

3

Managing Influences and Making Decisions



Aim: To explore and understand the impact of internal and external influences on our behaviour and decision making process.

Influences on Decision Making

Activity 1
All That Pressure!

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3 Managing Influences and Making Decisions

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Influences on Decision Making

Activity 1: All That Pressure!

Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- to review internal and external influences on behaviour;
- to understand the impact of societal norms on decision making;
- a range of methods for collating, recording and presenting information;
- to communicate with a sense of audience and purpose.



Opportunity for AfL Sharing learning intentions and success criteria

Skills and Capabilities

- Managing Information: Use a range of methods for collating, recording and presenting information.
- Managing Information: Communicate with a sense of audience and purpose.
- Communication
- Using ICT

Learning Experiences

- Linked to other curriculum areas
- Relevant and enjoyable
- Offers choice
- Culturally diverse

Attitudes and Dispositions

- Curiosity
- Respect
- Community spirit
- Resourcefulness

Resources

- 'How Societal Norms Influence...' (Resource 1)
- Computer access
- Magazines and newspapers
- Large sheets of paper, glue, scissors, felt pens etc

Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Group work
- Research (using ICT)
- Presentations
- Self-reflection

Influences on Decision Making

Activity 1: All That Pressure!

This activity builds on work done in the Year 9 Self Concept unit, which considers how we adapt our behaviour to suit other people, and the Year 10 Feelings and Emotions Unit, which considers how our thinking influences our behaviour. As there is project work and presentations involved, this activity will be spread over more than one class.

1.1

Explain to the pupils that this activity will be reviewing influences on our behaviour and how this affects the decisions that we make. As a review of past learning, ask the pupils what influences the decisions they make in a variety of relevant situations, for example:

- which GCSE options they will choose;
- which friends they have;
- which clothes they wear; and
- what their favourite subject is at school.



Opportunity for AfL Formative feedback

Divide the influences into two groups as feedback is given:

- External influences - such as friends, family members, teachers, media.
- Internal influences - such as self-esteem, motivation, ambition, desires, values and beliefs.

Summarise with a whole class discussion highlighting just how many factors influence our decision-making process. The rest of the unit will offer pupils the opportunity to consider how we make decisions.

1.2

We are now going to consider the specific influence of societal norms on the decision-making process. For example, some countries think topless sunbathing or not forming queues are perfectly normal and acceptable. In other countries, it is considered rude to not belch after a meal and disgusting to blow your nose on a tissue and then put it back into your pocket. Many cultures consider it unacceptable to get drunk in public. During this activity, encourage the pupils to

share their personal experiences and knowledge of differences in other cultures, but be careful to avoid negative judgements of other societies.

Explain that pupils will be considering the culture of the society that they live in. Brainstorm a list of issues that are strongly influenced by societal norms.

For example:

- Use of cigarettes, alcohol and other drugs.
- How we behave in public places such as the supermarket, the bank, driving a car etc.
- Family relationships.
- Friendships.
- Romantic relationships.
- Physical appearance.
- Social pastimes.
- The work we choose to do.
- Government policies.
- Advertising campaigns.

Split the class into groups, and give each group an issue from the board. Each group considers how societal norms influence their particular area. For example, with physical appearance, some societal norms are that women should shave their legs and men should not paint their nails. Advertising campaigns often use the societal assumption that beauty implies success to sell a product.

One way to approach this activity is to use Resource 1 'How Societal Norms Influence...'. Ask the class to volunteer more 'prompt questions' which could be added to the bottom of the planning sheet.

Using computers, the Internet, magazines and newspapers, each group creates a collage and

Influences on Decision Making

Activity 1: All That Pressure!

prepares a talk/presentation on the role of society and media in the decisions that we make.

Each group then gives a presentation explaining their collage to the rest of the class. After each presentation, give the pupils a few minutes to list in their notebooks the main societal norms they heard about during the talk. (At the end of all the presentations, use these lists to prompt discussion.)



Opportunity for AfL

Peer-assessment and formative feedback

A lot of information will have come from all the presentations and it is important that the pupils get a chance to discuss and process all of the information received. Using a circle time format, discuss the societal norms that have been highlighted during the presentations and how they influence our behaviour. Some prompt questions could be:

- Could someone volunteer to share a societal norm that he or she found interesting?
- How would this influence our behaviour?
- Do you think this societal norm is okay or not? Why/why not?
- Why do you think that societal norms exist?
- Would it be possible to have no societal norms? How would this look? What would be different?

Pupils now individually reflect in their personal journals on how they feel about the influence of societal norms. Prompt questions could be:

- Are there any societal norms that influence your life in particular?
- Are you expected to be a certain way with your friends or family? How does that feel?
- Do you feel under pressure to be a certain type of person that you don't want to be? What could you do about this?



Opportunity for AfL Pupil reflection



3 Managing Influences and Making Decisions

Aim: To explore and understand the impact of internal and external influences on our behaviour and decision making process.

Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 2: Am I Impulsive?

Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- that thinking is an important part of decision-making;
- to manage emotions and behaviour in a range of situations;
- to make new connections between ideas/information.



Opportunity for Afl Sharing learning intentions and success criteria

Skills and Capabilities

- Self Management: Manage emotions and behaviour in a range of situations.
- Being Creative: Make new connections between ideas/information.
- Communication

Learning Experiences

- Investigating and problem solving
- Ongoing reflection
- Supportive environment
- Challenging and engaging

Attitudes and Dispositions

- Personal responsibility
- Concern for others
- Flexibility
- Self belief, optimism, pragmatism

Resources

- 'Acting On Impulse vs Time To Think' scenarios, (Resource 2)
- 2 soft balls or beanbags

Methodologies

- Teacher led discussion
- Pair work
- Worksheet
- Self reflection



Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 2: Am I Impulsive?

These activities aim to raise pupil awareness of the link between impulsive decisions and negative consequences. We want pupils to consider why they may actually do something that they don't really want to do and therefore encourage decision-making that is more beneficial to them.

2.1

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate how we act on impulse. Get a few volunteers to stand at the front of the room. Without warning turn quickly, shout catch and throw a ball or beanbag at the volunteers (with minimum force).

Ask the volunteers to describe their immediate reactions e.g. did they attempt to catch or duck? Did they make a conscious decision or act on impulse? Explain that during this lesson we are going to consider the consequences of acting on impulse in comparison to when we stop to think.

2.2

This activity asks pupils to consider, 'Why do I say yes when I really mean no?' Divide the class into small groups or pairs and give each of them a copy of Resource 2 'Acting on Impulse vs Time to Think'. Alternatively, you may want to use pupils' actual experiences. Ask the class to think of times when they have said YES when they would have preferred to say NO. Use these examples as the basis for the lesson.

Ask the pupils to feedback under the two headings 'On Impulse' and 'With Time to Think.'



Opportunity for AfL Effective questioning

In a whole class discussion, ask the group to compare the different outcomes. Is there any difference between the consequences of decisions made without thinking and the consequences of decisions when we take time to think?

Key points for discussion might include:

- Acting on impulse is often a natural response.
- There may be times when acting on impulse may work for us.
- Sometimes however impulsive decisions don't work. We often do things we don't really agree with on impulse.
- When we take time to think we have more options.
- It is important to know our pressure points i.e. what makes us say yes when we really mean no.
- Often taking time to think or talk decisions over with others will help us to make decisions that work for us.
- Decisions that work for us are decisions that make us feel good about ourselves.

Explain that strategies for saying no when we mean no will be covered later in the course. The next activity will look at the decision-making process in more detail.

Pupils reflect in their personal journals about how impulsive they are and what strategies might help them to make decisions that they are happy with.



Opportunity for AfL Pupil reflection



3 Managing Influences and Making Decisions

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Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 3: How Do I Make Decisions?

Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- to become aware of different decision making styles and consider their appropriateness in a variety of situations;
- to compare their approach with others and in different contexts;
- to give and respond to feedback.



Opportunity for AFL Sharing learning intentions and success criteria

Skills and Capabilities

- Self Management: Compare their approach with others and in different contexts.
- Working with Others: Give and respond to feedback.
- Communication

Learning Experiences

- Investigating and problem solving
- Relevant and enjoyable
- Active and hands-on
- Supportive environment

Attitudes and Dispositions

- Commitment, determination, resourcefulness
- Integrity, moral courage
- Community spirit
- Tolerance

Resources

- 'Decision Making Styles' cards, (Resource 3)
- 'Decisions, Decisions!' (Resource 4)
- 'Prompt Questions - How Do I Make Decisions?' (Resource 5)

Methodologies

- Walking debate
- Group work
- Worksheet
- Self reflection



Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 3: How Do I Make Decisions?

Decision making is a process in which a person selects an option from a range of choices. A choice does not exist unless there is more than one course of action, alternative or possibility to consider. We use different decision making styles for different decisions. Most people use more than one style and vary the style according to the situation. Some styles of decision making are more effective than others for particular situations. It is important to help young people examine their approach to decision making and help them to become aware of their styles.

Throughout this activity, take any opportunity that arises to highlight how rational thought can be compromised under the influence of various factors, such as alcohol, drugs, peer pressure, adrenalin or how we feel at that moment. For example, if we are feeling lonely or unattractive we may be more vulnerable to the influences of others.

3.1

Review with the class the two styles of decision making from Activity 2, and highlight that we may use many different styles to make decisions in our lives, e.g., sometimes we go along with everyone else, sometimes we decide on impulse, sometimes we consider all the options etc. Often the style we use depends on the decision we have to make. Each of us is likely to have one style that we use most of the time; however, we can learn to use other styles with practice.

Cut Resource 3, 'Decision Making Styles' into cards and stick these around the room. Talk through each one by asking for a volunteer to go up to each card and read it out to the rest of the class.

Ask the pupils to move and stand next to the card that most typically describes their approach to decision making. Discuss the range of decision making styles in the room, asking individuals to explain why they have chosen a particular style and to give an example to demonstrate it.

Ask if anyone felt that they could have easily gone to another place. If so, which? Point out that there are no right or wrong styles – just different styles, which may be appropriate in different situations. However some styles, e.g., "it feels right" or "go along with others", could be inappropriate or lead to harmful situations at times. Our style also varies depending on the situation.

3.2

In small groups, ask the pupils to talk about a decision they made last week (where to go at the weekend, what to wear, which homework to do, what to do about a row, etc) and say how they made the decision.

Now distribute Resource 4, 'Decision, decisions!', and ask pupils to fill in the table using the information from Resource 3 for reference. For each decision, they have to choose the style they would use to make it and consider the possible consequences of deciding in that way.



Opportunity for AfL Formative feedback

Pupils record at least four decisions they have made in the last few months or year and indicate what decision style they chose. Using Resource 5, 'Prompt Questions - How Do I Make Decisions?', groups of pupils discuss their decision making styles.



Opportunity for AfL Peer-assessment

Get feedback from each group on any particular issues that came up as a result of their discussion. Give the pupils time to reflect on the activity individually in their personal journal.



Opportunity for AfL Self-evaluation

3 Managing Influences and Making Decisions

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Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 4: How Do I Think?

Learning Intentions

Pupils are learning:

- about the importance of critical and creative thinking in making decisions;
- to select, classify, compare and evaluate information;
- to focus, sustain attention and persist with tasks.



Opportunity for AfL Sharing learning intentions and success criteria

Skills and Capabilities

- Managing Information: Select, classify, compare and evaluate information.
- Self Management: Focus, sustain attention and persist with tasks.
- Communication

Learning Experiences

- Investigating and problem solving
- Varied to suit learning style
- Linked to other curriculum areas
- Enquiry based

Attitudes and Dispositions

- Flexibility
- Openness to new ideas
- Curiosity
- Commitment, determination, resourcefulness



Resources

- 'Creative And Critical Thinking - Cards' (Resource 6)
- 'Exercises Involving Creative Thinking' (Resource 7)
- 'Approaches To Problem Solving' (Resource 8)
- 'A Critical Thinking Approach' (Resource 9)

Methodologies

- Teacher led discussion
- Card sort
- Group/pair work
- Problem solving

Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 4: How Do I Think?

Creative thinking focuses on exploring ideas and looking for many possible outcomes to a problem. Critical thinking follows a logical path to find a correct solution.

Critical and creative thinking skills help a person analyse and understand the world in which they live, enabling them to make appropriate choices without being manipulated or deceived by their surrounding influences. In practice, critical and creative thinking tend to complement each other and are used simultaneously, encouraging the use of the higher order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

These activities give pupils the opportunity to clarify what these terms mean and to experiment with applying critical and creative thinking to some examples. They also consider some general models for approaching problem solving and decision-making.

In 4.3, you may prefer to refer back to Year 8 InSync: Managing Influences and Making Decisions, Activity 2, 'Making an Informed Decision' (Resource 3) and 'How Do I Make Decisions?' (Resource 4).

4.1

Explain to the class that they will be looking at two different ways of thinking called 'Critical Thinking' and 'Creative Thinking'. Ensure everyone understands the meaning of these terms. Do not spend too long explaining the difference because this activity will help to distinguish between the two ways of thinking.

Distribute sets of Resource 6, 'Creative and Critical Thinking - Cards' and ask pupils to separate them into two groups that they think might describe these types of thinking. Create some blank cards to allow pupils to add their own words if they want to.



Opportunity for AfL Effective questioning

Receive feedback from the class and discuss the activity. Lead the class towards forming a definition for each type of thinking. Some of the attributes associated with each type of thinking will overlap because they both involve the higher-order thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

The general distinctions between the two types of thinking are that:

- Critical thinking involves logical thinking and reasoning.
- Creative thinking involves creating something new and original.

4.2

Distribute Resource 7, 'Exercises Involving Creative Thinking' for pupils to try individually or in pairs. The answers are available on an additional sheet. Review the answers, highlighting the possibility of various answers when 'creating something new'.



Opportunity for AfL Peer-assessment

Summarise attitudes that promote creative thinking by reviewing the checklist provided on Resource 8, 'Approaches to Problem Solving'. In true creative thinking style, ask pupils to volunteer any more points that they think should be added to the list - the essence of creative thinking implies that the list is never complete!

Creative and Critical Thinking in Decision Making

Activity 4: How Do I Think?

4.3

This activity considers critical thinking in more detail. Divide the class into pairs and ask them to discuss with their partner which method of mobile phone communication (text or talk) is best and why. Pupils should come to a reasoned judgement, and be able to explain the reason behind their decision.

Ask some of the pairs to feed back their conclusions to the rest of the class and talk through how they came to this decision. Highlight the process involved in arriving at the judgement, in preparation for the introduction of models for problem solving.

The 'Approaches to Problem Solving' (Resource 8) information sheet provides a basic model for approaching critical thinking. Talk pupils through each statement on the sheet and help them to develop their own understanding with appropriate examples that link to their experiences.

Prompt questions for discussion could be:

- Where in life might you use these approaches to problem solving already?
- Where does creative thinking fit into these models?
- What are the benefits of using this type of thinking to solve problems?
- Are there any drawbacks to using these types of thinking?

Resource 9, 'A Critical Thinking Approach', is an alternative worksheet that may be more suitable for some pupils. You could also refer back to Resource 3 and 4 of Year 8 InSync: Managing Influences and Making Decisions.



Opportunity for AfL Effective questioning

Ask pupils to invent scenarios or problems in order to practise using creative and critical thinking approaches. In groups, the pupils consider a particular scenario and then present their ideas to the rest of the class.



Opportunity for AfL

Peer-assessment and formative feedback

Pupils reflect on the exercise in their personal journal. Possible prompt questions are:

- Which approach to problem solving do you feel more comfortable with and why?
- What tactics could help you to improve your ability to use both creative and critical thinking skills?



Opportunity for AfL Self-reflection

