

IF YOU MADE A MILLION

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by David M. Schwartz, illustrated by Steven Kellogg

Themes: Communities, Fantasy and Imagination, Humor, Math

Grade Level: K-4 (ages 5 to 9)

Running time: 15 minutes

SUMMARY

This is a lighthearted look at counting, earning, spending and saving money. Marvelosissimo the Mathematical Magician, with the help of his fantasy animal friends, introduces money in units from one cent up to a million dollars. Marvelosissimo shows how people earn money by providing goods (such as purple painted pots) and services (such as dusting a duck or mowing a meadow). He also explains how to earn money by saving money and letting it earn interest. Along the way, the program shows how to count money, how to use checks instead of money, and how to spend money, by paying cash or borrowing from a bank. The program also compares relative amounts by measuring and weighing money. (A million dollars in pennies would make a stack 95 miles high.) Marvelosissimo's magic is a marvelous introduction, not just to money, but to our economic system.

OBJECTIVES

- Children will watch and listen to explanations of money and economic principles.

- Children will learn the importance of earning money, making long-term savings plans and spending money wisely.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Write the number 1,000,000 on the chalkboard and ask students to calculate how many pennies would make up one million dollars. Then introduce the title of the movie and ask for ideas on how to make a million dollars, starting with just one cent. Encourage students to watch for details in the movie that show if their ideas were correct.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Ask students to identify what they thought were the funniest ways the movie showed for earning and spending money. Have them compare these methods with how people earn and spend money in the real world. Review the parts of the movie that talk about leaving one million dollars in the bank and living on the interest. End the discussion by asking students the program's final question: "What would you do if you made a million?"

Connect the story to K-2 math by discussing use of real coins and bills. Have students arrange the coins in the same ways they saw in the movie, to make totals of one penny, one nickel, one dime, one quarter, one dollar, five dollars, ten dollars, and one hundred dollars. For older students (grades 2-4), use the movie to focus on the use of zeros to multiply by tens, hundreds, and thousands. With all grades, encourage students to write funny story problems featuring Marvelosissimo and his magical friends.

Connect the story to social studies by introducing the term "circulation." Ask students to imagine where a coin or bill goes as it passed from hand to hand. For a lighthearted approach, have students make up stories and poems about the adventures of money in circulation. For a more serious approach, have them make a bulletin board or study center that shows the flow of money through a community.

Connect the story to art by having students design their own money. Have them make cardboard "coins" and paper bills, assigning a value to each type of currency. Younger students can use their "funny money" to do story problems or play "Store." Older students might want to "make money" that features their own portraits.

Connect the story to geography by collecting coins and bills from around the world. Have students examine the currency to discover what country it comes from and then locate the countries on a map or globe.

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HOW MUCH IS A MILLION?, by David M. Schwartz, illustrated by Steven Kellogg
MILLIONS OF CATS, by Wanda Gág

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