

LESSON PLAN

Owning vs. Renting a Home

- IT'S A -
**MONEY
THING®**

INCLUDED IN THIS PACKAGE

- **LESSON PLAN** (2 pages)
- **ACTIVITY** (4 pages)
- **QUIZ** (1 page)
- **ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY** (3 pages)
- **QUIZ ANSWER KEY** (1 page)

COLLECT FROM YOUR LIBRARY

- **VIDEO 39** (*Owning vs. Renting a Home*)
- **HANDOUT 39** (*Owning vs. Renting a Home*)
- **PRESENTATION 39** (*Owning vs. Renting a Home*)

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LESSON PLAN

Owning vs. Renting a Home

GRADES

9 to 12

TIME

45 minutes



OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will explore the key differences between renting and owning a home. They will compare the costs, responsibilities and trade-offs associated with each option, and gain a better understanding of how personal and financial factors can shape housing decisions.

GOALS

- Help students understand the key factors in choosing between renting and owning a home
- Encourage students to think critically about how personal and financial factors influence housing decisions

OBJECTIVES

- Identify key differences between renting and owning a home
- Compare the costs, responsibilities and trade-offs of renting and owning
- Analyze housing scenarios to determine whether renting or owning is a better fit
- Explain how individual circumstances can affect the decision to rent or own

ASSESSMENT

Use the activity in this lesson plan to assess students' grasp of the topic. An optional quiz is also provided (the quiz is not factored into the lesson's 45-minute runtime).

***Did you know?** The average person moves residences **over 11 times in their lifetime.** That's a lot of opportunities to choose between renting and owning a home!*

MATERIALS

- ☐ **VIDEO 39**—Owning vs. Renting a Home
- ☐ **HANDOUT 39**—Owning vs. Renting a Home
- ☐ **PRESENTATION 39**—Owning vs. Renting a Home
- ☐ **ACTIVITY**—Rent or Own? and Answer Key
- ☐ **QUIZ**—Owning vs. Renting a Home and Answer Key

PREPARATION

- Gather digital materials (video and presentation)
- Prepare the **ACTIVITY**: Print a copy of the worksheet (page 1) for each group. Print and cut out enough fictional housing scenario cards (pages 2–4) so that each group will have one scenario to analyze. (Optional: Prepare a full set of scenario cards for display during class discussion.)
- Print **HANDOUT 39** for each student
- (Optional) Print **QUIZ** (Owning vs. Renting a Home) for each student



LESSON PLAN

Owning vs. Renting a Home

TIMELINE

- 5 minutes** Introduce topic and show **VIDEO 39** (*Owning vs. Renting a Home*)
- 10 minutes** Go over **PRESENTATION 39**
- 5 minutes** Discussion round
- 20 minutes** Facilitate **ACTIVITY**
- 5 minutes** Wrap up and distribute **HANDOUT 39**
- (Optional)** Assessment: **QUIZ** (*Owning vs. Renting a Home*)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Introduce the topic: "Choosing whether to rent or own a home is a major financial decision that many people face at different points in their lives. While some people assume one option is always better, the right choice often depends on a person's situation, goals and priorities. Today, we'll explore some of the factors that can influence this decision."
2. Show **VIDEO 39**
3. Go over **PRESENTATION 39**
4. Engage the class in quick discussion as a lead-in to the Activity:
 - Based on what we've learned so far, what are some reasons someone might choose to rent instead of own, or own instead of rent?
 - What kinds of personal situations or goals might influence that decision?
5. Facilitate the **ACTIVITY**
 - Divide students into small groups
 - Distribute one worksheet and one fictional housing scenario to each group
6. Explain that students will review their scenario, compare the pros and cons of renting and owning, and decide which option fits best
7. Allow 8–10 minutes for groups to complete the worksheet
8. Bring the class back together and display each scenario one at a time
9. Invite groups to share their recommendation and explain their reasoning
10. Use the Answer Key as a guide to highlight key considerations
6. Wrap up by sharing the following:
 - Renting and owning each offer different benefits and challenges
 - Choosing between them means considering what matters most to you
 - There is no one right answer when it comes to renting or owning your home
7. Distribute **HANDOUT 39**
8. (Optional) Distribute **QUIZ** for individual assessment, or answer the questions together as a class; decide whether or not students can reference their notes/handouts during the quiz

NOTES



ACTIVITY

Owning vs. Renting a Home

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RENT OR OWN? - WORKSHEET

Directions: Read the housing scenario assigned to you. Use the information to answer the questions below. Be prepared to share your recommendation and reasoning with the class.

WHAT STANDS OUT?

What are the most important details in this scenario?

COMPARE YOUR OPTIONS

Consider the pros and cons of renting and owning in this situation.

	Renting	Owning
Pros		
Cons		

MAKE YOUR RECOMMENDATION

☐ Rent ☐ Own

Why?



ACTIVITY

Owning vs. Renting a Home

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RENT OR OWN?

HOUSING SCENARIO #1

Maya: Early Career in a New City

KEY DETAILS

- **Age:** 24
- **Job:** New full-time role
- **Income:** Entry-level
- **Savings:** Limited
- **Current situation:** Renting with roommates
- **Future plans:** Open to moving for new opportunities

SCENARIO

Maya recently moved to a new city for her first full-time job. She's still getting settled and is not sure how long she'll stay. While she likes the idea of owning a home one day, she's focused on building her career and keeping her options open. Some of her friends have started talking about buying property, which has made her wonder if she should consider it too.

HOUSING SCENARIO #2

Daniel: Stable Career and Ready to Settle

KEY DETAILS

- **Age:** 34
- **Job:** Established career
- **Income:** Consistent and reliable
- **Savings:** Has saved for a down payment
- **Current situation:** Renting a one-bedroom apartment
- **Future plans:** Plans to stay in the same city long-term

SCENARIO

Daniel has been working in the same field for several years and feels confident in his job stability. He has built up savings and is thinking about buying a home. He likes the idea of having a permanent space and not dealing with rent increases, but he's also aware that owning comes with new responsibilities and upfront costs.



ACTIVITY

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RENT OR OWN?

HOUSING SCENARIO #3

Aisha: Location vs. Affordability

KEY DETAILS

- **Age:** 29
- **Job:** Full-time professional
- **Income:** Moderate income
- **Savings:** Some savings, but limited for a down payment
- **Current situation:** Renting in a central neighborhood
- **Future plans:** Wants to stay close to work and social life

SCENARIO

Aisha lives in a neighborhood she loves, close to her job, friends and favorite places. While she has considered buying a home, the cost of purchasing in her area is much higher than renting. Buying would likely mean moving farther away or choosing a smaller space. She's trying to decide what matters more—owning a home or staying in a location she enjoys.

HOUSING SCENARIO #4

Lucas and Sofia: Growing Family on a Tight Budget

KEY DETAILS

- **Age:** Early 30s
- **Job:** Dual-income household
- **Income:** Moderate, but stretched
- **Savings:** Some savings, but also new expenses
- **Current situation:** Renting a small apartment
- **Future plans:** Expecting their first child

SCENARIO

Lucas and Sofia are expecting their first child and are starting to think about needing more space. They like the idea of having a stable home where they can settle down, but they're also concerned about the costs of owning, especially with new expenses coming up. Renting a larger place is an option, but it may be more expensive on a month-to-month basis.



ACTIVITY

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RENT OR OWN?

HOUSING SCENARIO #5

Noah: Flexibility and Lifestyle Choices

KEY DETAILS

- **Age:** 31
- **Job:** Remote, flexible work
- **Income:** Strong and steady
- **Savings:** Has enough savings to consider buying
- **Current situation:** Renting in different cities
- **Future plans:** Wants to keep traveling and seeing new places

SCENARIO

Noah works remotely and enjoys the freedom to live in different cities throughout the year. While he could afford to buy a home, he prefers the flexibility of renting and being able to move whenever he wants. Some people have suggested that he's missing out on building long-term value by not buying property, which has made him reconsider his approach.

HOUSING SCENARIO #6

Evelyn and Raj: Retirement and Downsizing

KEY DETAILS

- **Age:** Mid to late 60s
- **Job:** Retired
- **Income:** Fixed retirement income
- **Savings:** Some savings and home equity
- **Current situation:** Own a larger home
- **Future plans:** Looking to simplify and reduce expenses

SCENARIO

Evelyn and Raj have lived in their home for many years, but now that they're retired, they're thinking about downsizing. Maintaining their home is becoming more work than they want, and they're considering whether it makes sense to sell and rent instead. At the same time, they value the stability and familiarity of owning their home.



QUIZ

Owning vs. Renting a Home

NAME: _____

TOTAL / 6 pts

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Directions: CIRCLE the best possible answer to each question.

1. Which statement best describes the difference between renting and owning?
 - a. Renting is always cheaper than owning
 - b. Owning is always the better long-term choice
 - c. Renting and owning are essentially the same
 - d. Renting and owning involve different costs, responsibilities and trade-offs
2. When deciding whether to rent or own, which factor is most important?
 - a. What most people your age are doing
 - b. What is trending in the housing market
 - c. What looks best on social media
 - d. Your personal goals and financial situation
3. Which responsibility is more common for homeowners than renters?
 - a. Following rules set by a landlord
 - b. Paying for maintenance and repairs
 - c. Renewing a lease
 - d. Asking permission to make changes
4. Taylor may need to move to a new city within a year for school. Which option is the better fit for their situation?
 - a. Renting, because it allows for easier mobility
 - b. Renting, because it often costs less
 - c. Owning, because it can build wealth over time
 - d. Owning, because it provides more stability

/4 pts

SHORT ANSWER

Directions: Answer the following question in a sentence or two.

5. Give one example of when renting might be a better choice than owning. Explain why.

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/2 pts

ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY

Owning vs. Renting a Home

RENT OR OWN?

Directions: Use this answer key as a guide to support discussion and highlight key considerations for each scenario. Encourage students to explain their reasoning. There is no single correct answer.

SCENARIO	COMPARE OPTIONS	NOTES
#1 Maya: Early Career in a New City	Rent: - Flexibility to move as Maya's career and plans evolve - Lower upfront costs with limited savings and entry-level income - Fewer responsibilities while Maya is getting settled in a new city Own: - Opportunity for Maya to start building equity early - More stability if Maya decides to stay long-term	Notes: - Students will likely choose renting - Emphasize how uncertainty and mobility shape Maya's decision - Ask: What would need to change for Maya to be ready to buy?
#2 Daniel: Stable Career and Ready to Settle	Rent: - Flexibility if Daniel's plans change unexpectedly - Fewer maintenance responsibilities, despite stable income Own: - Long-term stability, with Daniel planning to stay in one place - Ability to use savings for a down payment and build equity - More control over living space and lifestyle	Notes: - Students will likely choose owning - Reinforce how financial readiness and long-term plans support buying - Ask: What risks should Daniel still consider before buying?

ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY

Owning vs. Renting a Home

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SCENARIO	COMPARE OPTIONS	NOTES
#3 Aisha: Location vs. Affordability	Rent: • Ability to stay in a preferred neighborhood close to work and social life • Lower upfront costs, with limited savings for a down payment Own: • Opportunity for Aisha to build equity over time • More stability if Aisha chooses to stay long-term • Trade-off may include moving farther away or choosing a smaller space	Notes: • Students may have different opinions based on their own priorities • Highlight the trade-off between location and ownership • Ask: If Aisha moved farther away to afford buying, what might change in her day-to-day life?
#4 Lucas and Sofia: Growing Family on a Tight Budget	Rent: • Lower upfront costs with a stretched budget and new expenses • Flexibility if Lucas and Sofia's financial situation changes • Fewer unexpected maintenance costs Own: • Stable home environment for a growing family • Opportunity to grow equity over time • More control over space as their needs change	Notes: • Students may lean toward owning, due to family needs • Highlight the risk of being financially stretched • Ask: How might buying a home affect Lucas and Sofia's monthly budget and stress level?

ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY

Owning vs. Renting a Home

RENT OR OWN?

Directions: Use this answer key as a guide to support discussion and highlight key considerations for each scenario. Encourage students to explain their reasoning. There is no single correct answer.

SCENARIO	COMPARE OPTIONS	NOTES
#5 Noah: Flexibility and Lifestyle Choices	Rent: - Freedom to move between cities and maintain a flexible lifestyle - No long-term commitment, despite having the ability to buy - Fewer responsibilities while prioritizing travel and experiences Own: - Opportunity for Noah to build long-term wealth - Potential to establish a home base or generate rental income	Notes: - Students will likely choose renting, based on Noah's lifestyle - Highlight how flexibility and independence shape Noah's decision - Ask: Why might Noah choose not to buy, even with enough income and savings?
#6 Evelyn and Raj: Retirement and Downsizing	Rent: - Fewer maintenance responsibilities as upkeep becomes more difficult - More predictable costs on a fixed retirement income - Opportunity to simplify and reduce stress in retirement Own: - Stability and familiarity after many years in the same home - More control over living space and environment - Potential to avoid rent increases if housing costs rise	Notes: - Students may recognize that needs change in retirement - Emphasize the idea of downsizing and simplifying - Ask: How might Evelyn and Raj's needs change over time, and how could that affect their housing choice?



QUIZ ANSWER KEY

Owning vs. Renting a Home

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Directions: CIRCLE the best possible answer to each question.

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/4 pts

SHORT ANSWER

Directions: Answer the following question in a sentence or two.

5. Give one example of when renting might be a better choice than owning. Explain why.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE: MAY NEED TO MOVE SOON, HAS LIMITED SAVINGS,

VALUES FLEXIBILITY, DOES NOT WANT MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES.

/2 pts