

Active Reading

Section: Making Informed Decisions

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Forming an opinion about an environmental issue is often difficult and may even seem overwhelming. It helps to have a systematic way of analyzing the issues and deciding what is important. One way to guide yourself through this process is by using a decision making model. A **decision-making model** is a conceptual model that provides a systematic process for making decisions.

In a simple decision-making model, the first step is to gather information. In addition to watching news reports and reading newspapers, magazines, and books about environmental issues, you should listen to well-informed people on all sides of an issue. Then consider which values apply to the issue. Explore the consequences of each option. Finally, evaluate all of the information and make a decision.

IDENTIFYING MAIN IDEAS

One reading skill is the ability to identify the main idea of a passage. The main idea is the main focus or key idea. Frequently, a main idea is accompanied by supporting information that offers detailed facts about the main idea.

In the space provided, write the letter of the term or phrase that best answers each question.

- _____ 1. Which of the following can help you when you want to form an opinion or make a decision?
- having many friends so they can tell you what they think
 - listening to the opinions of all the adults around you
 - finding one source of information that can tell you all you need to know
 - having a systematic way of analyzing issues
- _____ 2. Which of the following sources should you use when gathering information to help you make a decision about environmental issues?
- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| a. the TV news | c. books and magazines |
| b. local newspapers | d. all of the above |
- _____ 3. What is a good system of analyzing issues?
- using a cause-and-effect chart
 - determining the mean for a population
 - using a decision-making model
 - performing experiments

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- _____ 4. Whose opinions should you seek when you are trying to make a decision?
- a. your relatives' and teachers'
 - b. your friends'
 - c. well-informed people's on all sides of the issue
 - d. well-informed people's on the side of the issue that best matches your values

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

5. The suffix *-ate* means "to act on." If the word *values* means "principles or standards we consider important," what is the meaning of the word *evaluate*?

6. What is a decision-making model?

SEQUENCING INFORMATION

One reading skill is the ability to sequence information, or to logically place items or events in the order in which they occur.

Sequence the statements below to show the steps of the decision-making model. Write "1" on the line in front of the first step, "2" on the line in front of the second step, and so on.

- _____ 7. Evaluate all the information.
- _____ 8. Explore the consequences of each option.
- _____ 9. Consider which values apply to the issue.
- _____ 10. Make a decision.
- _____ 11. Gather information from many sources.

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

Read the question and write the answer in the space provided.

12. What is one effect of using a decision-making model?
