

MAKE CHOICES USING THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

ACTIVITY

Time Needed

40–60 minutes

Materials

Note-taking supplies

List of steps (below)

Activity Description

We can use the scientific method to help us make decisions, and this can be especially helpful when making decisions that we feel pressured or rushed into. It helps to stop and think. Consider a time you've felt rushed and how things might have been different if you had a process to help you choose what to do.

Suggested Steps

1. Review the following steps of decision making:

According to *Learning to Live Drug-Free, A Curriculum Model for Prevention*, U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, the fundamentals of the scientific method are:

1. Ask yourself what the problem is (PROBLEM);
2. Decide on your goal (HYPOTHESIS);
3. Stop and think of as many solutions to the problem as you can (ANALYSIS);
4. For each solution, think of all the things that might happen next (DATA, OBSERVATIONS);
5. Choose your best solution (CONCLUSIONS);
6. Rethink it once more (just to be sure).

2. Break up into small groups and choose a scenario from below. In your group, act out the scenario demonstrating use of the 6 steps of the scientific method for decision making.

Scenario 1: You're at a party and having a good time hanging out with friends and listening to music. You notice kids are sneaking off to smoke pot. What do you do?

Scenario 2: You're out at the movies and your friend drove you and is planning to drive you home. You see your friend sneaking sips from a flask and he offers you some. What do you do?



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Scenario 3: You've got a big game coming up and at practice you twist your ankle. Your friend offers you a prescription painkiller she got from her doctor when she had a similar injury. What do you do?

3. Each group should present their scenario and role-play the decision-making process for the large group.
4. Review the six steps of decision making, remembering that you have control over your decisions. Stop and think before you choose. This is a skill that needs to be practiced. Write the six steps out for yourself and review them every now and then. Share them with members of your family and/or community. Consider using the six steps at some point in the next week, whether for a big or small decision. If you practice, it will become natural for when you really need the process for a big decision.



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