



Skills for Problem Solving

Intermediate – Consider Other People’s Needs and Preferences

<p>A. It is an important holiday in your country. On this day, you eat a special meal with traditional dishes. For this year’s meal, some visitors from abroad are sharing the meal with you. There are five people in their family. They’ve got a small child, who is 15 months old, the mom is a vegetarian, and the dad is allergic to eggs, nuts, and shellfish. The other two children are the same age as you and you want to make them welcome. Plan the dinner, making sure your visitors feel happy, comfortable and that they enjoy the meal.</p>	<p>B. A friend is coming to stay with you at the weekend. You really look forward to weekends because you can do lots of great activities and sports outside. Unfortunately, your friend broke their leg skiing recently. It is nearly better, but they need to be careful and rest often. Plan some weekend activities you can do with your friend making sure you both can have a good time while keeping our friend safe and comfortable.</p>	<p>C. Every year, your entire class go on a school trip. You and your friend always help arrange it: where to go and a restaurant in the area to have lunch together at the end of the day. However, this year your class has changed. A few of your classmates are vegetarian and a couple others have food allergies. There is also a girl in a wheelchair, so places need to be accessible. Decide where to go for the school trip and choose a restaurant in the area that has options for everyone.</p>
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Reflection Point

It isn’t always easy to consider people’s needs and preferences, but, when you do, people feel heard and included.

Cut out cards



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Aim: To encourage students to consider other people’s needs and preferences in order to become more inclusive.

Lead-in: Encourage students to think of one of their good friends in the class. Then ask them if they can think of some things that their friend really likes or really doesn’t like. Write these prompts on the board:

- *food*
- *sport*
- *actor/actress*
- *music*

Ask students to work alone to make notes next to each prompt. Then have them stand up and show the list to their friend to see how accurate they were.

Elicit feedback as a class. Ask students how much information they could give about the other students who aren’t very close friends.

Ask students to think about the kinds of things they would need to know if an exchange student or completely new student was:

- coming to dinner with your family (e.g., *can’t eat gluten, allergic to certain foods, is a vegetarian*)
- coming on an activity weekend (e.g., *can’t do some activities, can’t swim very well, etc.*)
- coming to the cinema with you (e.g., *types of films or actors they like*).
- coming to a concert or music festival with you (e.g., *music preferences, how they feel in big crowds, etc.*).

Ask students whether they have ever been in a situation where their needs have not been considered and they couldn’t join in. If so, elicit details and how they felt.

Choose A Scenario: Ask students to work in pairs and choose one of the scenarios (A–C). First encourage them to think about what they would normally do for this scenario. So, if they chose A, they should write the different foods they eat on a particular holiday; for B, they should write the

activities they would do; for C, they should write where they would go and where they would eat.

Then ask them to list the important things they need to consider about the other people. After listing the areas they must consider, encourage students to make suitable changes to their scenario so that their ‘visitors’ feel happy and comfortable.

Encourage students to refer to the Reflection point while they are working.

Reflection Point: Make it clear to students that understanding and thinking about other people’s needs is an important life skill. It helps people feel accepted and liked. The best way to do this is to think of possible problems and ask people about them.

Class discussion: Put each pair with another pair that chose the same scenario. Ask them to compare their plans and to identify any similarities and differences. Ask them to think about which plan they prefer and why.

Ask students the following questions:

- Did changing the original meal/plan/trip make things better/worse/different? Why?
- Did anybody find it really difficult to change plans? Why?
- Imagine you had a problem (*special diet, injury, etc.*). How would you feel if someone forgot your needs?
- Imagine you forgot a friend’s needs. How would you feel?
- What can you do to make sure that you have considered people’s needs? (e.g., *ring them up and ask them; tell them about what you are planning and ask if that’s OK, etc.*)

Work alone: Ask students to choose a second scenario (A–C) and to work individually. They should follow the steps in Activity 2 to create a plan.

Once they have finished, invite some of the students to present their plan to the class. Make sure they explain what things they had to consider and what they changed for their guests.



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Extension: Encourage students to think of five questions they could ask someone in order to find out more about their needs, likes, dislikes, and particular situations.

Ask students if they know these things about their group of friends, and if they don't, they should find them out so that they know for the future, especially if it's information that can save each other's lives (big allergies, medical conditions, etc.).