

Using the D.E.C.I.D.E. Model to Make Decisions

What to Know

Decision-making is the process of choosing or selecting a particular course of action, especially when there is uncertainty involved. You can learn to thoughtfully make decisions using the D.E.C.I.D.E. model. It's a simple step-by-step process:

Define the decision to be made.

Example: Should I delay writing my essay and spend time with my friends?

Explore your options.

Example: I can spend time with my friends now OR finish my essay first.

Consider the consequences.

Example: If I see my friends now and write the essay later, I'll have to stay up late and I'll be tired and in a bad mood tomorrow. If I write my essay now and see my friends tomorrow, I'll feel rested and have a better day.

Identify your values (what's important to you) so you can make a choice that honors your values.

Example: I want to do a good job on my essay and receive a good grade. Even though I value time with my friends, I also value sleep! I don't want to stay up late, rushing to finish this paper. They'll understand if I stay home to finish my essay.

Decide and act. After you consider your options and values, it's time to decide and then act.

Example: I'm going to stay home and finish my essay, get to bed at a decent time, and see my friends tomorrow.

Evaluate the results. Reflecting on the results is an important final step of the decision-making process. You can evaluate how your choices impact you and consider what you might do differently in the future. This builds your self-awareness!

Example: I turned in my essay on time and received a good grade! I slept well and I was in a good mood when I spent time with my friends after school.

What to Do

Help the students in the prompts make decisions that will increase their self-awareness.

1. Sammy is new at school, and she hasn't made any friends yet. She was an athlete in her other school, but she's unsure if she's good enough to make the team at her new school. She can't decide whether to try out for the basketball team. Can you help Sammy decide what to do?

1. What is the decision to be made? _____

2. What are Sammy's options? Pros and cons of her options? Fill in the chart.

Option	Pros?	Cons?

What do YOU think Sammy should do? _____

What would you say to Sammy? _____

What are some things that might be important to Sammy? (e.g., making friends)?

What are some consequences of Sammy's options? _____

2. Antonio is your friend. He always puts himself down, even though he is smart, funny, and plays the violin. He doesn't have much confidence. He wants to try out for the school play but doesn't think he will be chosen for a role.

1. What is the decision to be made? _____

2. What are Antonio's options? Pros and cons of his options? Fill in the chart.

Option	Pros?	Cons?

What do YOU think Antonio should do? _____

What would you say to Antonio? _____

What are some things that might be important to Antonio?

What are some consequences of Antonio's options? _____

3. Miguel has lots of friends, and he's often the leader of groups. It seems like Miguel is good at everything, and sometimes he acts like he can do whatever he wants to! He's disappointed in his grades at school, and he's blaming his teachers and the school. He's complaining to anyone who will listen, and he's saying he wants to file a complaint about the school. Recently he asked you what he should do.

1. What is the decision to be made? _____

2. What are Miguel's options? Pros and cons of all options? Fill in the chart.

Option	Pros?	Cons?

What do YOU think Miguel should do? _____

What would you say to Miguel? _____

What are some things that might be important to Miguel?

What are some consequences of Miguel's options? _____

Next, use the D.E.C.I.D.E model to make a decision.

Define the decision to be made.

Explore your options.

Consider the consequences.

Identify your values (what's important to you) so you can make a choice that honors your values.

Decide and act. After you consider your options and values, it's time to decide and then act.

Evaluate the results. Reflecting on the results is an important final step of the decision-making process. You can evaluate how your choice impacted you and consider what you'd do differently in the future. This builds your self-awareness!
