

# Coins in the Classroom



## Pick a Year, Any Year

### Script

This PowerPoint presentation is designed to help students understand:

1. Coins are primary historical documents
2. The term “value” should not always be associated with the amount of money an object is worth.

Materials: To add reality and drama to the presentation, it is best to have a few coins with a date of 1912 to pass around to the students during the presentation. United States coins from 1912 are considered common dated coins and can be purchased at most coin shops. A complete set can be purchased for approximately 25-30 dollars.

Slide 1 – Title Page

Slide 2 – Examples of coins minted in the United States in 1912. All of the designs had been around for years. The Lincoln cent design first circulated in 1909. The Liberty nickel had been around since 1883. The Barber quarter and dime designs were minted in 1892. 1912 was a routine year in numismatics.

Slide 3 – 1883 “cents-less” nickels that were gold plated were known as “Racketeer Nickels”. A popular story concerns a deaf mute by the name of Josh Tatum. Mr. Tatum gold plated the new nickels and would walk into stores purchasing items that cost 5 cents. He would hand the gold plated coin to the clerk and would simply stand there. Many clerks mistakenly thought the nickel was really a 5 dollar gold coin and hand Josh \$4.95 in change. Eventually, Josh Tatum was arrested but was released when it was determined that he never asked for change because he could not speak. The saying “I’m just joshing” was born.

Slide 4 – The Mint realized the problem later in the year and added a denomination.

Slide 5 – 1913 was a much more interesting year in numismatics. The nickel sports a new design.

Slide 6 – Not only was there a new nickel design in 1913, the design had two varieties.

Slide 7 – The obverse (heads) and reverse (tails) of the Buffalo nickel.

Slide 8 – 1913 Liberty Head nickels were not authorized and should not have been made. By advertising for nickels Samuel Brown knew no one else had, he is setting the price.

Slide 9 – Of the 5 examples that exist, the American Numismatic Association has two.

Slide 10 – The 1913 Liberty Head nickel is very rare so when compared to the 1912 nickel, the 1913 should have more value.

Slide 11 – How is ‘value’ defined?

Slide 12 – Let’s focus on events from 1912. A coin from 1912 has many stories to tell us.

Slide 13 – Could a nickel from 1912 have been used to purchase a newspaper with the headlines of Arizona or New Mexico statehood?

Slide 14 – Jim Thorpe participated in the last Olympics before World War I. Could a coin from 1912 have once been owned by Jim Thorpe?

Slide 15 – Is it possible that a survivor of the Titanic carried a coin from 1912?

Slide 16 – This artist rendition of the sinking of the Titanic is accurate in that no smoke is rising from smokestack number 4. That smokestack was not hooked up to an engine and was only there for aesthetic reasons.

Slide 17 – The Presidential election of 1912 was very special. This was the only time in our nation’s history when three major candidates participated.

Slide 18 – President Taft was the incumbent running for re-election. He was our largest President, at one time weighing over 300 pounds. His main ambition in life was to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He achieved his goal during the Harding administration.

Slide 19 – Woodrow Wilson was a former Governor from the state of New Jersey. He also served as President of Princeton University. Wilson will win the election of 1912 and will be re-elected in 1916 and will lead the nation in its participation in World War I. He will suffer a major stroke towards the end of his second term.

Slide 20 – Theodore Roosevelt was the leader of the Bull Moose Party. He had already served as President and at age 42, was the youngest man to become President. Roosevelt suffered from asthma as a boy and worked hard to make his body strong.

Slide 21 – While serving as a New York Assemblyman, Roosevelt lost his mother and his wife within hours of one another. Alice had delivered a daughter just two days earlier. His wife and mother both died on February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Slide 22 – Roosevelt’s diary entry from February 14<sup>th</sup>. “The light has gone out of my life.” Roosevelt will never speak of Alice again.

Slide 23 – Could any of the three candidates carried coins minted in 1912?

Slide 24 – What were prices like in 1912?

Slide 25 – Prices for new and used Model T Fords.

Slide 26 – Food prices in New Jersey.

Slide 27 – Furniture prices.

Slide 28 – Real estate prices in 1912.

Slide 29 – John Rockefeller's total worth and charity habits.

Slide 30 – Working wages in 1912 for men, women and children.

Slide 31 – 12 year old Furman Owens who had to work to help support his family.

Slide 32 – 5 year old Manuel who had already worked for a year.

Slide 33 – What rode did the coins dated 1912 take? Who used the coins and what did they purchase?

Slide 34 – Your job as a teacher is to help your students learn how to tell the story of money.