

# Making Good Decisions

## **PURPOSE**

To practice the skill of reasoned decision making, and to encourage students to anticipate the consequences of their choices.

## **CONTEXT**

Students should get into the habit of considering alternatives and their consequences. The concept of trade-offs should show up in many parts of the curriculum.

In this lesson, students practice balancing different interests involved in solving social problems, looking for the most realistic solution based on the advantages and disadvantages. They also consider the concept of compromise.

## **PLANNING AHEAD**

Preview the story on the next page and print out pages ahead of time, if necessary.

## **MOTIVATION**

To introduce the notion of social trade-offs, begin by having students engage in some form of classroom decision making, perhaps related to a classroom rule, outing, or pet.

Students should look at all of the possible options, as well as the consequences of each. Have students look at the advantages and disadvantages of each option, and discuss the notion of compromise.

Ask questions such as:

Is there a solution that would allow many people to get what they want?

Would you need to give up one thing in order to get something else?

Source: <http://sciencenetlinks.com/lessons/making-good-decisions/>

# A Hill Too High to Climb?

The Little Planet Council is meeting this Thursday evening. There is a very important issue on this week's agenda. The Little Planet creatures will be voting on whether or not to tear down the large hill outside of Snouse's house. It seems that this particular hill gets in the way of Snouse getting to Council meetings on time.

Let's study the background leading up to this historic vote. Snouse's family has lived in the same house for many years. The house was built fifty years ago by Snouse's great great grandfather, Grouse. It is surrounded by beautiful scenery. There are lovely trees and flowers, and a sandy spot superb for slithering in. A perfect location for any creature that's a little bit snake and a little bit mouse. Well, except for that hill!

A reporter interviewed Snouse last week. Snouse says that he has arrived late to the last ten Council meetings. "Being late is a terrible thing. I take pride in being on time!" said Snouse. He has tried on each occasion to leave a little earlier, and move a little faster. Every attempt gets him closer to the meeting's starting time. Five Thursdays ago, he was twenty minutes late, and missed the refreshments. Four Thursdays ago he was eighteen minutes late. The Thursday after that he was fifteen minutes late. The next Thursday he was twelve minutes late. Last week he was really determined. He slithered as fast as he could. He gave it everything he had, and still arrived ten minutes late. "It's no use!" he told the Council, "that hill is just too high to climb! It must be torn down!" The reporter asked if Snouse had ever tried going around the hill. "Oh yes," replied Snouse, "but that took twice as long!"

The council is very divided on this decision. Ribbit believes the hill should be removed to help a friend in need. Glowbird is against removing a natural landmark. Corse thinks that every Little Planet creature should have the same chance to get to places on time. Beavercat is worried about the time and cost involved in tearing the hill down.

This problem cannot be taken lightly. A lovely hill and Snouse's pride about being on time are at stake! The Little Planet Council would benefit greatly from your thoughts on this matter. Should the hill be torn down? Should Snouse move to a more convenient location? Should he keep trying to get there on time, since each effort has produced faster results? Are there any other possible solutions?

Source: <http://littleplanettimes.com/>