

Lunch Exit Fix

Trace how a student council makes and evaluates a practical decision.

7.23.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 Underline the problem, circle each source of information, and number the options and chosen solution in the order the council considered them.

A Clearer Cafeteria Exit

- ① At Riverside Middle School, the student council noticed a problem during lunch: overflowing trash cans often blocked the cafeteria exit. Council members did not guess at a fix. For five days, they counted bags of trash, watched where students placed leftovers, and asked custodians when the cans became full. Their notes showed that the busiest ten minutes came after the last lunch bell. Most waste was food containers, while recycling bins near the doors were used less often.
- ② The council listed three options. It could add more trash cans, move the recycling bins beside the lunch lines, or ask students to separate food scraps for composting. More cans would be quick, but they would cost money and might still crowd the exit. Moving bins would cost little and could make recycling easier, although students might ignore the new locations. Composting could reduce food waste, but staff members said they lacked a place to store scraps. The council chose to move four recycling bins and post clear signs.
- ③ During the next two weeks, council members checked the exit area each day and compared their observations with the first five days of notes. The exit stayed clear on nine of ten school days, and students placed more containers in recycling bins. However, one bin near the milk station filled too early. The council decided its solution mostly worked, but it was not finished. Members planned to move that bin closer to the lunch line and collect another week of observations before deciding whether to keep the change.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What three kinds of information did the council gather before listing options?

2 Why did the council decide not to choose composting?

3 What solution did the council choose, and what two actions did members take to put it into action?

4 What evidence showed that the solution mostly worked, and what evidence showed that it still needed a change?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose one small problem at school. Complete the table in order to show how you would gather information, compare options, choose and carry out a solution, and evaluate whether it worked.

STEP	YOUR PLAN

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the problem, circle each source of information, and number the options and chosen solution in the order the council considered them. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What three kinds of information did the council gather before listing options?	They counted trash bags, watched where students put leftovers, and asked custodians when cans became full.
2	Why did the council decide not to choose composting?	Staff members said they did not have a place to store food scraps.
3	What solution did the council choose, and what two actions did members take to put it into action?	They chose to move recycling bins. They moved four bins and posted clear signs.
4	What evidence showed that the solution mostly worked, and what evidence showed that it still needed a change?	The exit stayed clear on nine of ten school days, and more containers went into recycling bins. One bin near the milk station filled too early.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

STEP	YOUR PLAN
Problem	Students leave classroom lights on during recess.
Information	For one week, I would record which rooms have lights on after students leave.
Options	Ask a student helper to check lights, or post reminder signs by each door.
Advantages and disadvantages	A helper may forget, but signs cost little and remind everyone.
Chosen solution and implementation	I would post signs and ask teachers to mention them before recess.
Evaluation	After one week, I would compare the number of lights left on with the first week. If fewer lights are on, I would keep the signs.

Accept equivalent wording when students identify the passage evidence accurately. For the open task, accept reasonable school problems and solutions if each decision-making step is present and the evaluation includes a way to check results.