

Ginny laid a handful of coins on the table. There were quarters, nickels, and pennies. She studied them for a while. Ginny planned to write about the history of money for a school project. She had been doing research at the library. She pulled out her notebook and reread the information.

Long ago, many different items were used for money. This idea amazed Ginny. People in some cultures paid for goods with beads and shells. For instance, brightly colored shells were used in India. Some nations traded with whales' teeth or large stone disks.

She had learned the first metal coins were a mixture of gold and silver. They were made in little, round nuggets. These ancient coins were invented nearly three thousand years ago. Later, money was made from various metals. Their value depended on the size and weight of the object. These coins had to be weighed each time they changed hands. This process was not practical. Finally, coins were weighed and stamped with their value. That was the beginning of money as we know it today.

Her planning phase was finished. She had learned a lot about the history of money. Now Ginny was ready to start drafting her report.