

JA BizTown®

JA BizTown® gives students in grades four through six the opportunity to run banks, manage restaurants, read utility meters, use debit cards, and even vote. Turnkey classroom materials have been created with teacher input and are provided by Junior Achievement USA, along with teacher training and professional development opportunities.

JA BizTown® combines in-class learning with a daylong visit to a JA BizTown® facility—a fully interactive, true-to-life simulation where students learn the fundamental relationship between academics and life beyond school. JA BizTown® helps students envision the possibilities of what they can be by helping them see the value of staying in school. JA's interactive curriculum engages and excites students, leading to stronger critical-thinking and decision-making skills and greater self confidence.



JA BizTown® in the Classroom

The teacher, who presents a multi-week, in-class curriculum that encompasses financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship, brings the JA BizTown® experience to life.

Life lessons learned include:

- Rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Necessary steps to apply for and obtain a job, and the critical-thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership skills needed to succeed in that job.
- How to write checks, use debit cards, and manage money effectively.
- How goods, services, and resources flow in a free market economy.
- How to start, finance, and manage a business that brings jobs to a community

JA BizTown® Simulation

After completing their classroom lessons, students head to the JA BizTown® facility for an exhilarating simulated city experience. Through role-play, the simulation helps students connect the dots between classroom learning and real life. Students assume various roles, including CEO, CFO, utility worker, restaurant owner, reporter, disc jockey, lawyer, and postal carrier.

As “business owners,” students learn to:

- Responsibly manage staff, financial resources, inventories, and customers.
- Work as a team.
- Account for business expenses and take in enough money to make a profit.
- Balance their professional and personal responsibilities.

As “consumers,” students learn to:

- Make wise financial decisions.
- Write checks, use debit cards, and balance their checkbooks.
- Make deposits into their bank accounts.
- Manage their JA BizTown® income by first purchasing what they need before buying what they want.
- Understand their relationship as consumers in a free-market economy.

Volunteer at a JA BizTown®

Join Junior Achievement's national network of more than 153,786 volunteers and help students in your community connect the dots between what they learn in school and the “*business of life*”—work readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy.

Before you begin the JA BizTown® program, JA staff will provide training so you are comfortable with the simulation experience. You will become familiar with the daily schedule, the work expected of the students, and your roles and responsibilities. You also will be instructed on how to use the Volunteer Guide and Volunteer Checklist to help facilitate the experience.

Volunteers are key to the success of this program. JA staff will be available to answer your questions, make suggestions, and provide full support throughout the day of the simulation.

The time commitment is minimal compared to the significant impact you make. The approximately six-hour day includes volunteer training and the five-hour simulation. Additional training, either in person or online, is scheduled with the local JA staff. You will be astonished by how much the students accomplish in such a short period of time.



For details on how to inspire students in your community to succeed, visit Junior Achievement of Western PA's website at westernpa.ja.org or contact Lisa Henry, Project Administrator at lhenny@jawesternpa.org.