

Maroon Outdoor Education Centre

Problem Solving and Group Decision Making

Core Learning



The following knowledge and understandings should be taught in any program that focuses on **Problem Solving and Group Decision Making**:

Group Decision Making

Model	Description	Benefits	Deficits
Unanimous	Requires everyone to agree on a given course of action.	Total agreement.	A long process that may not produce a result.
Majority	Requires support from more than 50% of the members of the group.	Used by very large groups to determine a "winner".	May produce the most popular decision not the best decision. Creates atmosphere of "winners" and "losers".
Range voting	Allows a group to select one option from a set by letting each member score one or more of the available options. The option with the highest average is chosen.	Has the greatest participant satisfaction level of all models.	Requires planning and calculations and can be complicated.
Consensus	Requires sufficiently open communication and a supportive group to make everyone feel that they have had their fair chance to influence the decision. Someone then tests for the "sense of the meeting," carefully avoiding formal procedures like voting.	All participants must agree to go along with the course of action and feel they have had their chance to influence the decision.	The best decision may need to be compromised.
Plurality	The course of action with the most supports wins, even if it is less than a majority.	Quick and easy. Reflects widely used election process for very large groups.	The chosen course of action may have little support from the group.
Dictator	One individual determines the course of action.	Fast.	Relies on the decision making ability of one person and the willingness of others to follow that decision.

It is not expected that all models will be taught to a group. The teacher should teach the model or models that best suit the group and the situation.

Essential Learning Alignment

Health and Physical Education (Years 7 & 9): PD2
SOSE (Years 7 and 9): PES4

Problem Solving - Middle School

- 1. Identify the problem**
 - What is the problem?
 - What are we trying to do?
- 2. Share ideas of how to solve the problem.**
 - What ideas do we have?
 - What are we going to use?
 - Are there any constraints?
- 3. Make a Plan that the group accepts.**
 - Plans have steps
 - They allocate jobs
 - They keep us safe
- 4. Put the plan into Action.**
 - Follow the steps
 - Stay safe
- 5. Did the plan work?**
 - If not, do we need to change our plan and try again?

Problem Solving - Senior School

- 1. Identify the problem**
 - What is the problem?
 - What are we trying to achieve?
- 2. Analyse the problem**
 - What are the causes/ effects?
 - What do I know about the problem?
 - What do I need to know about the problem?
 - What resources do I have?
 - Are there any constraints?
- 3. Plan the solutions**
 - Brainstorm ideas
 - What are the advantages/ disadvantages of possible strategies?
 - How do these solutions align with my/our values?
 - Which strategy will work best?
 - What are the steps?
 - Who will do what?
- 4. Implement the solutions**
 - Carry out the plan
- 5. Evaluate the solutions**
 - Is it working?
 - What can we do to make things better?
 - Are we making the best use of our resources?
 - Did the solution align with my/our values?
 - Do we need to go back to a previous step (Identify the problem; Analyse the problem; plan the solutions; implement the solution)?

Essential Learning Alignment

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SOSE (Years 7 and 9): PES4