



## INTERSTELLAR INVESTOR Instructor's Guide

1. What is this program?
  - a. "Interstellar Investor" is an HTML5/flash digital file that is designed to be played offline in a classroom/group setting. It can also be played individually.
  - b. This game was developed by Jonathan Guymon and Luke Erickson of University of Idaho Extension. Funding was generously provided by Northwest Farm Credit Services.
  - c. The purpose of this program is to provide a fun and engaging activity to supplement third party curricula or lessons on investing for retirement. It is designed to improve knowledge and actions of class participants (see objectives below).
2. Who is the target audience for this program?
  - a. This program is developed specifically for high school students. However, in field tests this program has also been used successfully with younger and older audiences.
3. Objectives of the program.
  - a. After playing Interstellar Investor, students will:
    - i. Be motivated to invest for retirement.
    - ii. Be better prepared to start investing at an early age.
    - iii. Know how to start investing effectively.
4. To download and open the game.
  - a. Visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/nw-youth-financial-ed> to download the game. Click "download kit" or "download zip-file."

- b. Once folder is downloaded, be sure that your downloaded file is fully extracted (unzipped) and ready to use. GAME WILL NOT OPEN UNLESS YOUR DOWNLOAD IS FULLY UNZIPPED!
- c. Next, open the "Interstellar Investor" folder.
- d. Click on either the "movie (flash)" icon or the "html5" to open the program.
  - i. The "movie (flash)" version is more stable but only compatible with PC.
  - ii. The "html5" version is less stable but is compatible with both PC and Apple computers.
- e. The game will open and will work online/offline.

#### 5. Program materials.

- a. Visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/nw-youth-financial-ed> to find the following supplemental materials:
  - i. Student worksheet - This program uses student worksheets so that each student can play along individually and make their own personal game decisions while going through the program as a group or classroom. These worksheets can also be useful grading tools to assess how well the students are paying attention during the program.
  - ii. Program overview - Use for program marketing or as a student/parent handout.
  - iii. Student evaluation - Have your students fill out the evaluation at the end of the activity to see what they learned. Share results with program creator, Luke Erickson, whenever possible (see contact info below).
  - iv. Instructor's guide - Download additional copies of this guide to assist you in preparing to use this program with your students.
  - v. Articles - The full article can help the instructor become familiar with the financial content and sources used in the game. The article summary can be useful as a student handout and for reflection on the main concepts covered in the game.
  - vi. Education standards - Compare the content of this game to the national personal finance education standards.

#### 6. How to teach this program.

- a. This game will take roughly 2 hours to play. There is an option to return to the game if you need to come back to it a second day to finish.
- b. After the credits select "Start New Game," or if you are returning to finish the game, select the round where your group left off.
- c. The game begins with some animation and written narration and simple character navigation. You can read this narration as the instructor, or have students volunteer to read the character dialogue out loud for the class.

- d. When prompted, the students will use the student worksheet (personal data pad) to enter information related to their choices.
- e. There are four sections of the student worksheet.
  - i. The Money Tracker section is used to keep track of each student's total cash. Think of it as the student's checking account.
  - ii. The "Total Investment Portfolio" section is used at the end of each round to add up the current value of their total investments. This means that at the end of each round students can add their total cash and investments for a total net-worth.
  - iii. The "Investment Tracker" section helps the students keep track of all the individual investments they have at any given point. The main purpose of this section is to keep track of the students' constantly changing portfolios. Remember all shares can only be sold with a 50% penalty. This is to reward long-term investing and penalize "day trading."
  - iv. The "Personal Equipment" section helps students keep track of the bonuses for which they are eligible on dice rolls.
- f. Most game actions are explained during gameplay. When possible, run through the program once yourself before you facilitate this program with your students.
- g. This game consists of four rounds, with five "tasks" per round. It can be completed in approximately 2 hours, though time largely depends on the pace of the instructor. The first round is always the slowest, but students will get the hang of it by the second round, and the last few rounds will go very quickly!
- h. Students can compete or cooperate in order to try to build the values of their investment portfolios.
- i. We have designed this program to be easily facilitated in classroom sized groups by an instructor using a standard computer and projector.
- j. Students will need a pencil/pen, and possibly a calculator depending on their math level.
- k. At the conclusion of the program a final slide has suggested reflection questions that the instructor can use to facilitate group discussion on the main objectives covered in the game. Feel free to add your own reflection questions to the discussion as well.

## 7. How we measure success of this program.

- a. Program materials are offered free of charge through UI Extension.
  - i. However, we do ask payment in the form of an email each time you use the program in your group or class so we can count your numbers and track usage. Copies of tallies of student evaluations would also be nice, when possible. This will ensure that our program shows strong impact and merits continued financial support from our partners.
  - ii. Please print copies of the Interstellar Investor *student evaluation* and have your participants fill them out.

1. Completed surveys can be mailed to:
  - a. Luke Erickson  
UI Extension, Madison County  
PO Box 580  
Rexburg, ID 83440
  2. OR, scan surveys, tallied results, or just the numbers of participants in your program and send to [erickson@uidaho.edu](mailto:erickson@uidaho.edu).
  - iii. Pictures of you and your kids using our program are also very helpful!
  - iv. Thanks for your help, this program can't be successful without the help of local volunteers and program facilitators like you.
8. Contact us with any questions, comments, class numbers, pictures, or surveys to share!
  - a. Luke Erickson, [erickson@uidaho.edu](mailto:erickson@uidaho.edu), 208-359-6215.
  - b. Lyle Hansen, [lhansen@uidaho.edu](mailto:lhansen@uidaho.edu), 208-287-5900.

Thanks! We hope you enjoy the program!