

Loss or Gain? Game Overview

An Investment Game for Economis Users

Topics Covered: Investment options, investment risk, and return rate

Original Source: State Farm's Common Cent\$ game, "Scaling the Wall of Investment Risk" http://www.statefarm.com/learning/kid_stuff/commoncents/games_6-8.htm

Suggested Target Age: 6-12 grades

Length of Game: 20-30 minutes

How to Use This Game:

The first time this game is used, it should be played in conjunction with the *Economis* mini-lesson, [All About Investing Part 2](#). It could then be played at other times, independent of a particular lesson. We have devised two versions of the game, the Bucket Toss Version and the Water Balloon Version. You may want to try out different versions with different groups of students. Chances are, everyone will like the Water Balloon Version best!

"Bucket-Toss" Version

Materials Needed:

- Bucket
- Beanbag ("hacky-sack," or any kind of ball)
- Calculator(s)
- [Investment Options Cards](#)
- [Investment Options Chart](#)
- Play money (money from a *Monopoly* game would work well)
- Scrap paper for keeping score
- Dice (player will use just one die)
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Set-up:

- 1) Print out Investment Options Cards and cut them out.
- 2) Print out the Investment Options Chart.
- 3) Set up the bucket at one end of the room.
- 4) Create four markers representing different risk options. The low risk option will be 5 feet from the bucket. The medium risk option will be 10 feet from the bucket. The high risk option will be 15 feet from the bucket. The highest risk option will be 25 (or 20) feet from the bucket. You can use masking tape to mark the distances.

Play the game:

- 1) Split the students into two teams. Designate someone (could be the instructor or a volunteer) as the “banker.” The banker should count out the play money and give each team \$1,000 of play money to invest.
- 2) Place the Investment Options Cards in four piles according to their risk level (low, medium, high, highest) and turn them face down.
- 3) Choose which team goes first by flipping a coin. This team (Team 1) will choose one of their players to go first in making an “investment decision.” This person must:
 - a) Decide how much to invest - \$100, \$200, or \$300, and
 - b) Decide which of the four risk options to choose. The player will choose a card from that pile (low, medium, high, highest risk). The card will specify which investment option the player is making (e.g., CD, growth mutual fund, precious metals). The player (assisted by his/her team as needed) has 30 seconds to give an accurate description of that investment option – saying what the investment option is, and what its liquidity is. The team will be awarded \$25 for describing the investment option correctly. *(Remember that the Investment Options Chart contains the information on correct descriptions.)* If the player/team cannot provide an adequate description within 30 seconds, then they will not win the \$25. *(The class teacher/instructor will determine whether or not the description given is sufficient.)*
- 4) The player will now roll the die to determine the transaction amount. *(The transaction amount will be the amount of gain or loss on the investment, depending on the outcome of the bucket toss):*
 - For the low-risk category, the transaction amount will be the number rolled, expressed as a percentage, multiplied by the amount invested. For example, if \$200 is invested, and a 2 is rolled, the transaction amount will be \$4 -- 2% of \$200 ($.02 \times \$200 = \4).
 - For the medium-risk category, the transaction amount will be 1.5 times the number rolled, expressed as a percentage, and multiplied by the investment amount. For example, if \$100 is invested, and a 4 is rolled, the transaction amount will be \$6 – ($4 \times 1.5 = 6$ to get the 6%, then multiply $.06 \times \$100 = \6).
 - For the high-risk category, the transaction amount will be double the number rolled, expressed as a percentage, multiplied by the amount invested. For example, if \$200 is invested and the number 3 is rolled, the transaction amount will be \$12 ($3 \times 2 = 6$ to get 6%, then multiply $.06$ times $\$200 = \12).
 - For the highest risk category the transaction amount will be four times the number rolled, expressed as a percentage, multiplied by the amount

invested. For example, if \$200 is invested and the number 6 is rolled, then the transaction amount will be \$48 (6 x 4 to get 24, for 24%, then multiply .24 times \$200 = \$48).

5) Having established the investment amount and the transaction amount, the player will now toss the beanbag into the bucket from the line that designates the risk category he/she chose. (I.e., if he chose moderate risk, he will stand behind that line and try to toss the beanbag into the bucket.) If the beanbag goes in the bucket, the team receives the gain calculated using the formula in step 4. If the beanbag does not go in, the team receives the loss calculated by using the formula. (*If you want, you could give players more than one chance to get the beanbag into the bucket.*) The Banker will now either reward the team the additional play money, if gain was realized by a successful bucket toss, or the team will have to hand over to the Banker the amount of money lost due to an unsuccessful toss.

6) Repeat steps 3-5 for the first player from Team 2. Continue for as many rounds as you wish. At the end of the chosen amount of rounds, the team with the most money wins.

Water-balloon Version

This game can also be played by tossing water balloons rather than tossing a beanbag into a bucket. The basic procedures for the game will be the same as outlined in the Bucket Toss Version above. Instead of splitting up into two teams, though, you may want to split the class up into pairs, and each pair will be their own “team.”

Materials Needed:

- A large area outside such as a field, court, or parking lot
- Water balloons
- One Die
- Calculator(s)
- [Investment Options Cards](#)
- Scrap paper for keeping score
- [Investment Options Chart](#)

Set-up:

- 1) In a field or on pavement, create a starting point for marking out distances. From that starting point, walk 5 paces out. Mark that area as the “low risk” toss line. Make three other toss lines for “medium risk,” “high risk,” and “highest risk” at 10 paces, 15 paces, and 25 paces respectively.
- 2) Fill up water balloons.
- 3) Print out Investment Options Chart.
- 4) Print out Investment Options Cards and place them in four piles according to their risk level (low, medium, high, highest) and turn them face down.

Play the Game

Instead of one team going at a time, each pair will follow the steps as outlined in the Bucket Toss version above (Steps 3-4). I.e., they will determine the investment amount, and select a card from one of the risk piles, read aloud the investment choice, take 30 seconds or less to describe the investment choice, and then roll the die to determine the transaction amount.

Now, instead of tossing a beanbag into a bucket, the pair will separate. The player whose turn it is will stand at the starting line. His/Her partner will stand the appropriate number of paces across, depending on the risk level of the investment chosen. The player will toss the water balloon to her partner – if it is caught, the team will realize a gain on the investment equal to the amount figured in step 4. If the balloon is dropped, the pair will lose the amount of money calculated in step 4.

Now have each pair switch the person who tosses the water balloon for the next turn.

Play 5-10 rounds. The pair with the highest amount of money by the end of the rounds is the winner.