's Catering Business may be most productive if you focus on businesses that the community needs. You may want to refer back to the Local Economy Exercise in Session 1 for ideas.
The Credit System is a new concept for most participants. Many people do not realize that financial institutions are regulated and accountable for their actions. This section, combined with Evaluating a Loan Application, helps participants become more sensitive to how credit decisions are made. Review the five C’s of credit and give participants plenty of time to ask questions. It is very important that participants understand the concept of a debt-to-income ratio. For instance, if an applicant’s debt-to-income ratio is 25 percent, this means that for every $4 of income the applicant has $1 of debt. Some financial institutions may refer to their guidelines or the five C’s differently, but the evaluation process is generally similar. As you go through this explanation, some participants may realize why their loan application was previously denied.

Participants enjoy the Evaluating a Loan Application Exercise. This exercise is intended to provide participants with insight into how lending decisions are made. Encourage participants to discuss each of the scenarios. Help participants to transfer this knowledge into preparing their own loan application. If any of your participants have a background in finance or banking, make them aware that this exercise is meant to be simplified and straight-forward in order to give participants a sense of the process.

Completing a Loan Application should be explained so that all participants are comfortable with the information requested in the lending process. Go through each line of the sample credit application to ensure that participants are clear about its meaning and the information requested.

Participants often have quite a few questions about credit scoring. You may want to identify some additional resources such as credit bureau websites to provide more detailed explanations of how the process works.

Games and teaching techniques

Evaluating a Loan Application Exercise is an opportunity for participants to work in small groups and get a glimpse of what it is like to be a lender. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Divide participants into four groups. Provide each group with a large piece of flipchart paper to complete the exercise.
2. Ask each group to complete the exercise. If your session time is limited, you might ask each group to complete one case study from the exercise.
3. Have each group present the answers for one of the case studies.
4. Discuss whether the group would vote to give the applicant a loan and why.

Completing a Loan Application is another good time to develop a fictitious example that resembles participants’ experiences. Develop the example prior to the session and show participants how to complete a loan application using your example. You may also want to bring several copies of loan applications for participants to complete as a group.
Invite a representative from a lending institution to attend the session and explain the lending process. Ask the representative to bring marketing materials as well as loan applications for participants to review. You may need to arrange for this visit well in advance. Prepare participants for the visit by brainstorming questions to ask the financial representative.

**Commonly asked questions**

The following are questions that have come up during this session. Often, there are no right or wrong answers to participant questions. Try to take questions that you are asked and pose them to the group for discussion before you share your opinion.

**Questions:** How long does it take to get a loan approved?

**Answer:** This depends on the type of loan, the lending institution, and the information you have provided to the organization. The process will always go more smoothly if you are prepared and provide detailed and accurate personal information. Ask your loan officer how long it might take to process your application.

**Question:** Do lending institutions make loan decisions differently?

**Answer:** Yes. Every lending institution has its own process and credit policies. Yet a consistent theme is that lenders want to make loans to borrowers who can repay them. If you are curious about a particular financial institution’s decision-making process, ask a loan representative to explain it to you.

**Question:** What do I do if I get turned down for a loan?

**Answer:** This issue is addressed in the Instructor’s Guide. Participants may still ask this question with regard to their personal situation. Encourage participants to read the suggestions in their Participant’s Workbook and work with their loan officer to determine actions that they will need to take in order to receive a loan in the future.

**Session 6: Accessing Credit, Part II**

**Session description**

This is the last session in the curriculum. Participants will

- Identify pre-European Native economic systems.
- Discuss types of financial institutions.
- Learn to evaluate loan rates, terms, and fees.
- Learn how to avoid predatory lenders.
- Recognize the importance of insurance.
Instructor and participant experiences

The Columbian trade network example at the beginning of the session can be used for many tribes in North America. Even so, research your community's traditional economic systems. Showcase them to the group as they demonstrate ingenuity and a detailed understanding of community economics.

Many participants will not know the differences among types of financial institutions. Come prepared with a list of local organizations. You can find these organizations listed in the yellow pages of a local telephone book under "banks," "credit unions," or "financial institutions." Before you talk about the different types of financial institutions, ask participants to share what they think the differences between them are. In rural communities that do not have access to different types of financial institutions, focus on how people take care of their financial needs. Discuss the options that are available and services that are needed in the community. Try to avoid "bank bashing" and focus on positive experiences and suggestions for building good relationships with a financial institution.

Understanding the Cost of Borrowing Money and Loan Rates, Terms and Fees typically contain new information and are therefore very interesting to participants. Go through this section slowly. Make sure that participants understand the relationship between principal and interest over the life of the loan. Develop several examples that reflect participants' experience to illustrate this concept. Walk through each of the factors that influence the cost of a loan very carefully. Participants usually like the Payment Factor Table since it empowers them to determine the cost of an installment loan. Again, walk through the example slowly so that participants understand how to use this tool.

Encourage participants to spend time working with a representative from a financial institution before they sign a loan agreement. Representatives at financial institutions are available to ensure that you understand how the loan, rates, terms, and fees affect your cost of credit. Anyone who is uncomfortable having this discussion with a loan officer should bring a trusted friend or family member who is more familiar and comfortable with these issues for support. The discussion around predatory lending can get personal and emotional for some participants. Encourage participants to raise this issue in their community. Some communities have been successful enacting codes to prevent predatory lending.

The last topic discussed in the curriculum is insurance. Some cultures are uncomfortable talking about death. If this is the case, then skip the discussion about life insurance and focus on the other types of insurance. Highlight the importance of protecting your family and all that you have worked to achieve.

Games and teaching techniques

Consider inviting a panel of representatives from different types of financial institutions to attend the session and describe the services that they provide. Prepare participants in advance for their visit by brainstorming questions and assigning participants to ask them.
Types of Financial Institutions Overview Exercise can easily be made into a puzzle. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Use the puzzle technique discussed in Section 2: Using the materials.
2. Type out the exercise, including the answers.
3. Make several puzzles.
4. Divide participants into small groups to complete the puzzles.

Develop additional examples for participants to practice calculating the cost of credit. Try to select examples with varying interest rates so that participants can compare the impact of different rates.

Collect examples of predatory lending advertisements. Bring them to the session and share them with participants. Take time to discuss how to spot a predatory lender and actions to avoid them.

The Predatory Lending Exercise is a way to discuss situations where people come into contact with predatory lenders. If your participants do not own their own homes, you can substitute a more realistic example. The following steps can be used to facilitate this exercise:

1. Ensure that the Predatory Lending Exercise is relevant to your participants' experience. If it is not, retype the story with a more appropriate example. See Appendix N: Predatory Lending Exercise
2. Photocopy the exercise for participants.
3. Divide participants into small groups and have them read the story. Then record their answers to the questions on a piece of flipchart paper.
4. Ask participants to present their answers and discuss the issues as a group.

Invite an insurance representative to talk about the different types of insurance. Make sure that the representative approaches this as an educational visit and not a sales call.

Commonly asked questions

The following is a question that came up during this session. Often, there are no right or wrong answers to participant questions. Try to take questions that you are asked and pose them to the group for discussion before you share your opinion.

Question: What financial institution should I choose?

Answer: Selecting a financial institution is a personal decision. If there are options in a community, encourage participants to visit them and determine which organization meets their financial needs while providing the best customer service. Also, remind participants to explore community loan funds when they are interested in borrowing money.
The effort that goes into planning a training session will be different based on the community, your role, and whether the curriculum is being integrated into an existing program or is a stand-alone training. We have included a Readiness Checklist in the appendix to help you prepare for each session (see Appendix O: Readiness Checklist).

**Working with Partners**

Depending on your community and circumstances, you may want to partner with other organizations to offer this educational opportunity. Every partner brings different organizational strengths to a project. Consider your program needs and how a partner might help you deliver the most useful training to participants.

**Consortium of social services**

Sometimes a number of organizations will join together to offer this training to their constituents. This can be particularly effective for community service organizations (e.g., social services, housing department) that can provide an incentive to their clients to attend the sessions. For instance, this training can become part of a homeownership program or a required part of living in tribal housing.

**Employers**

A lack of employee financial management skills contributes to greater turnover, absenteeism, decreased productivity, increased worker compensation claims, and increased health care costs. Therefore, some employers recognize the benefits of providing financial skills training to their employees. These benefits include improved financial management skills and better job performance ratings. Employers are in a unique position to encourage employee participation in training, and some may even be willing to compensate employees for their time. At the very least, most employers are willing to provide space and often food or other supplies for participants.

**Financial institutions**

Partnering with a financial institution can be a great way to ensure financial skills expertise at each session as well as to provide an opportunity for participants and the financial representatives to develop a relationship. These partners may also be willing to support the sessions by providing food, calculators, and pencils to the participants. If you are successful in developing this type of partnership, suggest that the sessions be held at a location that will be most comfortable for the participants (in the community versus at the financial institution). Work with the representative so that their presence is educational and does not revolve around selling products or services to participants. Also, ensure that the financial representative is prepared to work with participants in a culturally appropriate manner. Financial institutions that manage the community’s money are often most willing and interested in participating in this type of program.
Community partners

If you are from outside of the community, you will need to identify a community partner as discussed in Section 2: Using the Materials. Depending on your relationship with the community, you will need a contact to provide insight into community dynamics and arrange the logistics of the sessions. Your community partner should be able to provide you with suggestions and guidance on the best ways to market the session. Ideally, the partner will join you in recruiting and ensuring participation in the sessions. If possible, request a roster of participants before the session so that you can make contact and send materials out in advance. Your partner will also be critical to helping you to customize the training so that it speaks to the community’s life experience.

Selecting a Site

It is important that the sessions be held at a site that is both comfortable and convenient for participants. Historically, many communities have had access to financial skills training off the reservation but have had little interest in attending. The purpose of this curriculum is to offer a tool that can be taught in a Native environment.

Consider selecting a site that has space for childcare. In some communities, providing childcare will significantly affect participation. If this is the case, try to recruit volunteer or paid child-care providers who can assist during each session. Another issue to consider is transportation. You may want to coordinate car pools or ensure that the sessions are in a location that is highly accessible. Prior to the session, familiarize yourself with the site so that you know whether you will have access to electric outlets, an overhead projector, and wall space. Try to hold every session at the same site to minimize confusion.

Marketing and Participant Recruitment

Some instructors choose to make this curriculum part of an existing program while others develop stand-alone workshops. If the sessions are not part of an existing program, you will need to devote energy to marketing and recruitment of participants. Marketing can take many forms and is usually most successful when there is repeated communication and follow-up that is approached from a number of perspectives. Consider using any number of the following techniques:

- **Flyers.** Post flyers in community facilities. Flyers can also be sent to individuals as both invitations and reminders about each session. See Appendix P: Example flyers.
- **E-mail reminders.** If participants are online, send e-mail reminders.
- **Fax.** Fax flyers to participants who prefer this type of communication.
- **Telephone.** While it is time-consuming, nothing can take the place of speaking with someone. Speaking to participants individually, getting personal commitments, and reminding them to attend the sessions is a very successful way of ensuring attendance and assessing participants' interests and experience with personal finance.
• *Newspaper or Newsletter.* Community publications can be used in a number of ways. You can publish articles to introduce the program and market individual sessions. You can build interest in the curriculum by writing stories that highlight individuals who are participating or have gone through the training. Or, you can develop a column and write several articles about traditional resource management and financial skills.

**Supplies**

There are a number of supplies that will be useful as you teach this curriculum. Review the Supplies List (see Appendix Q: Supplies List) to be sure that you have the needed materials well in advance of each session. If you are providing snacks for your participants, try to bring healthy foods and be aware of dietary restrictions (e.g., diabetes, lactose intolerance, vegetarians etc.).
# Appendix A: Building Native Communities Participant Assessment

Please check the box that best describes your response to each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not Yet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am satisfied with my personal financial situation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have strong personal financial management skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I would like to learn new skills and take steps to strengthen my per-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ersonal finance skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I have savings goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have and use a spending plan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have and use a checking or savings account.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I know how to read my account statement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I know how to balance my checkbook.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I balance my checkbook each month.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I have bounced several checks in the past two years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I know how to read and understand the information contained on my</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credit report.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I review a copy of my credit report each year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I know how to correct errors I find on my credit report.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I understand the information that is required to apply for a loan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I understand how to calculate my debt-to-income ratio.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I understand how a lender will evaluate my loan application.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I understand the relationship between principal and interest over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the life of a loan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I know the differences between a credit union, bank, and finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>company.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I know how to avoid predatory lenders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I understand the types of insurance and use it to protect my family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and valuables.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I would like to pursue further training and continue to develop my</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal financial manage.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Welcome Letter and Agenda

Revise the following letter to meet your situation and needs.

To: Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families Participants
From: [Trainer's name]
Reference: Upcoming training

Welcome to Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families. Congratulations on taking this step toward strengthening your personal finance skills!

I am looking forward to the upcoming sessions of Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families. The first session will be held on [date] from [start time - end time] at [location]. Refreshments will be served.

Enclosed is your copy of the Participant's Workbook as well as an agenda for our first session. I encourage you to look through the workbook prior to the session. Don't be intimidated by the size of the workbook; we'll go through each session at a pace that suits you. If possible, please bring a pencil and calculator to use during each session.

If you have any questions or concerns about the training, please contact [contact name, phone number and e-mail address if appropriate].

Session dates and times

[List session dates and times if available]

Directions to location

[Provide directions to session location if not commonly known]
**Session One: Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening prayer</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icebreaker</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle of Life Exercise</td>
<td>50 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Economy Exercise</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plugging the Leaking Economy</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Action</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session evaluation</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Session 2: Developing a Spending Plan**

*(date, time and location)*
Appendix C: Icebreakers

Ice Breakers - Getting Comfortable

Knots

Tell the participants that this exercise is about cooperation, and how it works. Arrange the group in circles of 6-12 people. Ask each circle of participants to stand shoulder-to-shoulder facing the center of the circle. Then tell them to close their eyes, and put both hands into the center of the circle. Then say, “With you right hand, take one hand of one other person. Pause “Now with your other hand, take the hand of someone else” when all hands are taken 1:1, say “open your eyes, and you will see that you are in a human knot”

Ask, “Do you think that it is possible to undo this knot without breaking hands (Subtle suggestion of a rule and a challenge)? Encourage the group to try to undo themselves by working together and staying connected. At the end, people often stand around for some time, still holding hands.

Process the activity by asking the group what they did and what happened? Get the group to discuss how this is similar to the way they work together. This is a very powerful exercise, and informative about the actual group dynamics.

T.P.

I always have fun with the toilet paper icebreaker! Pass a roll of TP to the person closest to you and merely say “Take as much as you think you need and pass the TP to the next person.” Don’t offer any more information. Once the TP has gone around the room. Say to the group, “For every square that you tore off, tell the group something about yourself.” Then watch their faces, I get a charge out of who is proud that they only picked one square, and the other that picked 20 squares! This works with all types of people and groups.

Three Truths and a Lie

Give each person an index card and have him or her list three true things and one lie about themselves. Ask each individual to share their list with the group. Ask the group to guess which statement is not true. This exercise is fun and helps people get to know one another better.
Ice Breakers - Getting Comfortable (Continued)

Introductions

Start by having everyone stand in a circle. Have each person introduce himself or herself by using his or her first name preceded by a descriptive adjective – for instance – you might be “Marvelous Mary” and I might be “Righteous Roy.”

Now here is the catch, when it is your turn, you first have to say everybody’s name before you. If I were the 2nd person after you, I would have to say “Marvelous Mary” “Righteous Roy.” If “Ticklish Tom” were the 3rd person, he would have to say “M..M..”, “R..R..”, “Ticklish Tom”.

Needless to say, it does provide some interesting results, it breaks the ice, and it gets people to know each other on a more informal, first name basis. It is also good for improving memory skills through association.

Unusual Experiences

This icebreaker requires some preparation by the facilitator. You must collect an unusual life experience from each participant prior to the session. Things like “lived for 8 months in a tent” or “I got shot once” have come up in my interviews with participants. Make a list using one example from each person. Leave a blank space next to each item. The list looks like this:

Got shot once

Lived in a tent for 8 months

At the beginning of the session, pass out a copy of the list to each participant. Give the group some time to interview each other and match each participant with their life experience.
THE MEDICINE WHEEL

This exercise is a modified version of the one presented in a Community Change Agents seminar organized by the Center for Community Change.

**Total time:** This activity may last between 1 1/2 and 2 hours.

**Objectives:**

a) Participants will learn *main characteristics of four leadership styles*, their differences and interactions.

b) Participants will identify themselves with one of the leadership styles, or a combination of them; and the need to find balance both within a group and inside the individual.

**Process:**

a) **Introductions.** This should be done if new participants are in the group.

b) **Explaining the Four Leadership Styles.** The facilitator will explain that according to some Native American cultures, there are different leadership styles which can be classified using a medicine wheel. Animals represent the cardinal points and four specific leadership styles.

- **Buffaloes** represent the North. They are the classical warriors who are task-oriented people. They don’t like to spend too much time in meetings, discussing, arguing, and not seeing immediate results. When there is no agreement, they can start doing things just by themselves.

- **Eagles** represent the East. They are classical thinkers who are so good at defining the big picture. They like to discuss general ideas, creating “theory”; but they can’t respond efficiently when it is the moment to act. They feel lost when the group is engaged in action.

- **Deer** represent the South. They are classical peers who like to work in a group, always promoting teamwork. They like to be friendly, supportive, and sometimes they take other’s guilt to keep the group intact. They don’t like to work alone.

- **Bears** represent the West. They are classical critics who like to see the details of every plan or report. They like to be well prepared before making the first step. They rely on past experiences in order to plan. They usually alert others when they see possible mistakes or something is missing.
c) **What kind of leader am I?** The facilitator will ask participants to review all the leadership styles and identify themselves with the one that better describes their characteristics. People usually have characteristics from the four styles, but they must choose the one that better fits their current behavior.

d) **What are my strengths? Who is the most difficult to work with? Who is the easiest?** The facilitator will ask participants to make groups according to their leadership styles (buffaloes, eagles, deer, and bears). Every group will answer the following questions:

- What are the main strengths and weaknesses of this kind of leadership?
- Which group is the most difficult to work with, and why?
- Which group is the easiest to work with, and why?

e) **A report back.** The facilitator will allow groups to report back without having a particular order. It is not surprising that buffaloes will start first. The facilitator must allow a polemic, but friendly discussion.

f) **Do we need each other?** After the hot discussion, the facilitator will direct the arguments toward the need from each other and how necessary it is to find balance within the group and inside the individual.

g) **What does the Medicine Wheel Center represent?** Participants will answer this question based on the previous discussions.

**Debrief:** the facilitator will ask participants some questions about how they felt, how important the whole activity was, and if there is a motivation to continue on.
The Medicine Wheel

North

West

South

East

Four Predominant Leadership Styles
Appendix D: Indigenous versus Native economic models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Economic Model</th>
<th>Indigenous Economic Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumers</td>
<td>Producers and consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material wealth</td>
<td>Wealth distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual family</td>
<td>Extended family/community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Session Evaluation

### Session Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Training:</th>
<th>Location of Training:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator:</td>
<td>Session Name:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Please check the box that best describes your response to each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information provided was useful</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The pace/flow of the session was appropriate</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The delivery of the information was logical</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Please check the box that best describes your response to the following aspects of today's training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>□ Covered too much</th>
<th>□ Covered just enough</th>
<th>□ Covered too little</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length:</td>
<td>□ Too long</td>
<td>□ Just right</td>
<td>□ Too short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>□ Well-organized</td>
<td>□ Disorganized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Please check the box that best describes your response to the training facilities and materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session facility</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting room set up</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handouts/materials</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio visual materials</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. What was most useful about this session?

5. What was least useful about this session?

6. How will you use the skills and ideas presented in the session?

7. What suggestion would you make for future sessions?

Please share your observations about the STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES of the facilitator:

**Facilitator’s Name:**

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**
Appendix F: Credit Bureau Letter

Credit Bureau Letter Example

[Date]

To: [Credit Bureau name and address]

ATTN: Consumer Relations

Dear [Credit Bureau name]:

I request that you please add the following statement to my credit file:

I have successfully completed the program, Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families, a six-session curriculum developed by First Nations Development Institute and the Fannie Mae Foundation on credit and financial responsibility.

Respectfully,

[Your signature]
[Your name typed]
[Your Social Security Number]
[Your address]
[Your previous address within the past two years]
[Your home phone number]
Appendix G: Priorities and Values Auction Items List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities and Values Auction Items List</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A safe community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A close-knit family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A fulfilling and satisfying job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To be well respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A new truck with good stereo system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To own and manage my own business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The opportunity to go to school to further my education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. A bonus certificate that pays off all my credit card debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Peace among all countries in the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. To be rich and famous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. A good relationship with my partner (boyfriend/girl-friend/spouse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. To ensure that all of the people in my community have food, shelter, and healthy families</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Check Cashers Versus Banks

Juanita and Alice both work at Mr. One-Stop Shopping. They both make $280 a week.

Juanita has a bank account at Hercules bank, so every week the accounting department at Mr. One-Stop Shopping deposits her paycheck directly into the bank. Then when she wants to buy something, she either takes money out at an ATM or writes a check. Because Juanita has direct deposit and keeps a small minimum balance, Hercules Bank gives her the bank account for free.

Alice does not have a bank account. She feels better when she is given her paycheck and then sees the actual money. So every week when it is time to get paid, she goes to the office in Mr. One-Stop Shopping and picks up her check. Then Alice goes to Slick’s Fast Cash to cash it. Each time she cashes her check, Slick’s Fast Cash charges her 10 percent of the value of her check.

After cashing her check at Slick’s, Alice carefully puts all of her money in her wallet and walks home. As soon as she gets home, she puts the cash in different envelopes marked "gas," "food," and "rent." Then she hides the envelopes under her mattress. When she wants to buy something, she simply takes some money from the right envelope and goes out to make her purchase. When she needs to pay a bill, she takes the cash from the correct envelope and brings it back to Slick’s where she is charged $3.50 for each check.

Questions:

1. What does Juanita do when she gets paid? What about Alice?
2. How will Juanita pay bills during the week? What about Alice?
3. How much money does Juanita pay to have a bank account?
4. What are the pros and cons of having a bank account?
5. What are the pros and cons of cashing a paycheck at Slick’s Fast Cash?
6. How much money does Alice spend to have her check cashed each week and to pay her five other monthly bills?
7. If Alice cashes her check every week and pays her five monthly bills at Slick’s, how much money will she spend at Slick’s in a month? A year?
8. What could Juanita do with the amount of money that Alice spends each week to get her paycheck cashed?

This exercise has been adapted from the Fannie Mae Foundation’s *Money Management and Homebuying Readiness Sourcebook for Teachers for ESOL and ABE.*
**Appendix I: Researching a Checking or Savings Account Exercise**

Investigate the answers to the following questions to help you select an account. You may want to use an additional piece of paper to collect detailed information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial institution name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type(s) of account</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What services come with the account and what are the fees?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much money is needed to open an account?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much money do I need to keep in the account to avoid fees?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many checks can I write each month before I am charged a fee?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the fees for bounced checks?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will canceled checks be returned to me? If not, how much will it cost to receive a copy of a check?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many withdrawals can I make before I am charged a fee?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the interest rate on money that is kept in my checking account? Savings account?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does an ATM or debit card come with this account?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the fees for cashier's checks and wire transfers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the customer service?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J: Questions You Might Ask if You Are Applying for A Credit Card

1. What is the interest rate on the credit card?
2. Is the rate quoted a promotional or introductory rate?
3. If it is an introductory rate, how long will this rate last?
4. Does the credit card company charge an annual fee on the credit card?
5. Are there any penalties if the card is not used for a period of time?
6. Is there a penalty if the credit card holder goes over the limit?
7. Can the payment due date be changed if the cardholder needs to?
8. Is the interest rate for the credit card a fixed rate or a variable rate?
9. If it is variable, how and when does it change?
10. Would the interest rate be different if I needed a cash advance?
11. What is the grace period before I am charged interest on the owed balance?
12. How do your rates compare with other institutions?
13. Who would I talk to if there were problems or questions I might have about my credit card bill?

This exercise is adapted from a piece developed by Lavaun Moulten and can be found in the Fannie Mae Foundation’s *Money Management and Homebuying Readiness Sourcebook for Teachers for ESOL and ABE*. 
Appendix K: Example Credit Report Request Letter

Example Credit Report Request Letter.
Write your own letter by substituting the requested information for everything listed in *bold italics*.

*Date*

To: [Credit Bureau name and address]

Dear [Credit Bureau name]:

I would like to request a copy of my credit report. Please use the following information to access my file. I have also included a copy of [utility bill or driver's license] to establish my identity.

*Your full name*
*Your date of birth*
*Your Social Security Number*
*Your spouse's name*
*Your spouse's Social Security number*
*A list of your home addresses for the past five years*
*Your current employer*
*Your daytime phone number*
*Your evening phone number*

Respectfully,

*Your signature*
*Your name typed*
# Appendix L: Jeopardy Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Types of Credit</th>
<th>Credit History</th>
<th>Credit Report</th>
<th>Correcting Your Credit Report</th>
<th>Building Your Credit History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10</td>
<td>What type of credit allows you to pay for used services at a later date?</td>
<td>Your credit history is maintained by what organizations?</td>
<td>What are credit reports used for?</td>
<td>Does a credit report always show accurate information about your credit history?</td>
<td>What is the best way to build your credit history?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Answer: noninstallment or service credit</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: credit bureaus</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: To evaluate your reliability and your ability to manage your finances</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: No</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: pay your bills on time</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50</td>
<td>What type of credit allows you to borrow a specific amount of money at one time for a defined purpose?</td>
<td>Where do credit bureaus get their information?</td>
<td>How many major credit bureaus are there?</td>
<td>How often should you receive a copy of your credit report?</td>
<td>If you cannot pay your bills on time, what should you do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Answer: installment credit</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: banks, department stores, credit card companies, etc.</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: three</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: Once a year</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: contact creditors and make other arrangements as soon as possible</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100</td>
<td>What type of credit allows you to borrow money at any time up to a set limit?</td>
<td>What do credit bureau records indicate?</td>
<td>What are the seven types of information contained in a credit report?</td>
<td>To correct an error on your credit report, what do you need to send to the credit bureaus?</td>
<td>What actions can you take to avoid excessive inquiries into your credit report?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Answer: revolving credit</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: Whether you pay your bills on time</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: identification, credit history, collection accounts, court-house records, additional information, and inquiries</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: A letter of dispute, a copy of your credit report with the error highlighted, and additional information that proves your claim</em></td>
<td><em>Answer: Write the credit bureaus and request that they not share a copy of your credit report without your permission</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix M: I Can’t Pay This Bill—What Should I Do?

Recently Christopher and Ann had a car accident. Their truck was significantly damaged. They needed it fixed immediately since they both used the truck to get to their jobs. Christopher’s cousin Ron was out of town, so they brought it to a nearby auto shop. Several weeks later they received a bill for $1,000 from the auto shop. If they didn’t pay, it would go on their credit report and create problems for them later when they wanted to buy a house or get any other type of loan. They had only $300 in their savings account. Together they sat down and brainstormed ways to come up with some extra money. This is the list they came up with:

• Have a garage sale. They figure they can sell some crafts and other odds and ends lying around the house.
• Take a few things to the pawn shop down the street. Ann has a hand-woven blanket, and Christopher has a watch that the pawnbroker would take. Between the two items, they think they could get $400. The only problem is that the pawnbroker will charge 20 percent interest, and if they don’t repay the loan in three months, they will lose the watch and the blanket.
• Borrow money from family and friends. This is the most inexpensive option, but they are not sure how many people they will need to ask to pull $700 together.
• Hold a raffle. They can sell $10 tickets to family friends and raffle off some beadwork jewelry that Ann has collected. They realize that they will need to sell 70 tickets in order to raise enough money to pay the auto shop.
• Negotiate a payment plan with the auto shop. They can call the business and explain the situation. They can offer to pay a set amount of money each month until the loan is paid off and in return not be reported to a collection agency.
• Take out a payday loan from the Fast Cash store in town. Both Ann and Christopher make about $600 each pay period (every two weeks). So, if they take out a payday loan, they will have $1,200 immediately. Of course, they will pay a service charge of 15 percent, and they will still need to pay back the $1,200 as soon as they get paid. If they cannot repay the $1,200 right away, they will pay an additional 15 percent each pay period on the original $1,200 loan.

Questions:

1. What are the pros and cons of each option?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
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<tr>
<td>Garage sale</td>
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<td>Pawn shop</td>
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<td>Friends and family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raffle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payment plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payday loan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. What do you think that Ann and Christopher should do?

This exercise was developed by Vicky Vanderpol and can be found in the Fannie Mae Foundation’s Money Management and Homebuying Readiness Sourcebook for Teachers for ESOL and ABE.
Appendix N: Predatory Lending Exercise

Laid off after 29 years of working for a local company, Joanna was struggling. Although she had a part-time job driving a school bus, she was not earning enough to pay her bills. When she received a call from a man who said he could help her come up with some cash, it seemed like a godsend. The man said he worked for a home improvement company and that he could find her a loan that would both pay for some remodeling on her house and leave enough cash left over to pay her bills.

Unfortunately for Joanna, the salesman actually worked for a mortgage broker, and he was not peddling home improvement, but a refinancing of her existing home mortgage at a high interest rate. He invited Joanna to his office, where he chatted with her while he filled out a mortgage application for her. While he indeed gave her a "good-faith estimate"—a form required by regulators that lists the proposed interest rate and fees on a loan—the loan he wrote up was not a home equity loan for the $6,000 she needed to pay off bills. It was a loan for $76,500 that refinanced her entire mortgage at a higher interest rate.

A couple of weeks later Joanna signed the loan papers and walked out with a check for $1,900. The signing went by so fast she didn’t catch all that was written on the pages. But she trusted the broker and the lawyer in the room and felt she had a pretty good grasp on what she was signing.

What Joanna didn’t realize was that her loan terms had changed since she received the good-faith estimate. The broker added $6,500 in fees to her loan and changed the loan from a fixed-rate to a more expensive adjustable-rate mortgage. Joanna was a victim of predatory lending.

Questions:

1. What does the word "predator" mean?

2. How would you define predatory lending?

3. What are some things you might do to avoid being in the same situation?

This exercise is adapted from a piece by Jeanette Bradley and Peter Skillern and can be found in the Fannie Mae Foundation’s Money Management and Homebuying Readiness Sourcebook for Teachers for ESOL and ABE.
Appendix O: Readiness Checklist

Building Native Communities:
Financial Skills For Families

-Readiness Checklist for Trainers-

Are you ready?

☐ Have you talked with your community contact to arrange the session?
   Do any of the participants have special needs (e.g. wheelchair access, hearing impaired)?

☐ Have you arranged for snacks or coordinated a potluck meal for the session?

☐ Are you sure that the facility meets your needs? Does the room have electrical outlets? Are there tables and chairs? Are you going to have the space to yourself during the session?

☐ Have you sent flyers to potential participants?

☐ Have you posted flyers in the community?

☐ Have you reviewed the session?

☐ Have you practiced your presentation?

☐ Have you collected traditional examples from your community for this session?

☐ Have you prepared all needed overheads for the sessions?

☐ Are you prepared to facilitate the session?

☐ Is someone ready to lead the group in an opening prayer?

☐ Do you have a participant sign-in sheet?

☐ Have you selected an introductory exercise?

☐ Are the discussion questions pre-written on a flipchart?

☐ Do you have an agenda that lists the curriculum purpose and the session objectives?

☐ Do you have an evaluation for the session?
-Readiness Checklist for Trainers-

(Continued)

☐ Have you brought your instructor book and some extra participant workbooks?

☐ Do you have all of your teaching materials?

☐ Markers?

☐ Flipchart?

☐ Flipchart stand?

☐ Tape?

☐ Overhead projector?

☐ Extra pencils?

☐ Extra calculators?

☐ Have you set the date, time and place of the next session?
Appendix P: Example Flyers

Want to stretch your dollar further?
Join us for

Building Native Communities: Financial Skills for Families

When is it? Month #, ####
What time is it? 00:00

Where is it?
Neighborhood Center
1234 Street

It will be potluck so sign up for food!
Drinks: __________________________
Chips: __________________________
Dips: __________________________
Bread: __________________________
Meat: __________________________
Condiments: _____________________
Dessert: ________________________

Still have questions?
Call Ms. Neighborhood Contact at (123) 123-1234
or the Ms. Session Trainer at (123) 123-1234
Appendix Q: Supplies List

The following supplies may be helpful as you conduct the training:

- Flipchart. You may want two flipcharts so that you can prepare one with session discussion questions and exercises and use the other for participant brainstorming.

- Masking tape/thumb tacks. You will use this to hang things from the wall (e.g., flipchart papers, magic wall)

- Markers. Bring several for yourself and group exercises.

- Pencils. Bring enough for all of the participants.

- Calculators. Bring several calculators since some participants will not bring their own. If possible, find an organization that will donate calculators to the participants in the session for their ongoing use.

- Colored paper. Cut pieces of 8 1/2 x 11 paper in half and place stacks of sheets near participants around the room. Participants can use this paper for exercises, notes, and doodling. If you use the magic wall or index answer technique, the colored paper looks nice hanging on the wall.

- Overhead projector and screen. If a screen is not available, be sure that there is a clean white wall that you can use for this purpose.

- Overhead markers. Bring several different colors to use during the session.

- Overheads. Select which pages in the Participant’s Workbook will be useful overheads for participants. Suggestions are included in the Instructor’s Guide.

- Magic wall. A piece of nylon fabric can be purchased at a craft or fabric store. The suggested dimensions are 9 feet by 5 feet. Consider hemming the edges of the fabric so that it does not snag or fray.

- Spray mount adhesive. This is used to prepare the magic wall. A common type of adhesive is 3M Artist’s Mount that can be purchased at a craft or office supply store.

- Name tents. These are useful if you or the participants do not know each other.

- Toys. Silly Putty, Koosh balls, or other toys can be placed on participant tables to keep the atmosphere fun and provide people with something to do with their hands while they are listening to the presentation.

- Props for icebreakers, such as a roll of toilet paper.

- Snacks and drinks. If you are providing the food, be sure to select healthy choices and provide coffee.
Appendix R: Additional Resources

The following list of additional resources is extracted from an on-line comprehensive resource guide that is being designed through a partnership between the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, University of Massachusetts, Boston and the Fannie Mae Foundation. This online resource will be available by July, 2002 and can found through the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, University of Massachusetts, Boston website at www.alri.org.

Credit & Credit Counseling

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<tr>
<th>Type of Resource</th>
<th>Name of Resource</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>American Consumer Credit Counseling, Inc</td>
<td>(800) 769-3571</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Savings Education Council (ASEC)</td>
<td>(202) 659-0670</td>
<td><a href="http://www.asec.org">www.asec.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC)</td>
<td>(800) 388-2227</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nfcc.org">www.nfcc.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.consumercredit.com/about.htm">www.consumercredit.com/about.htm</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>National Institute of Consumer Education</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.nice.emich.edu">www.nice.emich.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Knowing and Understanding Your Credit</td>
<td>(202) 274-8000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.homebuyingguide.org">www.homebuyingguide.org</a></td>
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### Economic Literacy & Social Change

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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>United for a Fair Economy</td>
<td>(617) 423-0191</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ufenet.org">www.ufenet.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sourcebook</td>
<td>Making Cents: An Economic Literacy Sourcebook</td>
<td>(413) 552-2382</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sabeswest.org">www.sabeswest.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>Dollar and Sense Magazine</td>
<td>(617) 876-2434</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dollarsandsense.org/">www.dollarsandsense.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Claiming What Is Ors: An Economic Experience</td>
<td>(865) 933-3443</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Affluenza</td>
<td>(800) 543-FROG</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza">www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza</a></td>
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### Economic Self-Sufficiency

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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>The Fannie Mae Foundation</td>
<td>(202) 274-8000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org">www.fanniemaefoundation.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>National Association of Securities Dealers</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.investor.nasd.com/">www.investor.nasd.com/</a></td>
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## Financial Literacy

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>American Savings Education Council (ASEC)</td>
<td>(202) 659-0670</td>
<td><a href="http://www.asec.org/">www.asec.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Financial Literacy Center</td>
<td>(888) 679-3300</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hitflc.com/">www.hitflc.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy</td>
<td>(888) 45-EDUCATE</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jumpstartcoalition.org">www.jumpstartcoalition.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochure</td>
<td>Sixty-six Ways to Save Money</td>
<td>(734) 487-2292</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nice.emich.edu/66ways.html">www.nice.emich.edu/66ways.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Money Math: Lessons for Life</td>
<td>(212) 597-2423</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook</td>
<td>Control Your Money</td>
<td>(800) 448-8878</td>
<td><a href="http://www.newreaderspress.com">www.newreaderspress.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life Skills for Today's World: Money and Consumers</td>
<td>(800) 531-5015</td>
<td><a href="http://www.steckvaughn.com">www.steckvaughn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Financial Planning Education: Challenges for Teachers, Trainers, and Institutions</td>
<td>(703) 620-3110</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Calculator Web</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.calculatorweb.com">www.calculatorweb.com</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>General Electric Center for Financial Learning</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.financiallearning.com/ge/home.jsp">www.financiallearning.com/ge/home.jsp</a></td>
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### Individual Development Accounts

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>The Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED)</td>
<td>(202) 408-9788</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cfed.org/">www.cfed.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>Assets: A Quarterly Update for Innovators</td>
<td>(202) 408-9788</td>
<td><a href="http://www.indnetwork.org/assets/index.html">www.indnetwork.org/assets/index.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>IDAnetwork: Exchanging Information on Individual Development Accounts</td>
<td>(202) 408-9788</td>
<td><a href="http://www.idanetwork.org/">www.idanetwork.org/</a></td>
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### Training Adult Learners

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Active Training by Mel Silberman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Helping Health Workers Learn by David Werner and Bill Bower (See Looking at Learning and Teaching)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learning to Listen: Learning to Learn by Jane Vella</td>
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