

POSSIBLE DECISIONS AND PROBLEMS***Decision 1: We need a pet.***

Your classroom community decided that it would like to have a classroom pet.

Now you need to decide what kind of pet the class should have. Things to consider include the following:

1. A pet is a living thing and requires care.
2. You are not in school on the weekends, and you have a long summer vacation.
3. Some classmates might be allergic to or scared of certain pets.
4. Unless you have a means of acquiring a pet for free, you will need to consider the cost of the pet and where you will get the money to buy it and take care of it.
5. There may be school rules that apply to pets.
6. In what ways will the classroom community enjoy a particular pet?
7. Anything else you want to consider.

Go for it!

Decision 2: Homework—do we really need it?

Your teacher has explained that the question of whether there would be homework was non-negotiable: there will be homework. However, he or she has explained the educational reasons for homework and indicated that he or she intends to assign five hours of homework a week. Your teacher ended the discussion by telling you that he or she would like your input into how the five hours is scheduled. Your task is to decide on a weekly homework schedule. Things to consider include the following:

1. Distribution of the workload.
2. The weekend.
3. Individual student activity schedules.
4. Predictability of having a fixed schedule.
5. Flexibility issues.
6. Anything else you want to add.

Be creative!



REPRODUCIBLE

Problem 1: Gyms are not meant for sitting.

Your class has had to sit out its gym period four times in the last two weeks. The gym teacher has a rule that if things get out of hand, the activity stops, and you sit the rest of the period. The gym teacher knows you want to enjoy your time in the gym, and he or she has agreed to listen to any solution you might propose. Your task is to develop a proposal for the gym teacher that will solve the problem. Things to consider include the following:

1. The gym teacher's concerns have included people misusing the equipment, roughhousing, and not listening to corrections immediately.
2. You want to stay on your feet, not sit on your seat.
3. What things could you do to change or control your behavior?
4. What things do you think the gym teacher could do differently?

Keep your goal in mind and see what you can propose.

Problem 2: We don't have time to eat!

Your classroom is at the opposite end of the building from the cafeteria. Because you are not allowed to run in the halls, it takes 4 minutes to get from your classroom to the cafeteria. There are only two serving lines in the cafeteria, and it takes a long time to get your food. Your lunch period is 20 minutes long, so you usually have only about 10 minutes to sit and eat your lunch. People are choking on peanut butter sandwiches and developing indigestion usually seen only in old folks: something must be done! Your task is to help your principal solve this very real problem. Decide on a plan for doing so. Things to consider include the following:

1. How can you get to the cafeteria in less time?
2. How can you arrive at the cafeteria earlier?
3. How can you get your food faster?
4. How rigid is the 20-minute period?
5. Can your teacher make any changes in the classroom schedule to help?
6. Will you need input and feedback from your teacher or the principal? When?

Draft an initial proposal. If you need input or feedback from anyone, include it in your proposal.

Lunch is important—get going!

