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Rosa and her family save money together to buy a comfortable chair for their new home after their former home was destroyed in a fire.

**Ages:** 3 to 7 years

**ATOS Level:** 3.4

**Lexile:** 530L

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# A Chair for my Mother

*Is there something you'd like to save money to buy?*

**Topics:** money, problem solving, estimation, counting, counting by 1s, 5s, 10s, and 25s, addition

## Activities To Do Together:

Use the book *A Chair for My Mother* to make comparisons and explore money with your child.

Before you read the book with your child:

- Look at the picture of the Blue Tile Diner together. Ask your child to tell you about what they notice.
- If your child is unfamiliar with names and values of coins, explore together what pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters look like and talk about the value of each of these coins.

While reading the book with your child:

- Count what you see together.
- Ask your child to compare the chair Rosa's family bought with a chair they are familiar with. How are they similar? How are they different?

When you have finished reading the story, try the following:

- Ask your child to share with you what they know about coins and their values.
- Encourage your child to find four different combinations of coins that are equal to 25 cents.
- Ask your child to find a combination of four coins that equals one dollar. Can they find a combination of six coins equal to a dollar? Challenge them to find a combination of 8 coins and a combination of 10 coins that also equal a dollar.
- Count nickels by five. Count dimes by ten.
- Practice counting money together. Try counting the coins with the largest value first. Then count the coins starting with the smallest value first. Ask you child if they found one way easier than the other.

**Questions for Mathematical Thinking:**

1. What are some reasons that people save money?
2. Rosa's family wants to save money to buy a comfortable chair. What does each member of Rosa's family do to help?
3. How did Rosa earn money? What did she do with the money she earned?
4. Do you think putting coins into a big jar was a good way to save money? Why or why not?
5. If you wanted to save money, what would be your approach?
6. If you earned five dollars, what would you do with it?

**Early Math Project Resources:**

Visit [A Chair for My Mother Activities](http://countplayexplore.org/book/a-chair-for-my-mother) (countplayexplore.org/book/a-chair-for-my-mother) to find activities and related Learning Foundations and California Mathematics Standards for this book.

**Vocabulary**

**Math words found in the story:** back, beside, big, biggest, change, coins, count, dimes, down, enough, empty, finally, first, full, half, heavy, high, little, low, money, nickels, quarters, savings, single, smaller, ten-dollar bill, tips, up, whole

**Related math words:** allowance, budget, credit, debt, interest, invest, pennies, savings account

**Words to build reading**

**comprehension:** armchair, ashes, bargain, charcoal, comfortable, delivered, exchanged, furniture, pumps, put by, spoiled, velvet, worried

**Spanish Title:** Un sillón para mi mamá

**ISBN:** 90590475649

**Also available in:** Russian, German, Greek

**Related Books:**

*Alexander Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* by Judith Viorst; *Lemonade for Sale* by Stuart J. Murphy

Click this link to the [World Catalog](https://bit.ly/3FzUo9E) or enter <https://bit.ly/3FzUo9E> in your browser, to find *A Chair for My Mother* in the public library.

**Math Connections:** Use *A Chair for My Mother* to introduce your child to coins, coin values, counting money, and savings goals and strategies.

Ask your child to share what they already know about money and what they'd like to find out. Encourage them to investigate and find answers to their questions.

Look at a penny, a nickel, a dime, and a quarter together. Pick the coins up, feel their edges, and consider their weights and sizes. Ask your child to tell you what they notice about each of the coins. How are they similar? How are they different? Ask your child to invent their own way to identify each of the coins by touch alone and teach you how to do it.

Sort a handful of coins by type, putting the pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters into separate piles. If your child doesn't know the values of each of the coins already, help them learn their values, pennies = 1 cent, nickels = 5 cents, dimes = 10 cents, and quarters = 25 cents. Practice counting the pennies by 1s, nickels by 5s, dimes by 10s, and quarters by 25. Select five coins randomly and figure out the total value of the coins.

Look and explore the multiples of five together... 5, 10, 15, 20, 25... Count a collection of nickels skip counting by five. Look at and say the multiples of ten... 10, 20, 30, 40, 50... and use these numbers to count a collection of dimes.

Ask your child to find combinations of five coins that are worth more than 50 cents.

Ask your child to find combinations of five coins that are worth more than 10 cents, but worth less than 30 cents.

Ask your child if there is something they want to save money to buy. Talk about how much the item costs and estimate how long it may take to reach that savings goal. If your child has already started saving, count the money they have saved so far. If they haven't started saving, talk about ways that they might earn money and where they might keep their money. Consider opening a savings account with your child at a local bank.

Do some money problem solving together. Ask your child to figure out how much money they would have if they saved a dime each day for an entire week. Ask them how much they would have if they saved a quarter each day for a week. How long would it take to save five dollars at each of these rates?