



13 Listen and read. When were the first coins used?



Money, Money, Money!

Most people today use coins, paper money, or credit cards to buy things. However, shopping wasn't always as easy as that.

About 10,000 years ago, people farmed and grew the food they needed. They raised livestock, like cows and goats, and grew grain, like rice and wheat. During that time, people used bartering. This means they exchanged goods between them. They mostly used livestock and grain instead of money in many different parts of the world.

Over the years, things changed, and about 3,000 years ago, people started to use other things as money. Shells from the ocean, for example, such as the cowrie shell, were traded as money in places like China, Thailand, India, and some countries in Africa.

It wasn't until about 2,000 years ago when the first coins appeared. China, Greece, and India were probably the first places to use metal coins. Most coins were made of expensive metals like bronze, silver, or gold. They made them by heating small amounts of metal and then putting a seal on them (Greece) or putting a hole in the middle (India and China).

But carrying around a lot of heavy coins wasn't very practical. That's probably why paper money started to be used in China, almost 1,000 years ago. In Europe, paper money began as "bank notes." The first bank notes were made in Sweden, in 1661.

Almost every country has its own currency (a specific kind of money). For example, the U.S.A. has American dollars, and the United Kingdom has British pounds. We can tell how much one unit of a certain currency is worth in another currency. This is a very useful thing when you want to travel abroad!



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