

Dilemmas! You Make the Decision

Target Level:
Grades 7 & 8

SOLs:
Science: PS.1
English: 8.4, 8.6
History & Social Science
(Civics): 7.1, 7.4, 7.7

Materials Needed:
Dilemma Cards

Time Needed:
One class period

Summary

Students will read and analyze a given litter dilemma. They will propose a solution by reviewing it from the perspective of a specific audience.

Objectives

Students will be able to discuss sources of litter and associated challenges. They will also be able to analyze reasons for the litter problems, and bring a generated solution to consensus.

Background

People frequently encounter others that view the same situation differently than they do. The main reason is because of the interests of the individual making the choice. In organizations and groups the differing points of view are still expressed but are looked at from the perspective of how to best reach the desired outcome.

This activity provides litter-related topics that could be viewed differently by various groups of people: groups that have to look at littered areas, those that would have to clean the litter, and the ones who have to pay for the litter to be removed. The students will need to decide on the perspective of a specific group and make a decision regarding their given litter problem.

Advance Preparation

Copy the dilemmas onto card stock. These may be laminated for multiple usage.

Procedure

1. Ask students how a company would select a television show to advertise their product. Example questions follow: Who watches Saturday morning cartoon shows? What is the “target audience”? Would they expect to see a luxury car commercial during this time frame? Why or why not? What type of product might they see advertised during that time frame?

Ask students if different target groups might react differently to similar situations. For example: A professional basketball player is coming to your town. Would a member of the high school band work as hard to get a ticket to see the ball player as a member of the basketball team? Why do think there is a difference in their behaviors?

2. Discuss whether different solutions might be proposed if different groups were making the decision about the same litter dilemma. Ask the students how a group of potential investors would view litter on a bus or transit system in comparison to how it would be viewed by commuters on the same transit system.

3. Divide the students into six similar sized groups. Give each group a dilemma card and instruct them to make a decision on their situation based on the type of group they represent. Explain that all members of the group must agree before a decision can be reached. Have each group design an advertisement illustrating their decision. It should include a button, slogan, public service announcement, or skit that will be shared with the rest of their class.

4. Give the groups approximately 20 minutes to discuss their litter issues, agree on their solutions, and develop their advertisements.

Wrap Up/Assessment

Allow time for each group to come forward and share their dilemma and solution. When all groups have participated, discuss how the advertisements are hoped to affect the targeted audiences in the scenarios. Note also that any solution of a problem was begun with discussion and increased awareness of that challenge.

Extension

Have each group select a school (or appropriately related) litter challenge. They should design and carryout an actual advertising campaign that will educate fellow school members and/or the public about their litter problem.

-----Copy Page----- **Dilemma Cards**

The city wants to build a ballpark for a local soccer team where a field is currently located. A baseball stadium in a nearby city has had huge problems with people not placing their trash in trash cans. Many concerned citizens feel this new soccer field will have the same problem. You are the town council and must make a decision regarding the building of the soccer field. Should you allow the soccer field to be developed? If you do, how would you make the citizens feel that this soccer field will not have the same litter problems?

Smith Elementary School is having their 10th anniversary celebration with a picnic. The plans include lunch, cake, and giving each student a helium filled balloon to release as the band starts playing "Happy Birthday". The school is located 50 miles from the bay. The bay is rich with marine life. The currents will carry the balloons high up into the atmosphere and over the bay. It is known that the balloons will explode due to pressure and the elements of the weather. Fragments of the bright-colored balloons will float in the water and look like food to many animals living in the bay. The school ecology club wants to stop the balloon release. The final decision has been passed to you, a group of school officials. If you should decide the balloons will not be released, then you would need to suggest an alternative activity.

You are the owners of a new boutique and do not have a lot of money that can be spent on advertising. Newspaper and radio advertisements seem pretty expensive, so you have been making fliers and having them distributed on car windshields. People in the community have begun to complain that your fliers are the littering parking lots and neighboring yards. You investigate and find that many drivers are simply tossing the fliers on the ground. This is your only way of advertising. What can you do to advertise on a very low budget, or to keep the fliers from being a litter problem?

Your town park has a large lake with a healthy population of ducks. Many families go to the lake on weekends to feed the ducks and use the playground. Every Monday, park personnel spend several hours cleaning all the litter and debris left from the weekend. Due to recent budget cuts, the personnel that have been taking care of the litter are needed for other assignments. As members of the local Friends of the Park organization, the park officials have asked you to help find a solution to the litter problem.

As a member of the high school Athletic Association you are attending an emergency meeting to solve a litter problem. Several of the visiting sports teams have been leaving large amounts of trash in the parking lot and in the locker room. Other schools have been complaining that your teams are guilty of littering their parking lots and locker rooms too. What type of solution can you suggest that would prevent this kind of littering problem?

You are members of the church council. There has been a bus stop in front of your church for the area's students for many years. Recently you have been having a problem with the students cleaning out their backpacks and leaving paper all over the front yard of the church. You need to come up with a solution that will provide a safe bus stop for the students and, at the same time, keep your church yard clean.