



Unit : 10 Decision Making

Decision making is an important skill at all stages in life. It involves logical steps in choosing the best alternatives based on a particular situation. Learners need to understand that there could be more than one right or wrong answer.

The process of Decision Making involves the following process

Identify the problem

Analyse the problem

Think of alternatives

Decide on a course of action

A decision represents a course of action chosen from a number of possible alternatives. One such model for decision making is given below.

P.O.W.E.R Model

Step 1 : P = PROBLEM

Identify the issue in the situation

Stop and state (or identify) the problem.

Step 2 : O = OPTIONS

Think of different options for your situation. The more options you have, the better.

Step 3 : W = WEIGH

Look at the positive and negative consequences for every option you have thought of. The things you value should guide you in your decision making.

Step 4 : E = ELECT

Choose the best option, talk to a person you respect, then take the best course of action. Elect the option which you feel is important to you (values) and is a win-win situation for everyone.

Step 5 : R = REFLECT

Think or reflect about what happened because of your decision. What could be the consequences of your action?

{*Namibia Youth Programme : My Future, My Choice (UNICEF, Namibia)



Activity 1 : Making Informed Choices

Theme: Decision making is an important Life Skill which involves logical steps. To arrive at a decision, we need to gather information and should have evaluative and analytical skills.

Time Required: 2 periods

Materials Needed: Collage of pictures related to substance abuse, branded clothes and accessories, fast food products with a case study attached to each, chart depicting the P.O.W.E.R. Model and worksheets

Mode: Group activity (random)

Life Skills to be enhanced: Decision Making, Analytical Ability, Problem Solving and Critical Thinking

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- use their decision making skills;
- make mature decisions after identifying a problem, finding options and evaluating all the options.

Process :

- Divide students into three groups.
- Give each group a collage of pictures related to substance abuse, branded clothes and accessories and fast food products with a case study attached to each. (See handout)
- Allow twenty minutes to each group to solve the issues given in each study and ask them to focus on the following points:
 - What is the problem? How and why does it arise? What are the possible ways to solve it?
- Direct each group to make use of P.O.W.E.R. Model for arriving at a decision.
- Direct each student to speak about the problem given to them and how they were able to make informed choices. Encourage students from the audience to support, contradict or suggest new ideas about the possible ways to address that particular issue.
- Encourage students to analyze different alternatives critically such as the societal and personal values and norms, while taking decisions.





P.O.W.E.R. Model

P= PROBLEM

Step 1: Stop and state (or identify) the problem.

O= OPTIONS

Step 2: Think of different things you can do and use them. The more options you have, the better.

W= WEIGH

Step 3: Look at the good things and weigh them against the bad things of every option you thought of to solve your problem. The things you value should guide you in your decision making.

E= ELECT

Step 4: Choose the best option, talk to a person you respect, then take the best action. Elect the option which obtains what is important to you (values).

R=REFLECT

Step 5: Think or reflect about what happened because of your decision.

{Namibia Youth Programme: My Future, My Choice (UNICEF, Namibia)}.

Key Messages

1. Decision making is an important Life Skill.
2. It involves logical steps; determining the problem, considering multiple alternatives and choosing the best possible alternative based on a particular situation.
3. The skills required to arrive at a decision include gathering information, evaluative skills and analytical skills.
4. We should move away from the concept of one right or wrong answer to weighing multiple options and electing the best possible option.
5. Decision-making skills give us the power to actively take decisions about the different aspects in our lives and bear positive consequences on our mental health.





CASE STUDY HANDOUT

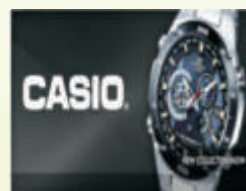
Case study 1: While returning back home from the school, you noticed two of your seniors smoking. On asking them about it, you were told that it was something that you should also try. They also threatened you that if you wished to be their friend you should not talk about this to anyone. You go home and think about it.

Discuss with your group. Identify the issue and use the POWER model to arrive at possible decisions that may help you make informed choices on what you should do.



Case study 2: At a friend's birthday party, your best friend was wearing branded watch. You really liked it and after coming home demanded the same from your parents, but they feel that they cannot give it you. You are upset with your parents' response.

Discuss it with your group. Reflect on the situation, analyse your parents' point of view and then arrive at a possible decision by using the POWER model.



Case study 3: Your friend, Rohit is putting on too much of weight and is beginning to feel very lethargic and does not feel like doing any physical activity. His parents and the doctors have counselled him to reduce his intake of junk food. What do you think Rohit should do?

Discuss with your group. Reflect on the situation and using the POWER model, reach a consensus on what Rohit should do.



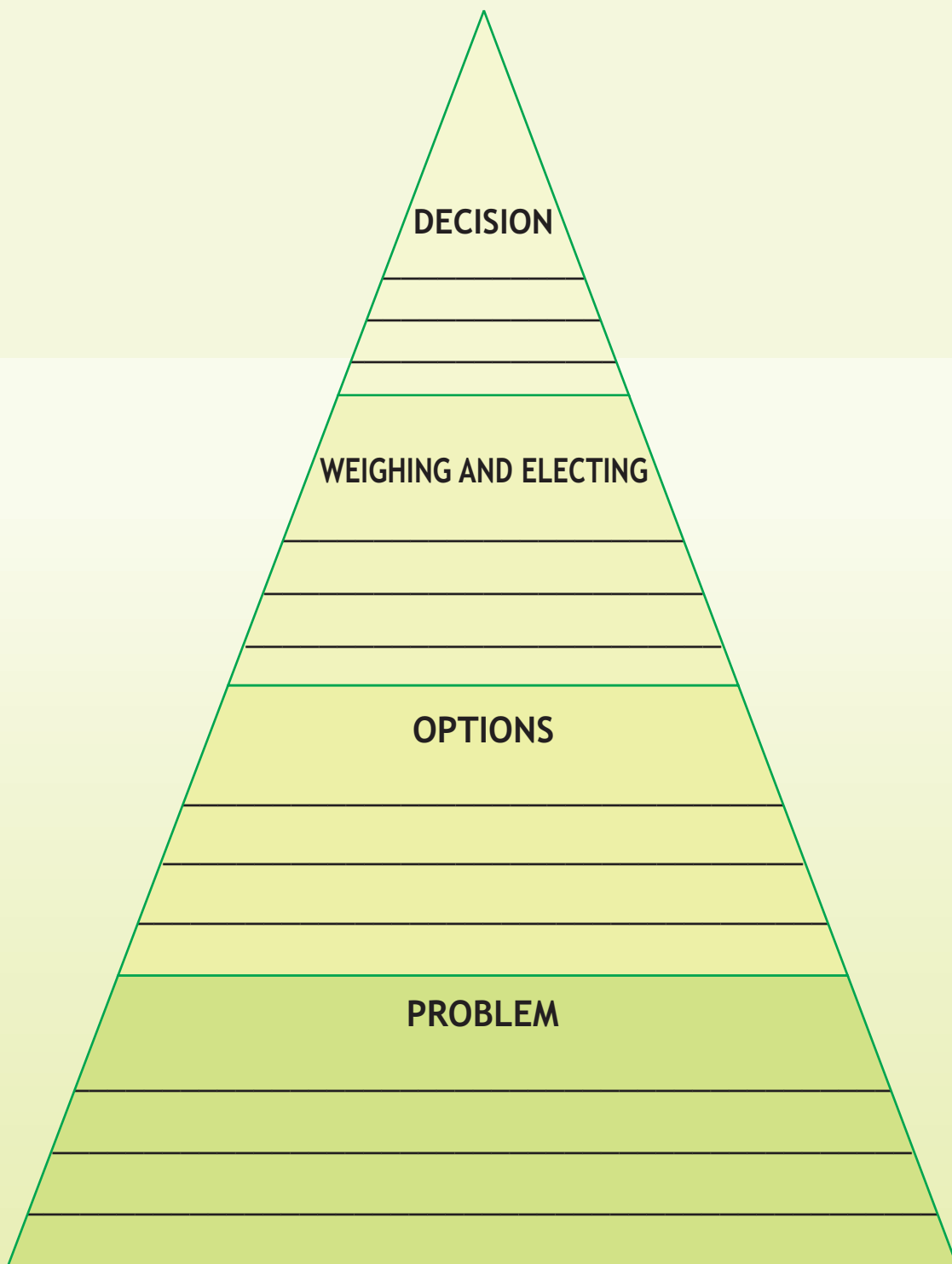


Worksheet - 1

I CAN DO IT !!!

After the class discussion about each of the case studies, fill up the pyramid.

I can now solve my problem





Worksheet - 2

I want to know that how I can use my decision making skills efficiently in my routine:

DAY	SITUATION	I TOOK THIS DECISION	IF I HADN'T TAKEN THIS DECISION
MONDAY			
TUESDAY			
WEDNESDAY			
THURSDAY			
FRIDAY			
SATURDAY			
SUNDAY			

Suggested Further Activity:

Direct students to work upon the worksheet no. 2 to practise the decision making skill.





Activity 2 : Practising Making Decisions

Theme: Decision making is an important skill. It involves logical steps in choosing the best alternatives based on the particular situation. Learners need to practise making decisions using the three C's model.

Time Required: 2 periods

Materials Needed: Poster of the three C's model and some difficult situations involving decision making process

Mode: Groups of five students

Life Skills to be enhanced: Decision Making, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Problem Solving and Communication Skills

Objective: Students will be able to make responsible and mature decisions using the three C's model

The Decision Making - 3C's

1. **Challenge** (situation available for decision making)
2. **Choices** (try to list as many rational choices as possible)
3. **Consequences** (list one positive and one negative for each choice)

Process:

- Explain to students that it is not necessary to use the three C's model to make small everyday decisions but it can be helpful for those decisions that would have a big impact on their life.
- Tell students that they are going to practise making decisions using the three C's model.
- Divide students into groups and give each two situations. Instruct them to write or draw the decision making model on a large sheet of paper and discuss the choices and consequences of each challenge. Help students to identify choices and consequences.
- Allow groups to continue working on the situations and remind them to be prepared to present their response. Encourage them to look for further information from other sources e.g. by discussing with other friends or with other teachers.
- Allow a few minutes to each group to finish their decisions (in case they consulted other people outside).
- Instruct groups to report their decisions to the whole group. The other students may ask questions and add other ideas for choices and consequences.





Key Messages

1. Each one of us faces difficult situations in our lives.
2. We should make decisions by choosing the most appropriate choices and then decide.

Some difficult Situations

Situation 1:

Your best friend has been bunking classes and acting differently than usual. You know your friend's parents are separating up and it has left your friend very upset, However he/she is not willing to talk to you about it and seems distant. What will you do?

Situation 2:

Nasir belongs to a group of boys who sell food and drinks to bus passengers that stop in the village on the way to the city. The boys have discovered that it is easy to steal small things (earrings, handbags, etc.) from the passengers as the bus pulls away. Nasir has never tried it earlier. His friends laugh at him and call him a coward. What do you think Nasir should do?

Situation 3:

Shivam is seeking admission to secondary school, but has to pass an entrance examination. When the result was declared, he found that he missed his chance by only two marks. An employee from the school tells him that he would get him admission for a certain amount of money. What do you think Shivam should do?

Situation 4:

Meena stays with her mother in a village and her father works in a nearby town. Her father used to send money for her school fee but this time it has got delayed. Her mother is not able to arrange money. Meena is worried what would happen now. What should Meena do?

Suggested Further Activity:

Encourage students to analyse their decisions for the above situations. Discuss which are the easiest and most difficult decisions to make. Why was it so?





Activity 3 : Bomb Shelter

Theme: Decision making is a skill that needs to be mastered. To solve a problem, we need to share our personal experiences so that we can learn from others' experiences.

Time Required: 1 period

Materials Needed: Six small different bags, few regular utility items to be placed in a bag

Mode: In groups of five students

Life Skills to be enhanced: Decision Making, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- talk and interact with others for a cause;
- establish trust and share their personal experiences to solve a problem.

Process:

- Divide students into groups.
- Instruct each group to assume that they are in an air-raid shelter after an atomic explosion. The shelter only has enough air and food supply for five people. The remaining members must leave the shelter so the others can survive.
- Randomly assign roles (doctor, housewife, movie star, politician, etc.) to each group member. Instruct each group member to plead his/her case on why he/she should stay in the shelter.
- Instruct the groups to decide as a whole who must stay and who goes. Set time limit to make the decision process more difficult.
- Ask each group to share with other groups how they arrived at a decision.

Key Messages

1. Decision making is an important Life Skill.
2. Decision making skill gives power to the learner to actively make decisions about the different aspects in their lives and bear positive consequences on their mental health.

Suggested Further Activity:

Instruct students to do the following:

Think of a situation in which your parents had gone out and left you at home and taken your younger sibling along with them. Now put yourself in their shoes and think of the reasons why they left you at home.





Activity 4 : Classroom Council

Theme: Decision making skills should be mastered to make good decisions in future.

Time Required: 1 period

Materials Needed: Classroom furniture and classroom decision making situations

Mode: Whole Class (Council)

Life Skills to be enhanced: Decision Making, Critical Thinking, Effective Communication and Problem Solving

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- make wise decisions in the future;
- recognize the fact each decision has consequences-positive or negative.

Process:

- Create a classroom council to help in the decision making.
- Determine if the entire class will be on the council or only a few students.
- Assemble the decision making council when a classroom decision has to be made.
- Encourage the members to discuss the decision, weighing the pros and cons of each possible decision. The council may also be used if a member of the group faces a difficult decision or finds it difficult to make decisions.
- Lead the council in a discussion of better decisions for that situation for future reference.

Key Messages

1. Decision making is an important Life Skill.
2. It involves logical steps.
3. Learners should move away from the concept of one right or wrong answer to weighing multiple options and electing the best possible option.

Suggested Further Activity:

Identify a common problem faced by the students in the school and then organize a discussion to arrive at a suitable decision.

Examples of Classroom Decision Making Situations

1. Maintenance of Discipline in classroom
2. Problem of Absenteeism





Activity 5 : Two Truths and a Lie

Theme: Decision making involves logical steps. The skills required to arrive at a decision are critical thinking, analytical skills and evaluative skills.

Time Required: 1 period

Materials Needed: A few A4 white sheets and pens/pencils

Mode: In groups (random)

Life Skills to be enhanced: Decision Making, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- use different elements involved in decision making;
- use the process of decision making with sequential steps;
- make a decision after thinking critically.

Process:

- Students recall different elements involved in decision making.
- Clarify that a wise decision requires a step by step process.
- Invite questions for clarification.
- Divide the students into five groups using random grouping method.
- Give each group an A4 white sheet to write down two things about themselves that are true and also to write one thing about themselves that is a lie.
- Allow ten minutes in order to brainstorm focusing on the steps of decision making:
 - Recognize and identify what is it you are deciding upon?
 - Aim and desire for positive results.
 - Analyze and weigh the consequences of an action.
 - Set alternatives or options.
 - Act responsibly or stand up for the decision made.
- Instruct each group representative to share the facts with their group members. The group must decide which two items are true and which one is a lie.
- Encourage students in each group to work together to make a decision.
- Once the decisions have been made, instruct each group to make a presentation for about four minutes, explaining how that decision was made.



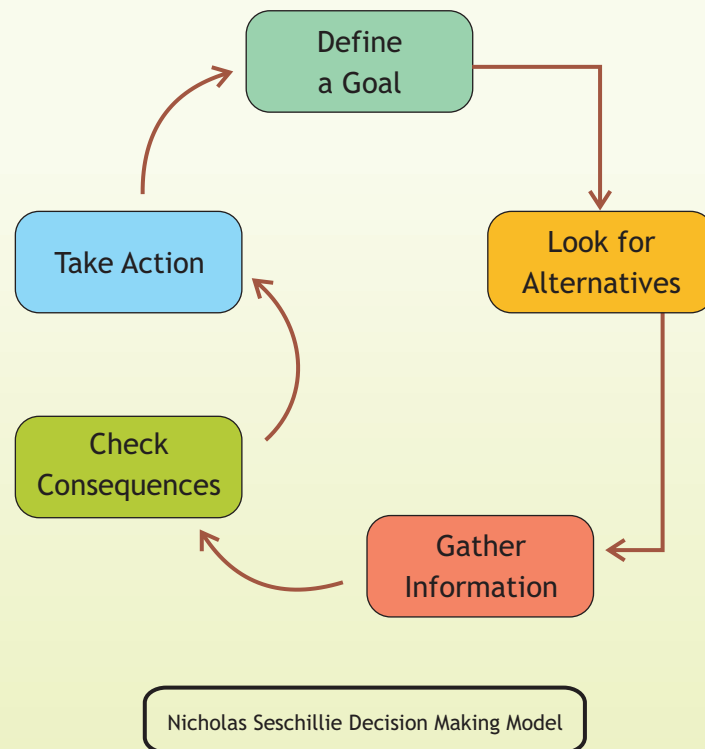


Key Messages

1. Decision making is an important Life Skill.
2. It involves logical steps: determining the problem, considering multiple alternatives and choosing the best possible alternative based on a particular situation.
3. The skills required to arrive at a decision include gathering information, evaluative skills and analytical skills.

Suggested Further Activity:

Encourage students to think critically and write about their strengths and weaknesses in the Life Skills Journal.





Activity 6 : Conflicts! My Conflicts

Theme: Everyone of us faces conflicting situations. We need to take wise decisions to come out of these situations. Different elements are involved in decision making and there are different ways to resolve these conflicts.

Time Required: 1 period

Materials Needed: Copies of conflict stories and worksheet

Mode: In groups of five

Life Skills to be enhanced: Decision Making, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- find ways to solve conflicting situations;
- use different ways to solve conflicts;
- use different elements involved in decision making;
- recognise different types of conflicts in order to resolve them appropriately.

Getting Started:

- Practise two minutes of deep breathing exercise with all the students.
- Discuss conflict situations by taking inputs from the students.
- Classify conflict situations into four types namely **Man against Man**, **Man against Nature**, **Man against Himself** and **Man against Society**. (Man here represents both the genders)

Process:

- Share with students that in literature, a writer employs four types of conflicts namely **Man against Man**, **Man against Nature**, **Man against Himself** and **Man against Society**.
 - **Man against Man** - where a character(s) in a story pose problem to another.
 - **Man against Nature** - where natural conditions like disasters and calamities pose a problem to the character(s).
 - **Man against Himself** - where character's own imperfections pose a problem to the character.
 - **Man against Society** - where rules, norms, values, systems and societal structures pose a problem to the character(s).





- Divide students into groups and assign a conflict situation story to each group to brainstorm and rehearse upon. (handout for conflict situation stories or facilitator may also develop own)
- Allow twenty minutes to brainstorm and rehearse. In the meantime, encourage students to analyze different alternatives to resolve a conflict situation and also help students to prepare their dramatic presentations.
- Each group will dramatise their conflict story with solutions. Allow four minutes to each group.
- In the end, give each student the decision making activity worksheet to support, contradict or give new ideas about the possible ways to address that particular issue. Direct students to submit the activity sheet the next day.

Key Messages

1. Decision making skill should be mastered.
2. It involves different elements.
3. It involves different logical steps: determining the problem, considering multiple alternatives and choosing the best possible alternative based on the particular situation.

*"It is your decisions, and not your conditions,
that determine your destiny."*

- Anthony Robbins



Handout for Conflict Situations

a) MAN AGAINST MAN

You think you deserve to be the monitor of the class yet your friend becomes the monitor of your class. You are feeling very low and start disliking your friend.

Discuss in your group. Reflect on the situation and analyze what could have been the probable reasons and possible way you could approach the situation.

b) MAN AGAINST NATURE

Your parents planned a family trip during the vacations but the trip gets cancelled because your parents have to visit some relative who is unwell. You are upset about change in schedule and do not want to do anything now.

Discuss in your group. Identify the issue in the situation and using the POWER model arrive at possible decisions that may help you to make informed choices on what you should or should not do.

c) MAN AGAINST HIMSELF

You feel you are smart and the best in the class yet your classmates don't wish to speak to you. It hurts you and you are slowly becoming aggressive.

Discuss in your group. Identify the issue in the situation and using the POWER model arrive at possible decisions that may help you to make informed choices on what you should or should not do.

d) MAN AGAINST SOCIETY

The electricity in your neighbourhood keeps going off because of which you are not able to complete quite a few school tasks and your own home tasks.

Discuss the situation in your group and analyse possible ways you can solve the problem.





Worksheet (Managing Conflicts)

CONFLICT RESOLVED AND DECISION TAKEN

.....

.....

CONSEQUENCES OF EACH OPTION

1	.....	2	.....

3	.....	4	.....

VARIOUS OPTIONS IN THOUGHTS

1	.....
2	.....
3	.....
4	.....

CONFLICT SITUATION IDENTIFIED

.....

.....

.....

Suggested Further Activity:

Let students think about any one conflicting situation which they might have faced at home or in their peer group. What decision was taken and how?

