Financial Decision Check

Five questions teachers can use to help students slow down, examine a financial choice, and explain why a decision makes sense.

USE THIS WHEN	BEST FOR	TEACHER TIME
Students are making a financial choice and need a simple structure for thinking beyond the first, cheapest, or most familiar option.	Grades 8–12 | Any financial literacy topic | Individual, pair, or class discussion	2–5 minutes to review; use all five questions or select the ones needed

Quick Teaching Point

> A strong financial decision is not simply the option a teacher prefers. Students should be able to identify the choice they are making, use relevant information, consider realistic alternatives, recognize trade-offs, and explain what could cause them to reconsider.

Five-Question Decision Check

Question	What It Helps Students Do
1. What am I actually deciding?	Clarify the real choice, goal, or problem instead of reacting to an option before the decision itself is clear.
2. What information matters?	Separate useful evidence - such as cost, timing, needs, terms, risk, or future consequences - from details that do not affect the choice.
3. What are my realistic alternatives?	Consider more than the first option. Alternatives can include a different product, a lower-cost choice, waiting, changing the amount, or doing nothing.
4. What might I gain, give up, or risk?	Recognize trade-offs. Choosing one option usually means giving up money, flexibility, time, another opportunity, or accepting some risk.
5. What could change my decision?	Identify uncertainty and the evidence that would justify revising the original choice rather than defending it automatically.

WATCH FOR...	TRY THIS...
Students looking for the teacher's 'right answer,' focusing only on price, or defending their first choice after stronger information appears.	After a student explains a choice, ask: “What new information could make you change your mind?” A thoughtful answer often reveals more than the original choice.

Optional Connections

PAIRS WELL WITH	GFF / FDIF™ CONNECTION
You Have $50 Left - What Do You Do With It? classroom activity. It can also be used independently with saving, budgeting, credit, purchasing, or comparison tasks.	The questions reinforce evidence-based financial judgment: clarify the decision, examine relevant evidence and alternatives, weigh consequences, and remain willing to revise.