

Can We Agree? An Activity in Consensus Decision Making

Name _____

Date _____

Many decisions that are made in our lives, whether on sports teams or in our governments, are based on the idea of majority rule – the idea that when more than half of the people who vote are in support of or against an issue, then that decision holds for the entire group.

In this activity, you will not be practising the idea of majority rule. Instead, you will be practising the idea of **consensus**. Consensus is coming to an accepted opinion or decision that all people in a group agree to abide by.

As a group, you are going to decide which three areas should be given the most funding and support in an upcoming election for your community. You must justify your choices. Indicate the three areas by writing the numbers "1", "2", and "3" beside the agreed upon choices. Record your choices on the chart paper.

Steps For Consensus

1. Introduction of issue.
2. Opening discussion by group members.
3. Identify concerns.
4. Resolve concerns.
5. Reach consensus.

Rules for Consensus Decision Making

1. All group members must agree to the order.
2. Everyone must have a turn speaking.
3. All group members must listen and respect each other's viewpoints.

The ten areas under consideration for the upcoming election are:

Defense

Education

Environment

Finance

Health

Immigration

Justice

Labour

Natural Resources

Trade

