

Solve the Wait

Trace how a student council makes and improves a decision.

5.26.B “use problem-solving and decision-making processes to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the passage's problem-solving steps 1 through 7: problem, information, options, advantages and disadvantages, choice, action, and evaluation.

A Faster Drink Break

- ① At Cedar Grove Elementary, the student council noticed that water fountains near the playground often had long lines after recess. Some students returned to class thirsty. The council named the problem: students needed faster access to drinking water. Before suggesting a fix, members counted students waiting at each fountain for five days and asked classmates where they usually filled their bottles.
- ② The counts showed that the two fountains by the gym had the most students waiting. The council listed three options: add a new fountain, set up a bottle-filling station, or ask classes to take water breaks at different times. A new fountain would serve many students but cost the most. Different water-break times cost little, but teachers said schedules could become harder to manage.
- ③ After comparing the choices, the council chose a bottle-filling station because it could fill bottles quickly and cost less than a new fountain. The principal approved the plan, and the station was installed beside the gym. Two weeks later, council members counted the lines again. Fewer students were waiting, but some students still missed water when the station was crowded. The council decided to add a sign directing students to a nearby fountain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What two kinds of information did the council gather before suggesting a fix?

2 What was one advantage and one disadvantage of having classes take water breaks at different times?

3 Why did the council choose a bottle-filling station instead of a new fountain?

4 What did the council learn when it evaluated its solution, and what change did it decide to make?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a small problem at school. Complete the plan or evidence for each of the six labeled steps.

STEP	YOUR PLAN OR EVIDENCE
Problem	
Information	
Options and trade-offs	
Solution	
Implementation	
Evaluation	

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number the passage's problem-solving steps 1 through 7: problem, information, options, advantages and disadvantages, choice, action, and evaluation. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What two kinds of information did the council gather before suggesting a fix?	They counted students waiting at each fountain for five days and asked classmates where they usually filled their bottles.
2	What was one advantage and one disadvantage of having classes take water breaks at different times?	It would cost little, but it could make teachers' schedules harder to manage.
3	Why did the council choose a bottle-filling station instead of a new fountain?	It could fill bottles quickly and cost less than a new fountain.
4	What did the council learn when it evaluated its solution, and what change did it decide to make?	Fewer students were waiting, but the station was sometimes crowded and some students still missed water. The council decided to add a sign directing students to a nearby fountain.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

STEP	YOUR PLAN OR EVIDENCE
Problem	Library books are often left on tables after lunch.
Information	For four days, count books left out and ask students why they leave them there.
Options and trade-offs	Put a return bin near the exit, which is convenient but needs emptying, or assign monitors, which is free but uses student time.
Solution	Choose the return bin because students can use it quickly.
Implementation	Ask the librarian for a bin and place a labeled bin by the exit.
Evaluation	After two weeks, compare the daily number of books left out. If the number is not lower, move the bin closer to the tables.

Accept equivalent descriptions that match the passage. For the open response, accept reasonable school problems when the student includes information gathering, options with trade-offs, a chosen action, and a way to evaluate the result.