

EPISODE 04 · KIDS ADVENTURE WORKBOOK

Taxes Don't Hate You: They Built Your School

The most-complained-about adult thing — explained without the rage.



Every adult complains about taxes — and most of them have never been taught what taxes actually are. LEDGER walks your kid through the truth in 2 minutes: where the money goes, why brackets are NOT what your uncle says they are, and the one phrase that demystifies the whole thing.

Squire (6-9): sticker the jars. Match the words. Try one quiz square.

Knight (10-13): finish the workbook. Take the 7-question quiz. Earn the Champion seal.

Champion (14-16): finish everything plus the family chat plus the extension question.

Tagline: *The Money Lessons Schools Skip. Taught as an Adventure, Not a Lecture.*

THE HOOK

Every adult around you complains about THIS one thing — but almost none of them can explain it. Want to be the rare kid who can?

Write your answer in the box. There is no wrong answer here. We just want your first guess.

***Why this question matters:** Every adult complains about taxes — and most of them have never been taught what taxes actually are. LEDGER walks your kid through the truth in 2 minutes: where the money goes, why brackets are NOT what your uncle says they are, and the one phrase that demystifies the whole thing.*

THE FIVE-PANEL COMIC

Watch LEDGER walk through the five steps. Read each panel out loud.

Panel	Mentor	What happens
1. WHAT IT IS	LEDGER	A bill the country splits to fund shared things.
2. WHO PAYS	LEDGER	Workers, businesses, buyers — almost everyone, in some way.
3. WHERE IT GOES	LEDGER	Schools, roads, defense, programs — the things you already use.
4. HOW BRACKETS WORK	LEDGER	Each slice of income gets its own rate. Not the whole pie.
5. HOW TO PLAN	LEDGER	Withhold smartly. Deduct legally. File on time. No drama.

Squire challenge: Circle the panel that surprised you most.

Knight challenge: Rewrite Panel 3 in one sentence using your own words.

Champion challenge: Add a sixth panel of your own. What would it say?

VOCAB MATCH-UP

Draw a line from each word to its plain-English meaning.

Word	Meaning
Tax	Money to fund shared services
Bracket	A taxed slice of income
Marginal rate	Rate on your next dollar
Take-home pay	What lands after taxes
Withholding	Pre-paycheck pull
Refund	Overpayment returned

Bonus: Pick TWO words and use them in a sentence about your own money.

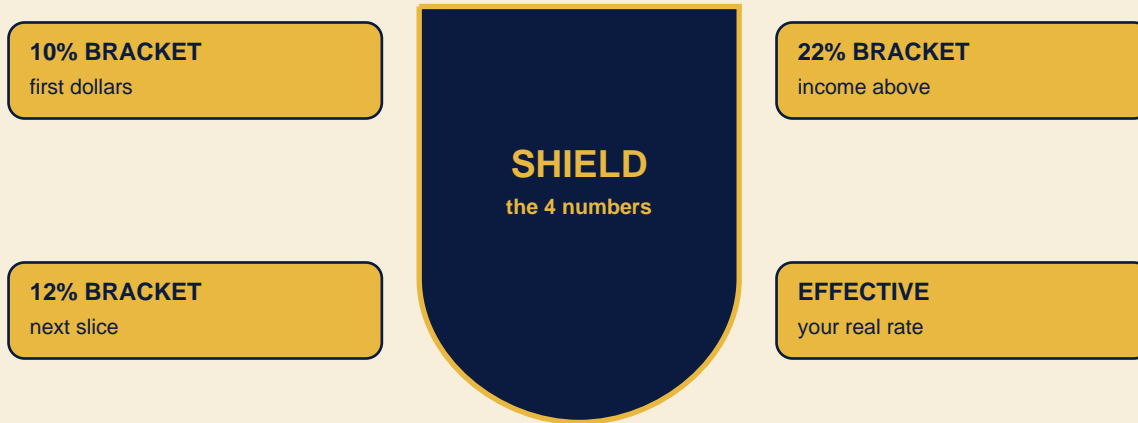
GLOSSARY OF MONEY WORDS

Bookmark this page. Adults pretend to know all of these. You will actually know them.

Word	Plain meaning
Tax	Money that goes from individuals or businesses to the government to fund shared services.
Bracket	A range of income taxed at a specific percentage. The percentage applies only to dollars in that range.
Marginal rate	The percentage on your NEXT dollar earned, not on all your dollars.
Take-home pay	What lands in your account after taxes are taken out.
Withholding	Tax already pulled from each paycheck before you see it.
Deduction	An amount you subtract from income before tax is calculated.
Refund	Money returned to you when you overpaid your taxes during the year.
FICA	The 7.65 percent that funds Social Security and Medicare from your paycheck.

THE BIG PICTURE

Here is the one drawing that captures the whole episode. Stare at it for ten seconds.



Your turn: Re-draw this picture in your own notebook tonight. If you can draw it from memory, you own the idea.

WORKED EXAMPLE — PICK YOUR LEVEL

Three versions of the same problem. Pick the one that matches your age band. Show your work.

Band	Problem	Hint
Squire (6-9)	If 100 dollars is your earnings and 10 percent goes to tax, how much do you keep?	90 dollars
Knight (10-13)	In 2026, the first 11,925 dollars is taxed at 10 percent. If you earn exactly 110,000 dollars, how much do you keep?	110,000 dollars, deduction (115,000) at 10%
Champion (14-16)	Earn 50,000 dollars single-filer in 2026. Apply standard deduction 15,000 dollars. How much do you keep?	Sample: 5,000 across the 10/12/22 brackets

Show your work in the box. Bring it to the dinner table tonight.

TRY THIS AT HOME — 7-DAY MISSION

Pick ONE mission. Do it for seven days. Bring back what you noticed.

- Find one paystub (yours or an adult's, with permission). Identify FIVE line items.
- Look up your state's individual income tax rate. Add it to the federal bracket you would land in.
- List 3 things in your town that taxes paid for that you used this week.

Mission journal: Each day, jot down ONE sentence about what happened. Use the box below.

Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	
Day 6	
Day 7	

THE 7-QUESTION QUIZ

Pick the best answer. Check it against the explanation at the bottom.

#	Question	Choose
1	If your top bracket is 22 percent, do ALL of your dollars get taxed at 22 percent?	(A) Yes / (B) No
2	Where does most state and local tax money tend to go?	(A) Vacations for politicians / (B) Schools, roads, and public safety / (C) Police
3	What is FICA?	(A) A tax software company / (B) A 7.65 percent payroll tax that funds Social Security and Medicare
4	Take-home pay is...	(A) Pay before taxes / (B) Pay after taxes / (C) Pay before deduction
5	A deduction makes your taxable income...	(A) Bigger / (B) Smaller / (C) Stay the same / (D) Doubled
6	In 2026, the standard deduction for a single filer is approximately...	(A) \$5,000 / (B) \$10,000 / (C) \$15,000 / (D) \$30,000
7	A tax refund means...	(A) You owe more / (B) You overpaid during the year and got the difference back

ANSWER KEY + EXPLANATIONS

#	Answer	Why
1	(B) No	No. Only the dollars inside that bracket are taxed at 22 percent. The dollars below it are taxed at the lower rates.
2	(B) Schools, roads, and public safety	Schools, roads, and public safety are the biggest categories at the state and local level.
3	(B) A 7.65 percent payroll tax	FICA is the Social Security and Medicare tax that funds Social Security and Medicare.
4	(B) Pay after taxes	Take-home pay is what lands in your account after taxes and other withholdings.
5	(B) Smaller	A deduction reduces taxable income — and therefore reduces tax owed.
6	(C) \$15,000	\$15,000 single / \$30,000 married-filing-jointly in 2026.
7	(B) You overpaid during the year and got the difference back	A refund returns overwithheld money. It is your own money coming back to you.

PAUSE AND PREDICT

Three predictions. Make them BEFORE you finish the workbook. Check them at the end.

Predict	Your guess	After you finish — were you close?
What is my guess for total federal+state tax on \$50k?		
What share of MY town's budget goes to schools?		
What does FICA stand for?		

Predictions you write down stick 4x better than predictions you only think about. Real research, real result.

SELF-CHECK — DID I GET IT?

Tick each box honestly. There is no test, no grade. Just an honest read on yourself.

I can name the 5 pillars from this episode.

I can use 3 vocab words in a sentence without looking.

I drew the big-picture visual from memory.

I picked one mission and started it.

I told a family member ONE thing I learned.

I have a question I still want to answer.

One question I still want to answer:

WORD SEARCH

Find every vocab word from this episode. Words go across, down, and diagonally.

T	A	X	X	M	P	E	C	C	A	M	R
B	R	A	C	K	E	T	L	I	Y	F	D
M	A	R	G	I	N	A	L	R	A	T	E
T	A	K	E	H	O	M	E	P	A	Y	H
W	I	T	H	H	O	L	D	I	N	G	Q
D	E	D	U	C	T	I	O	N	J	I	Z
B	C	B	O	U	I	Q	R	U	P	W	K
E	V	G	C	N	G	U	U	O	I	F	L
N	X	S	K	U	R	G	K	D	B	W	H
I	Y	S	T	H	D	K	F	J	O	A	B
L	W	C	J	X	V	K	A	K	J	K	E
Y	U	N	T	V	C	J	T	G	O	J	E

Find these words: TAX, BRACKET, MARGINALRATE, TAKEHOMEPAY, WITHHOLDING, DEDUCTION

MINI-COMIC DIALOGUE

Read this mini-comic out loud with one parent or sibling. Take turns being LEDGER and being the kid.

Speaker	Line
LEDGER	Show me the rows. Then show me the total.
Kid	Why is my paycheck smaller than the offer letter?
LEDGER	FICA. Federal. State. Maybe city. Each takes a slice.
Kid	Is the top bracket the whole rate?
LEDGER	No. Brackets are slices. Your effective rate is far less than your top bracket.
Kid	Where does it go?
LEDGER	Schools, roads, defense, programs. Things you already use without thinking.
Kid	Refund?
LEDGER	Means you over-paid. Your money. Returned.

Director's note: Whichever person plays the mentor — keep your voice STEADY. The mentor is never panicked. That is part of the lesson.

REFLECTION JOURNAL

After you watch the video AND finish this workbook, answer these three questions in your own words.

What is ONE word from the glossary I'd never heard before?

What is ONE thing I did NOT believe before but I do now?

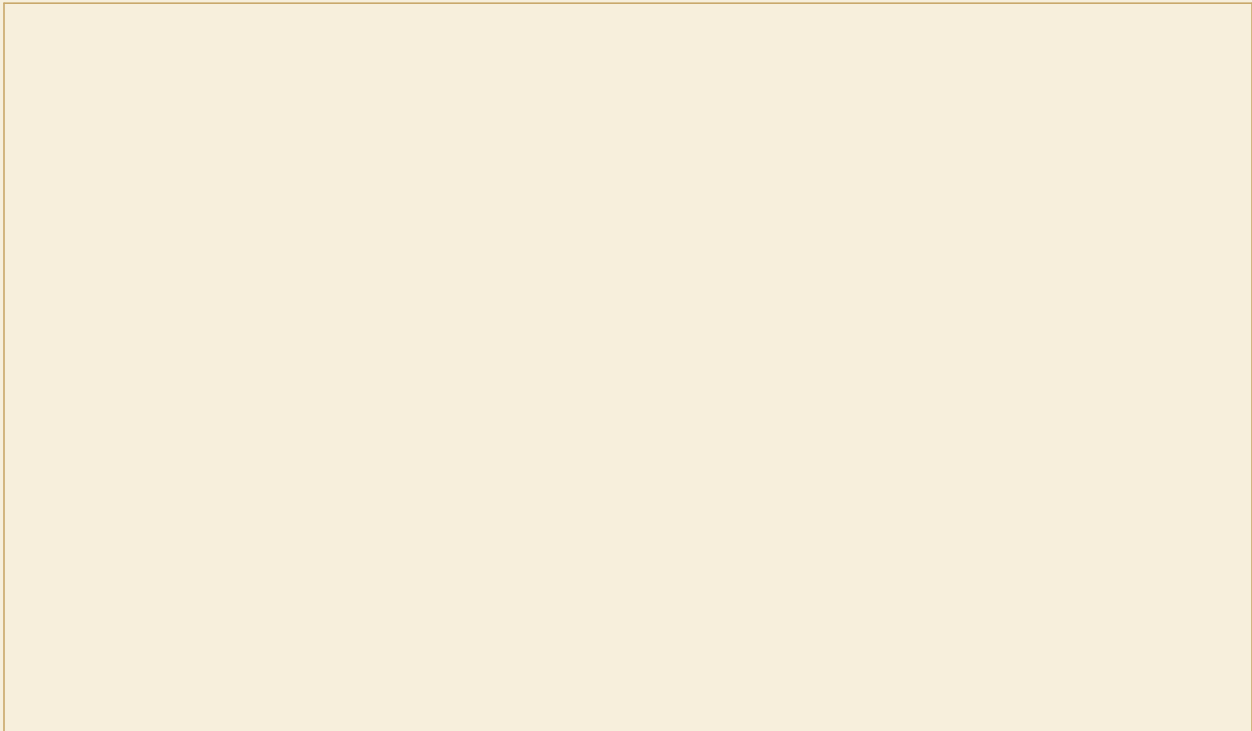
What is ONE habit I want to start by next Monday?

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

Pick ONE of these. Make it the way you make best.

- Draw a poster that teaches the 5 pillars to a first-grader in your school.
- Record a 60-second voice memo explaining the lesson to your future self at age 25.
- Write a 4-line rap or song with the key vocabulary words.
- Sketch a comic where the mentor shows up at YOUR dinner table.
- Build a simple chart with 3 columns: I knew, I sort-of knew, I learned today.

Sketch box:



FAMILY CHAT

Take this home tonight. Pick ONE prompt and share at dinner.

- What is one thing in our town that taxes paid for that we used today?
- If we earned \$5,000 more next year, how much would actually land in our account after federal, state, and FICA?
- What is one tax word we used to think meant something it doesn't?

Champion-band only: Ready to actually understand a paycheck stub line by line? What's a Tax (12 episodes with LEDGER) is inside the master pass at flexlifefi.com/cashquest-kids — \$149/year.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

This certifies that

*completed PILLARS_EP04 — Taxes Don't Hate You: They Built Your School
learned with mentor LEDGER and the Money Pillars series.*



Date: _____ Signed: _____

The Money Lessons Schools Skip. Taught as an Adventure, Not a Lecture.

RESOURCES + WHAT'S NEXT

Loved LEDGER? The full What's a Tax arc is inside the master pass.

Master all-access — \$149/year:

Enroll in the full curriculum at [flexlifefi.com/cashquest-kids](https://www.flexlifefi.com/cashquest-kids) — \$149/year all-access. Includes 60+ episodes, K/P/T teaching packs, Transcript Kit, and Certificate of Completion across all 5 tracts: Money Smarts, Insurance Genius, Investor Lab, What's a Tax, and Business World.

Enroll: <https://www.flexlifefi.com/cashquest-kids>

Other tracts you can pick from inside the pass:

Money Smarts (5 Jars). Insurance Genius (SHIELD). Investor Lab (IVY). What's a Tax (LEDGER). Business World (FORGE).

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