

Candy X or Candy Y

A Skill-Building Activity for Decision-Making

The purpose of the activity is to provide a simple process for students to learn and practice decision-making that must be done in groups. This activity is appropriate for use from 5th grade to adults. The ideas presented as supplementary information can be made as detailed as the group can handle.

Approximate time: 45 minutes, although can vary depending on the age group and the type of follow-up desired.

1. The group is told that they will be making a decision shortly concerning two types of candy that you will provide for sale later. They must choose which candy they wish to purchase.
2. In order to help them make a good decision, you will provide various pieces of information about the candies. In order to assist them further, you will also provide them with a sheet on which they can write the information you give them.
3. Distribute the sheet and go over it, explaining that there are several steps before reaching a final decision. Explain the choices they have on each step. (Step 1, you must choose either Candy X or Candy Y; Step 3 provides another choice – Undecided)
4. Group is told that they should write the information on each candy in the appropriate block in column X or column Y as it is given to them.
5. At the end of each step, the group (as individuals) must choose which candy they would buy, provided this is all of the information they have about the candies at this point. (Example: They must choose after Step 1, again after Step 2, etc.) They indicate their choice at each step by placing a check mark inside the box of the candy they prefer.
6. The choices can change from step to step as they learn more information. (Example: Student A chooses Candy X on Step 1, but after getting more information during Step 2, he decides that maybe Candy Y is the better one, but after Step 3, now maybe Candy X is the better choice.)
7. Group is told to put a check in the block of the candy they choose at each step.
8. After group has opportunity to make final decision, follow-up with a discussion on decision-making. Analyze the results of how each person decided which candy he/she would buy. At the final decision a new option becomes available – Neither candy.
9. When presenting the information be as realistic and as serious as you can. You can embellish this activity as much as you want.

Possible questions / comments / observations for the follow-up discussion:

1. The first decision may not always be the best one.
2. One alternative may have many good points, but one bad one can outweigh everything good.
3. The “eye-test” is important but looks may also be deceiving.
4. Everyone did not make the same decision although everyone heard the same information.
5. This is a process. If you chose neither, you have not failed but you have eliminated two possible solutions/options. Pick two more and put them through the same test.
6. Sometimes it is OK to be undecided.
7. Gather as much information as possible and ask the right questions. Always seek more information.
8. Talk about presentation of the two candies and the influence of marketing on people. Be aware of the attempts to influence you and the decisions you make.

Information for use with Candy X – Candy Y

For the name (1), maker (3) and additional information (5), put the information on a separate poster that you can show the group when you give them the information.

	Candy X	Candy Y
NAME	Venus Supreme <i>(block letters in black on dark yellow poster; say the name in a plain, business-like manner)</i>	Passion Delight <i>(fancy letters with curls on peach colored poster; say the name in a softer, breathy manner)</i>
VISUAL <i>use your own words to describe it on your sheet</i>	Ugly, green candied peanut* (see below) Don't tell them a peanut is inside.	Pink watermelon or ice blue candy, Individually wrapped
MAKER	7 th grade boy in a home economics class	Yum Yum Candies, Inc.

Prior to the next step, reinforce the decision-making steps thus far by switching to a car purchasing example. "Assume money is not a problem, if you could buy the car of your dreams, do you know the name of the car you would buy? Ask for a show of hands if they do (NAME). Would you recognize it if you saw someone else driving it? Show of hands (VISUAL). Before you would buy it what are some other things you might do? Acknowledge the responses, but keep going until someone says, "test drive it." Then move on to the test drive step (TASTE).

TASTE <i>Use your own words to describe it on your sheet</i>	(Pass around a container for each person to get a piece to sample)	(You individually serve each person from a silver tray)
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Remind them that they may not like the candy, but they can't make an informed decision unless they taste (test drive) each one. If they don't like it, they don't have to eat the remainder.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Boy's father is a well-known Chef (worked at the White House at one time); boy is an excellent cook	Sanitation Grade: C Other "things" have been found in their products from time to time.
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*** IMPORTANT** With peanut allergies more prevalent today, you may wish to have another Candy X. Options are to use some type of candy that (1) was or looks like it was homemade, (2) is ugly or visually non-appealing, and (3) actually has a taste that most people might like. When this activity was first developed peanut allergies and child diabetes were not a problem.

<i>Recipe for candied peanuts:</i>	2 cups of plain, large red-skinned peanuts 1 cup of sugar ½ to 1 cup of water green (or blue) food coloring
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Combine peanuts, sugar, and water in a medium pot. Bring to a boil and boil until almost dry, stirring to prevent burning. Remove and spread nuts onto a cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees until dry (approximately 10 minutes). Watch carefully!

X

Y

1

2

3

4

5

6

U

N

X

Y

1

Venus
Supreme
blue peanut candy

*Passion
Delight*

individually wrapped hard candy

2

Put one piece of Candy X in a plastic cool whip container. Move around the group and let each participant view the candy individually.

Place one piece of Candy Y in a special container... ie jewelry box and move around the group so each participant views the candy individually.

U

3

7th grade boy in a food science class

Yum Yum Candy Co.

4

Put Candy X in a plastic cool whip container. Move around the group and let each participant sample a piece (taste).

Put Candy Y on a silver tray and "elegantly" serve each participant a piece to sample (taste)

5

Boy's father is a well known chef (once worked at White House) and the boy is an excellent cook.

Yum Yum Candy Co. has a Sanitary Rating of "C". Other "things" have been found in their products from time to time.

N

6

Instruct the group that at this point they may select the choice of "NEITHER".

X

Y

1

2

3

4

5

6

U

N