Investment or Gamble?

Name _____ Date _____

You have $500. Here are 10 places it could go. Sort each one: S = safe saving, I = investment, G = gamble.

S = Safe saving. Your money is protected and grows slowly. You can count on getting it back.

I = Investment. Owns a share of real businesses, spread out, held for years. Value goes up and down, but has grown over time.

G = Gamble. Hype, rush, "guaranteed" huge returns, or all your money on one bet. You could lose it all.

1 An index fund that owns small pieces of the 500 biggest U.S. companies.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

2 "My cousin says this new coin will 10× by Friday. Get in now!"
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

3 A high-yield savings account at an FDIC-insured bank.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

4 A U.S. savings bond.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

5 $20 a week on lottery tickets.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

6 Putting all your money in one stock because a video says it will "moon" tomorrow.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

7 A 12-month certificate of deposit (CD) at your bank.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

8 A meme coin an influencer is paid to promote.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

9 A Roth IRA invested in a broad stock index fund for 40 years.
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

10 A stranger online promises "guaranteed 30% a month."
☐ S ☐ I ☐ G

1. Which offer is most likely a scam? What gives it away?

_____

MY MONEY CHOICE

You have $500. Where does it go, and why? Split it if you like.

_____

_____

WealthWise KIDS

© 2026 WealthWise Kids LLC. All rights reserved.
Free for home and classroom use. Please don't sell or repost. **wealthwisekids.org**

Investment or Gamble?

The quick lesson (read aloud, about 1 minute)

> Every choice with money has **risk** (the chance to lose) and **return** (the chance to gain). Safe savings, like an FDIC-insured account, protect your money but grow slowly. Investing in a broad fund owns many companies and has grown over long periods, with ups and downs. A **gamble** bets on hype or luck. Anyone who promises a "guaranteed" huge return is a red flag.

Two teaching points

1. Higher possible return = higher risk. There is no safe shortcut.
2. Spread money out and give it time; avoid hype and rush.

Answer key

1 = **I** · 2 = **G** · 3 = **S** · 4 = **S** · 5 = **G** · 6 = **G** · 7 = **S** · 8 = **G** · 9 = **I** · 10 = **G**.
Safe saving: 3, 4, 7. Investments: 1, 9. Gambles: 2, 5, 6, 8, 10. Number 10 is almost certainly a scam: no real investment can guarantee 30% a month. Number 8: a paid promotion means someone profits from your buying.
Question 1: offer 10.

10-minute run

1. Read the S / I / G box together.
2. Sort the 10 offers (5 min).
3. Share and defend your $500 split.

Ask

"Why would someone promise a guaranteed return? What do they want?"

Goal

Risk and return go together. Hype, rushing and "guaranteed" big returns are signs of a gamble or a scam.

Take it further

FDIC insurance covers bank deposits up to $250,000 per depositor, per insured bank, per ownership category. Ask: why might that make savings feel safe?

Standard: National Standards for Personal Financial Education (Council for Economic Education and Jump$tart), area: **Investing**. Print double-sided: the activity on the front, this teaching side on the back.

WealthWise KIDS

© 2026 WealthWise Kids LLC. All rights reserved.
Free for home and classroom use. Please don't sell or repost. **wealthwisekids.org**