NETWORTHY x IOWA

Financial Literacy Crosswalk · Grade 5 Course v1 · August 2026

Iowa's financial literacy picture, in brief

Iowa requires financial literacy for high school graduation, with Senate File 391 giving schools flexibility in how they deliver it. What makes Iowa unusual is what sits underneath that requirement.

On January 15, 2026, the Iowa State Board of Education adopted new Iowa Academic Standards for Social Studies. In them, financial literacy is not a high school subject with a vague elementary on-ramp. Every single grade from Kindergarten through fifth carries its own named Financial Literacy sub-theme: Needs and Wants in Kindergarten, People at Work and Careers in first grade, Saving and Spending in second, Budgeting in third, Spending Wisely in fourth, and Making Smart Financial Decisions in fifth. Twenty-two standards in six years.

Iowa's own description of the fifth grade year is the reason this document exists. The state writes that fifth grade students will “develop basic personal finance concepts including earning, saving, borrowing, investing, setting financial goals, and the role of taxes.” That is a list of six things. Networthy's eight units are earning, spending, saving, budgeting, borrowing and credit, giving and protecting, money choices, and a business capstone. Of any state framework Networthy has been mapped against, Iowa's grade 5 scope is the closest match to the course as built.

Where the Networthy Grade 5 course fits

Iowa asks for this content every year and gives teachers roughly one sub-theme's worth of the calendar to deliver it, inside a social studies course whose other themes are the Constitution, the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution and the Civil Rights Movement. Networthy is sixteen self-paced lessons that cover the financial literacy sub-theme on its own time, without taking the history weeks.

For an Iowa homeschool or ESA family, the practical read is simpler: this is a complete, standards-mapped fifth grade financial literacy unit that a child works through themselves, with printable activities that put the learning on the family's real money, and a before-and-after score that gives you something to point at.

- **Every grade, not just high school:** 22 financial literacy standards across Kindergarten to grade 5. Networthy addresses 21 of them and covers 19 in full.
- **The Networthy age band:** in grades 3, 4 and 5, the years this course is built for, 10 of Iowa's 11 standards are covered in full and the eleventh partially.
- **Iowa Education Savings Accounts:** Iowa's ESA provides $8,148 per student for 2026-27 and curriculum is an eligible expense. Networthy's marketplace application is submitted and in review.
- **Evidence a parent can hand over:** a signed Money Plan, a four-week money log, a business plan, and a 15-question before-and-after score.

Table 1: Iowa grades 3-5 financial literacy, all 11 standards

Budgeting (grade 3), Spending Wisely (grade 4) and Making Smart Financial Decisions (grade 5). This is the band Networthy is written for: 10 of 11 covered in full.

Standard	Iowa standard (abridged)	Where in Networthy Grade 5	Status
SS.3.18	Identify personal financial goals and explore how different careers help people earn income.	L3 (three sources of kid money; four ways workers get paid; skill and reliability raise your price). L9 (the goal is what the budget is for). L15 (a business is a career the kid can start this month).	Covered
SS.3.19	Identify why and how people save and invest money to meet personal goals and prepare for the future.	L7 (saving is telling money to wait; pay-yourself-first; the First-vs-Last race, identical money, $24 vs $2, only the order changes). L8 (interest, the penny race, compound growth).	Covered
SS.3.20	Describe what credit is and how it is used. Iowa's clarification: borrowing often means paying extra in the form of interest, and it is important to only borrow what you can afford to repay.	L11 (the three numbers of every loan: how much, how much extra, how long). L12 (the Trust Meter, creditworthiness at kid scale). Both of Iowa's clarification lines are taught explicitly, not implied.	Covered
SS.4.24	Identify factors that can influence people's different spending and saving choices. Iowa's clarification names wants and needs, quality versus quantity, scarcity, and marketing tactics.	L1 (the One-Cart Rule: every yes is a no to something else). L2 (the decision grid and the Sleep-On-It Rule). L5 (the four ad tricks, named and drilled, plus the unit-price check that beats the ad).	Covered
SS.4.25	Create a simple budget to plan how to spend and save money to meet financial goals. Iowa's clarification names spending categories, trade-offs and opportunity cost, and fixed, variable and unexpected expenses.	L9 (every dollar gets a job across Save, Share and Spend, signed by the kid, built on real income). L10 (Budget Rescue: what to do when the plan breaks, which is Iowa's 'unexpected' expense, taught as a drill rather than a definition).	Covered
SS.4.26	Identify why it is important and ways to protect personal financial information. Iowa's clarification names strong passwords and preventing identity theft.	L14 (the three scam buttons: urgency, secrecy, too-good-to-be-true; plus the password rules). Unit 7 is called Sharing and Protecting; this is the protecting half.	Covered
SS.4.27	Explore how people and the government work together to meet community needs. Iowa's clarification names taxes paying for roads, schools and safety, and citizens contributing by working, paying taxes and voting.	L4 (income and payroll tax on a pretend pay stub, sales tax hunted on a real receipt, property tax on a home, and what each one pays for). L13 (the giving plan and what non-profits do in a community). The civic participation half, voting and public decision-making, is classroom scope and is not taught here.	Partial
SS.5.21	Describe reasons and considerations for financial borrowing.	L11 (the three numbers of every loan, worked on real figures). L12 (what makes a lender say yes, and what happens to the Trust Meter when you pay late). Unit 6 is	Covered

		Borrowing and Credit end to end.	
SS.5.22	Compare different ways to save and invest money.	L6 (what banks actually do; five ways to pay and what each one costs you). L7 (where saved money can live). L8 (the two lanes: the safe lane and the growing lane, risk against return).	Covered
SS.5.23	Determine aspects of long-term financial goals.	L7 (short-term saving that survives a month). L8 (compound growth, which is what makes a long-term goal different in kind, not just in length). L9 (goals-based budget). L15 and L16 (a plan carried to launch day).	Covered
SS.5.24	Describe different types of taxes, including how they are collected and the public benefits they fund.	L4, in full: gross versus net on a pretend pay stub, then income tax, payroll tax, sales tax and property tax, each with how it is collected and what it funds. This is the closest single match between any state standard and any Networthy lesson.	Covered

Table 2: Iowa grades K-2 financial literacy, all 11 standards

Needs and Wants (Kindergarten), People at Work and Careers (grade 1) and Saving and Spending (grade 2). Networthy is not a K-2 course, but a fifth grader arriving without these has them by the end of Unit 4.

Standard	Iowa standard (abridged)	Where in Networthy Grade 5	Status
SS.K.19	Describe some needs and wants.	L1 (needs versus wants, and the One-Cart Rule that makes the difference cost something).	Covered
SS.K.20	Explain the difference between buying and borrowing.	L11 (borrowing means it goes back, and usually with extra). The distinction is the whole premise of Unit 6.	Covered
SS.K.21	Recognize ways to earn and save money.	L3 (three sources of kid money: gifts, allowance, work). L7 (where saved money goes and why it stays there).	Covered
SS.K.22	Identify forms of money.	L6 (five ways to pay: cash, debit, credit, gift card, app, and what each one actually does to your money). Extends past coins and bills.	Covered
SS.1.19	Explain how different jobs in the community help meet people's needs through goods and services.	L3 (people pay for skills that solve their problem). L15 (a business exists because someone has a problem worth paying to fix).	Covered
SS.1.20	Identify individual skills and interests that influence education, jobs and career goals.	L3 (the priced Earning Menu: skill and reliability raise your price). L15 (the kid picks the business from their own skills).	Covered
SS.1.21	Describe spending, saving and borrowing.	The spine of the course: L5 (spending), L7 (saving), L11 (borrowing), with L9 putting all three in one plan.	Covered
SS.1.22	Compare jobs from the past to	Not taught. This is a history	Not covered

	the present and discuss how tools, technology, or transportation have changed how people work.	standard sitting inside the financial literacy sub-theme, and it belongs to the classroom.	
SS.2.18	Describe ways people can earn, spend and borrow money.	L3 and L4 (earn), L5 and L6 (spend), L11 and L12 (borrow).	Covered
SS.2.19	Explain why and how people save money.	L7 (why: the First-vs-Last race proves it with numbers, not advice; how: pay yourself first, before the money is spendable).	Covered
SS.2.20	Identify different ways to make amounts of money out of coins and bills.	The real-money missions use the child's own cash, so combinations come up in practice, but coin-and-bill arithmetic is not drilled as a skill. This one is second grade math and Networthy starts above it.	Partial

The two standards that are not a full match, stated plainly

SS.4.27 asks how people and government work together to meet community needs. Networthy teaches the tax half properly, on a pay stub, in Lesson 4, and the community half through the giving plan in Lesson 13. It does not teach civic participation or voting. That is a civics standard wearing a financial literacy label, and a classroom should keep it.

SS.2.20 asks students to make amounts out of coins and bills. Networthy's missions run on the child's own real money, so this comes up constantly in practice, but the course does not drill coin arithmetic as a skill because it starts above that level.

SS.1.22, comparing jobs past and present, is not taught at all. It is a history standard placed inside the financial literacy sub-theme, and claiming it would be a stretch.

Summary for parents and administrators

- **Complete for the age band:** 10 of 11 Iowa financial literacy standards for grades 3-5 covered in full, the eleventh partially, delivered as a self-paced course rather than a unit competing with the Civil War for calendar time.
- **Iowa's own words:** the state describes grade 5 financial literacy as earning, saving, borrowing, investing, setting financial goals and the role of taxes. Networthy teaches all six, and teaches taxes on an actual pay stub.
- **Also mapped elsewhere:** Texas TEKS Math 5.10 A-F, all fourteen New York State elementary personal financial literacy objectives, the Utah K-2 Economics strand and General Financial Literacy strands, and the 2021 National Standards for Personal Financial Education.
- **No student data:** lesson progress, quiz scores and the Networthy Score are stored in the family's own browser and never sent to us. There are no student accounts and no roster.

Source: Iowa Academic Standards for Social Studies, adopted by the Iowa State Board of Education January 15, 2026 (Iowa Department of Education). Standard text abridged here; the full text governs. Networthy LLC, hello@networthykids.com, networthykids.com