MADE WITH LITTLE STORYBOOK

How Did Paper Become Money?

Visual lesson



Just paper?

At the fruit cart, Kai waves a paper note. "It's just paper," he says. "How can it buy a whole basket of apples?" Grandma Rosa smiles and lifts her little box out of her bag.





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A very heavy cart

Pop! They are in China, about 1,000 years ago. A merchant pushes a cart piled high with heavy strings of iron coins. He needs all of them just to buy some silk. Kai pushes too. The cart won't budge! Penny rides on top.

Coins in, paper out

So merchants had an idea. They left their heavy coins with a shop they trusted, and the shop gave them a paper promise instead. Later, anyone holding the paper could swap it back for the coins. Nia holds a whole cartful of coins in one hand!





Which paper?

Kai finds two sheets of paper on the table. They are the same size and the same paper. One is blank. The other has the rulers' red seal on it.

TALK ABOUT IT

Which paper can buy rice?

The rulers' promise

The paper with the seal! About 1,000 years ago, the rulers of China began printing notes like this, some of the first paper money a government ever made. Travellers from far away could hardly believe a whole country paid with paper.





Too many notes

But there was a catch. When the rulers printed far too many notes, each one bought less. One note used to buy a sack of rice. Later, the same sack needed a thick stack of notes!

Two stalls, one kite

Pop! Back in their street, Kai spots the same red kite at two different stalls. One stall wants a small pile of coins for it. The other wants a much bigger pile.

TALK ABOUT IT

What is a smart thing for Kai to do before he buys?





A paper promise

Kai doesn't buy a kite yet. He is still saving. That evening, a folded paper note goes into the box, next to the tiny stone wheel. "A paper promise," says Nia. "Light as a feather."

Check your wonder

1 **Why did merchants like paper money?**

- **A.** It was light to carry instead of heavy coins
- **B.** Paper was shiny

2 **What made a paper note worth something?**

- **A.** The promise people trusted
- **B.** The paper itself
- **C.** How big it was

3 **What happened when the rulers printed too many notes?**

- **A.** Each note bought less
- **B.** Everyone got rich

ANSWERS 1-A 2-A 3-A

1. Yes! A whole cart of coins became one light note. 2. That's it. People trusted the promise behind the seal. 3. Right! The same sack needed a thick stack.

THE END

Visual lesson



Put your child in this story

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