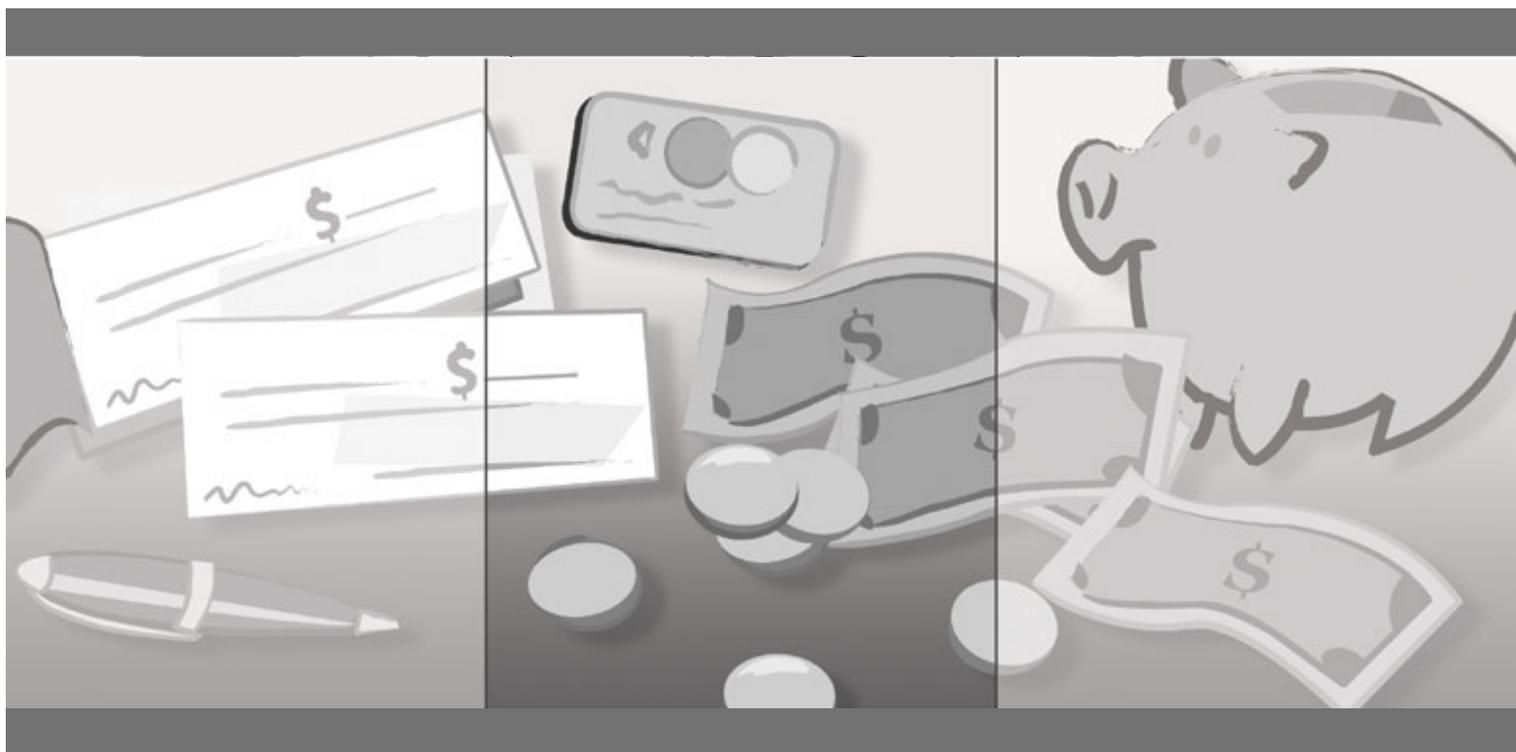




Financial Literacy

Instructor Guide

*Using GoVenture In
Your Learning Environment*



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GoVenture[®] Financial Literacy

Instructor Guide

Using GoVenture In Your Learning Environment

1. Welcome



This Instructor Guide is provided to help you use MediaSpark's GoVenture Financial Literacy simulation in your classroom or computer lab. If you are not already familiar with the award-winning GoVenture simulations, we invite you to visit the GoVenture.NETwork at www.goventure.net or to contact us at 1-800-331-2282.

An electronic version of this document is also available on the GoVenture.NETwork.

2. About GoVenture Financial Literacy

Make learning easier and more fun than ever!

The fastest and most effective way to learn the basics of money management. GoVenture Financial Literacy is a realistic software simulation designed to help youth and adults learn about personal money management decisions in a fun and educational manner. Like a flight simulator for finance and life, GoVenture Financial Literacy enables you to learn-by-doing. It's easy to use, visual, interactive, and exciting!

GoVenture Financial Literacy is ideal for youth and adults in self-directed or facilitated learning environments and can be used to enhance training in business, finance, economics, career, family and consumer sciences, math, and other subjects.

Unlike any book, course, or seminar, GoVenture Financial Literacy enables you to gain years of finance and life experience in minutes!

3. What Makes GoVenture Financial Literacy Unique

GoVenture simulations enable learning-by-doing, an approach that cognitive scientists have identified as the fastest and most effective way for human beings to learn. GoVenture simulations immerse the learner in a highly visual and interactive environment in such rewarding ways that the learner feels both intellectually and emotionally engaged in the experience - as if he or she were personally living it.

GoVenture Financial Literacy is designed to meet three key objectives, which differentiate it from other personal finance products:

1. GoVenture helps you identify personal life goals and set your goals in a visual environment.

It is difficult to identify and set financial goals, and these goals are not intuitive when expressed as purely mathematical concepts. GoVenture uses a visual interface to help identify goals and make it easier to relate to the financial concepts.

2. GoVenture is not a tool to document your financial life; it is a teaching tool which helps you learn about personal finance.

Many products on the market help document your personal finances, but they are designed to record data, or perhaps to calculate mathematical projections – not to teach. GoVenture is designed as a teaching tool.

3. GoVenture lets you “live” your possible financial future for 10 years.

As a simulation, GoVenture allows you to “live” your life in a virtual environment for up to 10 years. You can replay the simulation unlimited times to try different strategies or different personal goals.

GoVenture Financial Literacy is designed to be used as a learning program on its own, or to complement other learning materials, courses, programs, and curricula. It can provide a valuable learning opportunity for an individual or an entire class, within a single hour of use or over an extended period of time. The educational foundation and ease of integration in the classroom and curriculum make GoVenture Financial Literacy the first choice among learners who are in the early stages of learning about personal finance, as well as educators and trainers who are providing basic finance and life skills training.

4. GoVenture for You

GoVenture Financial Literacy is a flexible training tool which can be used in a variety of educational curricula.

Personal Planning

Planning your future is perhaps the most important strategy you must develop and monitor. GoVenture allows you to experience up to 10 years of virtual results in a few hours – and more importantly, learn from this experience. You can see what happens in different economic environments, and with different investment portfolios. You can even learn how to adjust for unexpected events. GoVenture can make you better prepared to address your actual personal financial future.

Education

GoVenture has been designed to be suitable for a variety of instructional approaches and levels. Whether the need is to create a completely new curriculum or to enhance an existing one, GoVenture offers a successful and valuable experience for instructors and learners, from middle school to adult education.

Investment

GoVenture includes basic investment options that introduce strategies to balance risk, income generation and growth. You are placed in changing economic conditions which will further challenge your investment skills. The ability to play over and over again at no real financial risk helps develop a more intuitive understanding of investing.

Career and Family

GoVenture provides you with the ability to plan major career and family objectives, and then simulates how they might affect your personal finances and future goals. It helps you develop a greater understanding of the financial and time commitments needed to meet these objectives.

Economics

GoVenture brings the study of economics to life in a controlled environment. Key economic factors are simulated, without the complexity of true worldwide economies. Using the GoVenture experience, you can learn how economic changes influence markets and affect you on a personal level.

Mathematics

GoVenture can be used to enhance mathematical skills. While prices and current totals are calculated by the simulation, you must project your cash requirements, investment returns, and future expenses so that you can manage your cash flow and increase your net worth.

Life Skills Training

GoVenture helps develop a number of necessary skills for success in the fast-paced Knowledge Economy, including: planning, just-in-time learning, problem solving, organization, critical thinking, and risk management. GoVenture addresses life skills training directly by immersing you in a simulated world of experience that transcends the limitations of traditional teaching and learning approaches.

Unlike conventional educational materials, games and Internet portals, GoVenture offers a comprehensive learning experience. Simulations are combined with a wide range of learning resources for quick and easy integration into self-directed or facilitated learning environments.

What You Need to Play GoVenture Financial Literacy

GoVenture Financial Literacy is designed using proven technologies that will operate on personal computers, either stand-alone or over the Internet. For specific system requirements, please refer to the software documentation.

5. GoVenture Resources

Every GoVenture educational license includes the following resources:

GoVenture Financial Literacy Software Simulation

A highly visual and interactive software simulation program that allows you to experience the thrills and challenges of planning your financial future in a realistic and fun learning environment.

Software User Guide, Simulation Help, and Advisor Window

Print materials included with the software simulation and visual tools in the simulation designed to introduce you and your students to GoVenture, and to help you become comfortable with the program quickly.

Experiencing Financial Literacy –

An Illustrated Introduction to Personal Finance

A concise, easy-to-read resource guide that introduces financial literacy concepts and outlines the basics of personal finance. For you and your students, this guide complements the GoVenture simulation by serving as a valuable resource throughout your course or program.

Performance Report

A helpful software tool that displays detailed simulation results, assigns a score to the performance based upon a number of factors, and can be printed out as a report.

Instructor Guide (this document)

A guide to help you learn about GoVenture and the various resources that are available for using GoVenture in the classroom or in a business or life skills training environment.

Learning Guides and Activities Workbooks –

Instructor and Student Editions

Lessons and activities designed to bring financial literacy and personal finance education alive in the classroom. Key decisions in planning and managing personal finances are addressed with a corresponding activity from the Learning Guide.

Test Bank

A selection of objective questions which can be used in creating tests on investing, cash management, life planning, and other information contained in the Experiencing Financial Literacy guide.

GoVenture.NETwork – www.goventure.net

A free website containing a wealth of business tools, activities, games, and collaboration opportunities for you and your students.

GoVenture Live the Learning

A free newsletter to help educators and facilitators bring business to life!

6. Getting Started

The following approach is recommended to help you and your students get started:

1. Browse through all of the resources that are provided with GoVenture to get a better understanding of how everything fits together.
2. Review the Software User Guide document.
3. Start GoVenture Financial Literacy and then choose *START NEW Simulation*. You can choose to play a Full Simulation or a Profile Activity.
 - a. Profile Activities (Life Plan, Net Worth, and Cash Flow) use some components of the full simulation's Startup Profile and are provided as stand alone learning opportunities for your students. If you feel your students are not yet ready to run a Full Simulation, or if you only need a shorter activity at the moment, then playing one or more Profile Activities is a great way to start.
 - b. Full Simulations give you the complete experience of managing up to 10 years of personal finances in a Custom or QuickStart simulation.

If you click the *Custom* button, you are taken to the Startup Profile area where you can enter your starting data by clicking on each of the buttons presented. Follow the directions provided to begin the simulation. Be sure to take the guided tour which is offered just before the simulation starts.

If you click the *QuickStart* option, you can choose from a list of preset simulation files. Each file has some or all of the Startup Profile completed and may help you dive into playing the simulation faster.

4. Explore the various areas of the program to become familiar with the different screens within the program and the types of decisions that need to be made. If you run your simulation long enough, you will experience a variety of events that will challenge you along the way. Be sure to view the Help and Advisor information that is available to guide you through the program.
5. Virtual time is tracked by week. Time can be set to advance manually or automatically when you set up your profile. The default setting is to advance automatically every 30 seconds. You can change the length of the simulation and the speed at which time advances at any point in the simulation by clicking on the *Time* button in the application menu. If you have selected manual time advance, or wish to move to the next week early, click the *Time Advance* button on the main menu to advance to each next period.
6. Once you are familiar with the simulation screens, try making personal finance decisions of your own to get a better sense of how GoVenture Financial Literacy works.

Try as many new simulations as you wish. As you become more familiar with GoVenture Financial Literacy, you can explore the following options:

CUSTOM: Custom simulations offer the most flexibility in structuring and running your own full simulation. Build your own Startup Profile exactly as you wish.

QUICKSTARTS: QuickStarts are full simulations which have already started. Some QuickStarts may only have the Startup Profile completed while others may have had the simulation run for several years. QuickStarts are a great way to get started quickly or to set up specific challenges for students. Once familiar with GoVenture, you can make your own QuickStarts and add them to the program.

LOCK OPTIONS: You can lock your simulation so that it is impossible to change the length of play, the speed of time advance, the life plan, job, and/or expenses during the simulation. Locking one or more of these options can help you standardize the experience for each of your students. However, it is recommended to leave these features unlocked until you have run GoVenture a few times.

RANDOM EVENTS: There are random events which can affect your simulation — for example, you might be robbed, or you might receive an unexpected inheritance. Before you start playing the simulation, you can choose whether random events will occur in the simulation or not.

PROFILE ACTIVITIES: Instead of running a full simulation, you can elect to run the Life Plan, Net Worth, or Cash Flow activities. Some of these activities are components of the Startup Profile in a full simulation. Running a Profile Activity can be helpful if you wish to focus on one of these aspects of personal finance.

Note: Refer to the GoVenture Financial Literacy Software User Guide for more information on running GoVenture.

7. GoVenture and Your Curriculum

Possible Approaches

GoVenture Financial Literacy is a comprehensive program designed to supplement and enhance your existing course, program, or curriculum. It has been specifically created to provide you with a broad and flexible range of options. You may choose to use GoVenture Financial Literacy at the beginning of a course, at the end of a course, or throughout an entire term.

Using GoVenture at the Beginning of a Course

By using GoVenture Financial Literacy at the beginning of a course, students immediately gain hands-on experience in the issues involved, and the decisions that need to be made, in planning their personal finances. This experience provides them with considerably more insight into what they need to learn and why, making them more likely to participate in class discussion and to ask insightful questions. Lectures and textbooks become instantly transformed into valued sources of information when connected to GoVenture's hands-on experience.

Using GoVenture at the End of a Course

By using GoVenture Financial Literacy at the end of a course, students can apply the knowledge, lessons, and techniques they have learned throughout your course to a highly realistic, simulated setting. GoVenture provides students with the opportunity to gain experience and to make the important connection between theory and practice.

Using GoVenture Throughout a Course

GoVenture Financial Literacy is essentially a personal finance laboratory where your students can go every week, or every day, to apply the information and concepts you are teaching about in class. Throughout your course, students can continually use GoVenture to experience and experiment with the knowledge they are gaining.

Choosing what is right for you depends upon the amount of time you have available to include GoVenture Financial Literacy in your curriculum, and your desire to use the many GoVenture resources that are available. If you only have limited time or if you want all students to work on the same scenario, you may want to use a GoVenture QuickStart, or a QuickStart scenario you have set up yourself.

Or, you may choose to have students spend additional time on the Startup Profile of the simulation, making all the decisions for themselves – and perhaps using the activities in the Learning Guide for assistance.

Hours Required

Within the GoVenture simulation, time works under a constantly running virtual clock. In general, it takes one hour for students to become familiar and comfortable with GoVenture's various screens and the daily decisions that need to be made. Within this period, they will likely have experienced many of the challenges and issues they will need to understand in order to reach success.

As a general rule-of-thumb, you can count on every hour your students spend working with GoVenture equaling about one to three years of operating time for their GoVenture finances. The basic speeds at which the clock can be set are listed in the following table. The table also gives you the real time it would take to run a number of years at each setting.

| The Amount of Real Time It Takes to Play GoVenture (APPROXIMATELY) | | |
|---|---------------|-----------------|
| Simulation Time => | 1 Year | 10 Years |
| Automatic Time Advances, a week every: | | |
| 5 seconds | 5 min | 1 hr |
| 10 seconds | 9 min | |
| 15 seconds | 13 min | |
| 20 seconds | 18 min | |
| DEFAULT = 30 SECONDS | 26 MIN | 4 HRS |
| 40 seconds | 35 min | |
| 50 seconds | 44 min | |
| 60 seconds | 52 min | 9 hrs |
| Manual Time Advance: You click the <i>Time Advance</i> Button to advance to next week. | (Variable) | |

Unless the time advance speed has been locked before starting the simulation, the clock speed can be increased or decreased at any point in the simulation. On average, 5 to 10 hours with the simulation will provide students with a full GoVenture experience. However, this can easily be extended to 20, 30, or more hours by utilizing the many resources, working deeper into the simulation, and repeating the simulation using different scenarios.

Matching Personal Finance Scenarios to the Current Topic of Discussion

GoVenture can be used to provide targeted learning, by directly corresponding to the current topic at hand. For example, in one scenario you may wish to instruct students to focus exclusively on investments, while in another you may want them to focus on successfully balancing their current quality of living with that of their targeted retirement goals.

Saving and Resuming Simulations

GoVenture simulations can be saved and resumed at any time. This allows students to continue to build and work with an existing simulation scenario over an extended period of time.

Creating Your Own QuickStart Scenarios

Once you are familiar with GoVenture, you may wish to make your own QuickStarts and add them to your copy of the program so that an entire group of users is challenged with the same scenario. All you need to do is start a new simulation, make the desired decisions, and play the simulation for as many or as few virtual weeks as you want.

Then, save the simulation and move a copy of it into the GoVenture QuickStart folder (the "/QUICKSTA" subfolder in your GoVenture Financial Literacy program folder). Your scenario will then be included in the list of QuickStart options the next time the program is run.

If you are running the simulation from the CD-ROM, or if you prefer, you can provide a copy of your scenario to your students via disk or any network folder, give the file name and password, and instruct them to use the *Resume Simulation* feature and select your simulation file.

Note: Refer to the GoVenture Financial Literacy Software User Guide for more information on creating and playing your own QuickStarts.

Every Simulation is Different

No two simulations will be exactly the same in GoVenture Financial Literacy. Even if your financial profile is the same from one simulation to the next, there will be changes in economic conditions, news and events, and (intelligently) random factors which will make each simulation a new challenge.

8. Facilitated and Self-Directed Learning

GoVenture Financial Literacy is designed to be used in facilitated and/or self-directed learning environments. Students can dive in on their own, exploring and discovering their GoVenture personal finances with limited supervision, or can be directed step-by-step through the various aspects of planning and managing their finances.

Students only need the GoVenture Financial Literacy simulation to begin exploring and learning. However, the additional resources provided can add value to their specific areas of interest and their overall learning experience.

9. Individual and Group Learning

GoVenture Financial Literacy can be used for individual or group learning.

Students can manage their own personal finances and make all of the necessary decisions. They do not necessarily compete directly against each other, but with themselves in order to plan and manage their personal finances. Differing economic conditions are likely to exist when a simulation is run by each single player, even if it is the same simulation file.

For group learning, students can work together to make decisions and/or they can be assigned specific areas to champion – Investments, Cash Flow, and Housing. Groups of up to five students per simulation per computer can work effectively.

10. Evaluating Success

GoVenture provides a detailed Performance Evaluation report. This report includes a score based on net worth, so students can compare their results. However, what role this score might play in your evaluation of their learning experience is your decision.

To view your students' performance reports, instruct the students to print a copy of their reports for you, or to save their simulation files and have each provide you with a copy of the file and password.

Depending on your objectives, you may wish to discuss other measures of success than pure financial wealth, for example:

- Meeting and surpassing established life plan goals, or
- Balancing risk in your asset portfolio, or
- Maintaining a quality of life in the present while establishing a sufficient net worth to provide for retirement.

This allows you and your students to focus upon and to evaluate a diverse number of success points.

11. We Want to Hear from You!

At MediaSpark, we are committed to providing our customers with the best support in the business! We make every effort to design easy to use, robust programs that run on various computer platforms and require little or no installation. However, if technological difficulties still arise, we are here to help. Toll free telephone, email, and fax assistance is readily available. We will call you back promptly, and stay with you until all of your issues are resolved. Our primary goal is to provide you and your students with a successful GoVenture experience every time.

We invite you to stop by the GoVenture.NETwork often, to learn about new features we have added to GoVenture and new simulations we are developing.

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