

**Parent reading guide for**  
**“How Much Is that Doggie in the Window?”**  
**by Bob Merrill**

 Ages 3+








**Money as You Grow Bookshelf**



# Welcome

This guide will help you teach your child money management skills while reading “How Much Is that Doggie in the Window?” by Bob Merrill. It will accomplish this by:

-  Helping you explain the key ideas covered in the book, and then providing you with signs your child understands the key ideas and can use them in daily life.
-  Giving you things to think about before reading the book with your child. These can help you spot key points in the book or spark ideas to discuss later.
-  Helping you prepare for an enjoyable reading time with your child.
-  Providing questions to talk about with your child.
-  Suggesting activities that help your child put ideas and lessons into action.



# The story

A young boy wants to buy a dog but does not have enough money. He tries to earn money, but ends up spending his money on others instead. His good deeds are rewarded in the end.



# Key ideas

By the time you finish this discussion guide, your child will be able to **point to examples** of these key ideas in the book you read and discuss **real-life examples, too**. Use these definitions to explain the ideas. We've also included ways children can show they are ready to use them in their daily lives.

## 1. Prioritizing

Sometimes we need to make choices about what we want or do. These choices can change from day to day. Prioritizing is arranging things in order of their importance to us.

**How kids show it:** They can prioritize choices when they want two or more things at the same time.

## 2. Spending

You need money to buy things. These things have different prices. Money can be spent only once – after buying something, a person needs more money to buy something else.

**How kids show it:** They can make spending choices with their own money (real or play). **(Ages 7+)** They can tell the value of different coins and bills.

### 3. Staying true to yourself

Sometimes we might feel left out if we don't have what other people have. Knowing what's important to you and not comparing yourself to others can help you feel good about your decisions.

**How kids show it:** They can name one special thing they like about themselves and one thing that makes each family member special too. **(Ages 7+)** They can discuss why it's okay that different people use their money for different things.

# Something to think about

First, read the book yourself and think about these ideas:

- The young boy did not have enough money to buy the dog. He tried to make money but that didn't work out very well.
- He really wanted the dog, yet he spent his money to help his family. Are there times when family events change your own plans?
- The boy's family bought the dog to surprise and thank him. What did the boy do that made the family want to reward him?





## Before you read

Read the book first yourself. Knowing the story will help you know what comes next. It is important to ask your child questions about the story as you read. Ask what might happen next in the story.

- Choose a quiet time for stories and make it part of your daily routine.
- Find a cozy, quiet place to read.
- Make sure your child can see the pictures.
- Talk about the pictures and characters in the book.
- Read with expression in your voice. Give each character in the story his or her own voice.
- Keep the story time short enough to leave them wanting more.
- Look for ways during the day to bring up the messages in the story.
- Continue to read aloud together even if your child can read alone.



# Something to talk about

Before you begin to read the story with your child, look at the cover of the book together. Ask what the story might be about.

As you read the story with your child, talk about these ideas:

- How did the boy know he did not have enough money for the dog?
- There are different pets for sale at the pet shop, but the boy wanted the dog. If you could pick out a pet at the shop, what would you pick?
- When he found out he didn't have enough money, how did the boy react?
- The boy was excited to earn money by selling lemonade. What happened when he set up a lemonade stand? Have you ever tried to earn money? How did it go?
- The young boy spends his money on his sister, his mother, and his father when they are not feeling well, even though he is saving for a dog. Why do you think he spent his money on his family instead of saving it?
- He goes back to the pet shop to visit the dog only to learn that the dog has been sold. How do you think the boy is feeling?
- How do the boy's feelings change when he gets home and sees his surprise?



# Something to do

## Caring for others

**Ages 3+**

It feels good to do something nice for someone else. Instead of spending money on a gift, you can also plan a surprise for a family member. Some ideas for a surprise are to make a card or draw a picture. Does your child have skills he or she can share with others instead of buying a gift? Your child could bake a treat, walk a dog, or water plants. He or she could also give the person a homemade coupon for a promise to do something in the future, like wash their car or shovel snow. If you or your child gets a gift or someone does something nice for you, sit down together to write a thank you note and draw a picture to thank the giver.

## I want it later

**Ages 4+**

Sometimes we have more wants than we have money. You can use this activity to avoid shopping battles or stress at the store. Next time you are at a store with your child, bring along a pencil or crayon and small notebook. If your child starts to get the "gimmes," help him or her set a goal for a wanted item. Instead of buying a toy or treat right then, while you shop, have your child write down or draw a picture of things they would like. Young children can also circle images in a store ad as they walk around the store. Save this list for special occasions like

birthdays or holidays. If your child has a way to earn money, you can also use this list to make a savings goal chart, figure out how much each want will cost, and how your child will earn money.

# About this guide

Money as You Grow Bookshelf is a research-based program designed to help parents, caregivers, and others teach children ages 4 through 10 money skills through reading, activities, and play.

Money as You Grow Bookshelf is an updated version of the University of Nevada Extension's Money on the Bookshelf program. In collaboration with The University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Financial Security and the University of Wisconsin-Extension Family Living Programs, we are working together to expand the program and make it available to libraries, educators, and parents nationally.

For more tools and resources for parents, visit [consumerfinance.gov/MoneyAsYouGrow](https://consumerfinance.gov/MoneyAsYouGrow).

The Center for Financial Security is a research center that seeks to help the public build financial knowledge and skills, increase access to financial services and increase the financial security of families. The University of Wisconsin-Extension is part of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) Cooperative Extension System, which brings vital, practical information to agricultural producers, small business owners, consumers, families, and young people.





## MONEY AS YOU GROW BOOKSHELF

---

Ask about these other Money as You Grow Bookshelf books and parent guides:

**A Bargain for Frances**  
by Russell Hoban

**A Chair for My Mother**  
by Vera Williams

**Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday**  
by Judith Viorst

**The Berenstain Bears & Mama's New Job**  
by Stan & Jan Berenstain

**The Berenstain Bears' Trouble With Money**  
by Stan & Jan Berenstain

**But I've Used All of My Pocket Change**  
by Lauren Child

**Count on Pablo**  
by Barbara deRubertis

**Cuenta con Pablo**  
by Barbara deRubertis

**Curious George Saves His Pennies**  
by Margaret and H.A.Rey

**How Much Is That Doggie in the Window?**  
by Bob Merrill

**Jingle Dancer**  
by Cynthia Leitich Smith

**Just Shopping With Mom**  
by Mercer Mayer

**Lemonade in Winter**  
by Emily Jenkins

**My Rows and Piles of Coins**  
by Tololwa M.Mollel

**Ox-Cart Man**  
by Donald Hall

**The Purse**  
by Kathy Caple

**The Rag Coat**  
by Lauren Mills

**Sally Jean, the Bicycle Queen**  
by Cari Best

**Sam and the Lucky Money**  
by Karen Chinn

**Sheep in a Shop**  
by Nancy Shaw

**Those Shoes**  
by Maribeth Boelts

**Tia Isa Wants a Car**  
by Meg Medina

**Tía Isa Quiere un Carro**  
by Meg Medina

For more tips and activities for parents and caregivers, and to download Money as You Grow Bookshelf parent reading guides, visit [consumerfinance.gov/MoneyAsYouGrow](https://consumerfinance.gov/MoneyAsYouGrow).