

Council Choices

Trace how a civic simulation moves from a problem to an evaluated decision.

8.31 "Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others. The student is expected to: describe governmental and democratic processes such as voting, due process..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the seven decision-making steps in the passage as they appear: identify the problem, gather information, list options, compare advantages and disadvantages, choose, implement, and evaluate.

A Rainy-Day Council

- ① At Mesa Middle, a civics class held a simulation of a town council meeting. The problem was clear: students waiting for late buses had no covered place during rain. Before proposing an answer, teams gathered information. They counted students at the stop for five afternoons, checked the school budget, and read district safety rules. A student caucus followed. In small groups, classmates discussed priorities and selected speakers to share concerns with the full council. Each group recorded its reasons.
- ② The council listed three options: build a roofed shelter, change the late-bus pickup site, or provide rain ponchos. Members considered advantages and disadvantages. A shelter could protect many students but cost the most. A new pickup site might be cheaper but could require students to cross a busy driveway. Ponchos cost less, yet they would not help students carrying instruments. During a public hearing, students who opposed the shelter used a due-process model. They received written notice of the proposal and could state evidence, hear opposing views, and respond before any decision.
- ③ After debate, every council member cast one vote by secret ballot. The shelter won 12 votes to 8, so the class chose it. A volunteer committee created a cost list, asked the principal for permission, and arranged a temporary canopy for the next month. To evaluate the solution, the class planned to recount waiting students, collect anonymous comments, and compare rainy-day attendance before and after the canopy. If the canopy did not improve safety or comfort, the council would reconsider its options.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What problem did the council identify, and what are two kinds of information the teams gathered before suggesting a solution?

2 How did the caucus help students take part in the council simulation?

3 What fair procedures did the due-process model give students who opposed the shelter?

4 How did the class plan to evaluate the temporary canopy, and what would happen if it did not improve safety or comfort?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose a different school problem. In 6 to 7 sentences, identify the problem, name two information sources, list two options with an advantage and disadvantage, choose and describe a first action, and explain how you will evaluate it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number the seven decision-making steps in the passage as they appear: identify the problem, gather information, list options, compare advantages and disadvantages, choose, implement, and evaluate. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What problem did the council identify, and what are two kinds of information the teams gathered before suggesting a solution?	The problem was that students waiting for late buses had no covered place in rain. Teams counted students at the stop, checked the budget, and read district safety rules.
2	How did the caucus help students take part in the council simulation?	Students discussed priorities in small groups and selected speakers to share their concerns with the full council.
3	What fair procedures did the due-process model give students who opposed the shelter?	They received written notice of the proposal and could state evidence, hear opposing views, and respond before the decision.
4	How did the class plan to evaluate the temporary canopy, and what would happen if it did not improve safety or comfort?	The class would recount waiting students, collect anonymous comments, and compare rainy-day attendance before and after the canopy. The council would reconsider its options if it did not improve safety or comfort.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our school cafeteria throws away too much unopened food. I would count unopened items for five lunches and ask cafeteria workers about food-safety rules. Option one is a share table, which could save food but needs careful supervision. Option two is smaller default portions, which could reduce waste but might leave some students hungry. I would choose the share table and ask the principal to approve a two-week trial. I would compare the number of discarded items before and after the trial and survey students; if waste does not decrease, I would reconsider smaller portions.

Accept equivalent descriptions of the decision-making steps and democratic processes when they are supported by the passage. For Your Turn, accept reasonable school problems and solutions that include all requested process elements.