

DECISION MAKING

GRADE LEVEL: Appropriate for students 4th-6th grade

OVERVIEW: Conflict resolution is a trend to which students need to become familiar. They should understand the possible impact that alternative dispute resolution may have in their lives.

PURPOSE: This lesson encourages students to think of different ways in which they may solve their problems. The traditional "My father can beat up your father" or "I'll see you in court" are old-fashioned approaches to problem solving.

OBJECTIVES: Students will identify the problem, the choices and the consequences both positive and negative. The students will work together to make a group decision.

ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES:

A. Distribute copies of "Decision Mountain." Inform students that they are going to make a decision by climbing the "Decision Mountain." By climbing the mountain they will learn the steps involved in decision making, while examining in further detail the problem presented in their story. Have students break into groups of five or six.

B. Ask students to read the story to their group and identify the problem. At the foot of the mountain, write the problem.

1. Ask students to identify possible options for resolving the problem. List negative and positive options.

2. Next, have the class identify the consequence (positive or negative) for the specific option. List the consequences with the corresponding option number.

3. Review and discuss information. Ask students to decide which options and corresponding consequences are best. Have students write their group decision at the top of the mountain.

C. Ask students to share their story with the class. Discuss problems and decisions. Discuss how decisions were made and why it solves the problem.

STORIES

1. Catherine is not doing very well in her English class. Whether she passes or not depends on her final written project. Even though she has always tried hard, she hasn't been able to get very good grades. She finds the paper that her brother did on the topic three years ago and this paper received an "A."

2. You forgot your social studies assignment. Today is the day when