

How to Organise a Successful Penny Wars Fundraiser

What is 'Penny Wars'?

Penny Wars is a fun and competitive fundraising event where different groups, like classes or year groups, compete to collect the most pennies (or coins). It's a simple yet effective way to raise funds for your school while promoting friendly competition among children. The group that collects the most coins by the end of the contest wins a reward!

Step-by-Step Guide to Organising Penny Wars

1. Set Up the Rules

Start by establishing the basic rules of the competition:

- **Objective:** The goal is for each team to collect the most pennies (or other coins) in their jar. Silver coins (like 5p, 10p) can be used to "sabotage" other teams, as they deduct from the total value.
- **Duration:** Set a time frame for the competition, usually 1-2 weeks, so there's enough time for children to gather their coins.
- **Teams:** Organise children into teams, typically by class, year group, or house. Each team will have their own jar for collecting coins.

2. Prepare the Collection Jars

Get everything ready for the competition:

- **Jars:** Label large clear jars or containers for each team. Make sure the jars are easy to access and see, so children can monitor their progress.
- **Display Area:** Place the jars in a central location, like the school hall or entrance, so everyone can see the competition in action. Ensure the jars are securely placed to avoid any spills or accidents.

3. Explain the Game to the Children

Hold a kick-off assembly or classroom visit to explain how Penny Wars works:

- **How to Play:** Tell children that they should fill their own team's jar with pennies, but they can use silver coins to sabotage other teams. Pennies add to their total, while silver coins subtract from the other teams' totals.
- **Encourage Team Spirit:** Motivate children to rally their team and contribute regularly. Remind them that small coins can add up quickly!

4. Promote the Event

Get everyone excited and aware of the event:

- **Posters and Flyers:** Display colourful posters around the school and send flyers home with children to explain the rules and the fundraising goal.
- **School Newsletters and Social Media:** Announce the start of Penny Wars in the school newsletter and on social media. Provide updates on which teams are in the lead to keep the competition lively.

5. Monitor and Motivate

Throughout the competition, keep the energy up:

- **Progress Updates:** Provide regular updates on which teams are in the lead by tallying the coins weekly and announcing results during assemblies.
- **Encourage Donations:** Remind children that every penny counts and encourage them to bring in coins throughout the event. Teachers can also contribute to keep the spirit high.

6. Determine the Winner

At the end of the event:

- **Tally the Totals:** Carefully count the pennies and subtract the value of silver coins from each team's total. Announce the winning team in an assembly or via the school newsletter.
- **Award Prizes:** Reward the winning team with a fun prize, such as a class party, extra playtime, or a non-uniform day. Consider offering a smaller prize for the team with the most silver coins collected, even if it reduced their total!

7. Collect and Secure the Funds

After the event:

- **Collect and Secure Coins:** Safely gather the coins and arrange for them to be deposited in a bank or exchanged for notes. Some banks have coin counting machines, making this process easier.
- **Announce the Fundraising Results:** Share the total amount raised with the school community, explaining how the funds will be used to benefit the school.

8. Reflect and Plan for the Future

Once the event is complete:

- **Gather Feedback:** Ask teachers, children, and staff for feedback on how the event went. Did the children enjoy the competition? Were the rules clear?
- **Plan for Next Year:** Based on the feedback, consider making Penny Wars an annual fundraiser, with improvements based on this year's experience.



Tips for Success

- **Team Spirit:** Encourage team spirit by allowing children to decorate their jars and create team names or slogans.
- **Offer Incentives:** Provide small rewards throughout the competition for teams that reach certain milestones, such as collecting the most pennies in a single day.
- **Keep It Fun:** Make sure to keep the competition friendly and light-hearted. Emphasise that it's all for a good cause and to have fun along the way.

Final Thoughts

Penny Wars is a simple, low-cost fundraiser that excites children and promotes teamwork while raising money for your school. With a little organisation and enthusiasm, your school can turn spare change into a big success!

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