

Handout 02.09: Budget Builder and Scenario Cards

Page 1 (Day 1): Fixed or variable, the 50/30/20 math, and the one-week estimate

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

A budget is _____ (copy from the slide)

Part A: Fixed or variable?

Fixed: the same amount every month, and skipping it has a consequence. Variable: it changes, and you control it. Write F or V.

#	Expense	F or V
1	Phone plan, \$35 a month	
2	Pizza slice with friends on Friday	
3	Monthly bus pass	
4	Birthday gift for a friend	
5	Streaming subscription	
6	New sneakers	
7	Sports club dues, \$20 a month	
8	Bubble tea	
9	School lunch account, refilled every month	
10	A video game on release day	

The 50/30/20 guide, at your scale

Adults: 50 percent of net income to needs, 30 percent to wants, 20 percent to savings. For a teen, the order matters more than the percents: **save first (at least 20 percent), cover fixed needs, then wants with what is left.**

Practice on a \$140 month:

20 percent of \$140 = \$_____ (savings, first)

50 percent of \$140 = \$_____ (the most that should go to needs)



30 percent of \$140 = \$_____ (the most that should go to wants)

My SMART goal from Lesson 2.4: I want \$_____ by _____ (month). That is _____ months away. Monthly savings needed: \$_____ divided by _____ = \$_____ a month.

Part B: My next seven days (an estimate)

Think ahead. Write every dollar you expect to get and every dollar you expect to spend. Use real prices.

Day	In or out?	What is it?	Amount
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$

Total money in: \$_____ Total money out: \$_____ Projected balance (in minus out): \$_____

The twelve-dollar question. Circle every “out” line that is a want under \$5. Add them: \$_____ a week. Times 4: \$_____ a month. If you saved just those, in a year you would have: \$_____.

Exit line (3-2-1)

3 expenses I estimated: _____, _____, _____

2 that are fixed: _____, _____

1 number: my small wants for a month: \$_____

Page 2 (Day 2): Scenario cards (teacher cuts; one card per student)

All prices are Long Island prices for 2026 and marked [update]. Every person on these cards is made up.

Card A: Mateo, age 13

Income: allowance \$15 a week (\$60 a month) plus dog walking, two dogs, \$10 a walk, four walks a month (\$40). **Monthly net income: \$100.** (No deductions; nobody takes taxes out of an allowance.)

Fixed expenses (must pay every month): share of the family streaming plan, \$5 [update]; *school lunch account refill, \$35 [update].*

Variable expenses (his usual month): pizza slice with friends on Fridays, \$4 each, four Fridays [update]; *bubble tea, \$7 [update],* about twice a month; a game skin or app, \$10; a gift for his sister's birthday this month, \$20; snacks from the deli, \$3 a day on days he forgets lunch, about five days [update].

Savings goal (from his SMART goal): a concert ticket, \$120 [update], in four months.

Card B: Priya, age 16

Income: cashier at a supermarket, 12 hours a week at \$17.00 an hour [update]. Gross \$204 a week. About 17 percent comes out in deductions. **Monthly net income: about \$680** (four weeks).

Fixed expenses: phone plan, \$35 [update]; *monthly bus pass, \$60 [update];* gym membership, \$30 [update]; *a music subscription, \$12 [update].*

Variable expenses (her usual month): food out with friends, \$80; clothes, \$60; ride share when the bus does not run late, \$15 a ride, about four rides [update]; *movies, \$17 a ticket, twice [update];* skin care and hair, \$40; gifts, \$20.

Savings goal (from her SMART goal): \$2,000 toward a used car in 12 months.

Card C: Jasmine, age 15

Income: summer camp counselor, eight weeks, \$2,400 net for the whole summer. No income during the school year. She has to make it last ten months (September to June).

Monthly net income to budget: \$240.

Fixed expenses: phone plan, \$35 [update]; *robotics club dues, \$20 a month [update];* school lunch account refill, \$35 [update].

Variable expenses (her usual month): food out, \$40; a new pair of sneakers this month, \$90 [update]; *movies, \$17, once [update];* art supplies, \$25; a gift, \$15; bubble tea, \$7, three times [update].

Savings goal (from her SMART goal): a laptop for high school, \$350 [update], by June (ten months).



Card D: Theo, age 14

Income: babysitting for a neighbor, \$15 an hour [update], about eight hours a month (\$120), plus birthday and holiday money that averages \$20 a month. **Monthly net income: \$140.**

Fixed expenses: phone plan, \$35 (a family rule: he pays his own line) *[update]; school lunch account refill, \$35 [update];* a game subscription, \$10 [update].

Variable expenses (his usual month): snacks, \$3 a day, about ten days *[update]; a game on release day, \$70 [update];* pizza Fridays, \$4, four times *[update]; a haircut, \$25 [update];* a gift, \$15.

Savings goal (from his SMART goal): a week of sports camp, \$300 [update], in six months.

Page 3 (Day 2): The Budget Builder

Name: _____ Date: _____ My scenario: Card _____ (name: _____)

Fill it in top to bottom. Save first. Fixed next. Wants with what is left. The bottom line must be zero or above.

Step 1: Income (net, not gross)

Monthly net income: \$ _____

Step 2: Savings, first

Savings goal: \$ _____ by _____ (_____ months away). Monthly savings:

$\frac{\square}{\square} \div \square = \square$ $\frac{\square}{\square} \div \square = \square$

Income minus savings = \$ _____ (this is what is left for everything else)

Step 3: Fixed expenses (needs; every line gets a number)

Fixed expense	Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
Total fixed	\$

What is left after savings and fixed = \$ _____ minus $\frac{\square}{\square} \div \square = \square$ (this is the most you can spend on variable expenses)

Step 4: Variable expenses (wants, and some needs you control)

Write what the person usually spends. If the total is more than what is left, cross out or cut wants until it fits. Show the cuts.

Variable expense	Usual amount	Budgeted amount
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$

	\$	\$
Total variable (budgeted)		\$

Step 5: The bottom line

Income \$_____ minus savings \$_____ minus fixed \$_____ minus variable  ** _____ **

Zero or above? yes / no. If no, go back to Step 4.

Part D: The 50/30/20 check and one revision

Needs (fixed plus any variable needs) divided by income x 100 = _____ percent (guide: 50 or less)

Wants divided by income x 100 = _____ percent (guide: 30 or less)

Savings divided by income x 100 = _____ percent (guide: 20 or more)

Which line is furthest from the guide? _____

One revision: I changed _____ from \$_____ to \$_____ because the savings goal is _____ and _____.

(Grade 6: skip the percents and do the revision only.)

Pair check (a partner fills this in)

Checker's name: _____

Savings written first? yes / no. Every fixed line has a number? yes / no. Bottom line zero or above? yes / no.

One sentence of advice: _____

Exit card

One thing I would change about this person's spending: _____

One line of my own budget I now want to write: _____

Summary lines (copy these into Part 7 of the Investor Report in Lesson 2.19, "Before" column)

Line	This budget
Income (per month, net)	\$
Needs (total fixed, plus any variable line you marked as a need)	\$
Savings (paid first)	\$
Wants (total variable, minus any need)	\$
Total spending (needs plus savings plus	\$



wants)	
Balance (income minus total spending; must be 0 or more)	\$

Project 02 revision box (leave blank until after Lesson 2.19)

After ClassroomStreet, I changed: _____

Because: _____

Teacher key

Part A: 1 F, 2 V, 3 F, 4 V, 5 F, 6 V, 7 F, 8 V, 9 F, 10 V. Accept “lunch account” as V if the student argues the amount changes; the point is that it must be paid.

50/30/20 on \$140: \$28 savings; \$70 needs; \$42 wants.

Part B: any ten lines with totals that add. The twelve-dollar question: whatever the student circles, times 4, times 12.

Budget Builder, expected outcomes per card:

- Card A (Mateo): income \$100; savings \$120 divided by 4 = \$30; fixed \$40 (\$5 + \$35); left \$30. Usual variable: pizza \$16, bubble tea \$14, skin \$10, gift \$20, snacks \$15 = \$75. Must cut \$45 of wants. A “got it” budget cuts bubble tea to \$0 or one, skips the skin, and trims snacks to two days (\$6), for example pizza \$16, gift \$20 (a value choice), snacks \$6 = \$42; that is still \$12 over, so pizza drops to two Fridays (\$8) and the gift stays: \$8 + \$20 + \$0 + \$0 + \$6 = \$34, four over; cut snacks to one day: \$31; cut one more pizza: \$27. Bottom line \$3. Percents: needs 40, wants 27, savings 30. Any balanced version with savings at \$30 is “got it.”
- Card B (Priya): income \$680; savings \$2,000 divided by 12 = about \$167; fixed \$137 (\$35 + \$60 + \$30 + \$12); left \$376. Usual variable: \$80 + \$60 + \$60 + \$34 + \$40 + \$20 = \$294. Bottom line \$82 with no cuts. Percents: needs about 20, wants about 43, savings about 25. Furthest from the guide: wants. A strong revision moves \$50 or more from wants to savings (car in ten months instead of twelve) or cuts ride share by planning the bus.
- Card C (Jasmine): income \$240; savings \$350 divided by 10 = \$35; fixed \$90 (\$35 + \$20 + \$35); left \$115. Usual variable: \$40 + \$90 + \$17 + \$25 + \$15 + \$21 = \$208. Must cut \$93. The sneakers are the problem; a “got it” budget either delays the sneakers, saves for them across two months (\$45 this month, \$45 next), or buys a \$40 pair. Percents with sneakers cut to \$45 and bubble tea to \$7: needs 38, wants about 48, savings 15. The stretch conversation: the savings percent is under the guide, but the goal is met; is the guide or the goal in charge?
- Card D (Theo): income \$140; savings \$300 divided by 6 = \$50; fixed \$80 (\$35 + \$35 + \$10); left \$10. Usual variable: \$30 + \$70 + \$16 + \$25 + \$15 = \$156. Must cut \$146. The \$70 game cannot fit this month; the haircut is a gray zone (need if a school or job rule, otherwise it waits). A “got it” budget is snacks \$0, game \$0 (wait or save for it), pizza \$8, haircut \$0 this month, gift \$0 or \$2, or any combination at \$10 or under. Percents: needs 57, wants 7, savings 36. Furthest from the guide: needs, because a \$35 phone line on \$140 is 25 percent by itself. The revision students usually find: ask about a cheaper phone plan, or babysit two more hours.

Pair check and exit card: complete or missing.