

## Making Fair Decisions

**Intended age group:** Upper elementary through Adult

**Time Needed:** 10 minutes

**Learning objectives:** Participants will evaluate a scenario in which they must apply the five substantive theories of fairness.

**Materials needed:** Handout of scenario (see next page)

### Overview:

Say: "Pretend you are a classroom teacher with one candy to give to a group of students. Who is the student who fairly deserves the candy?"

Distribute the handout and read through the descriptions of each student together.

Participants are likely to ask you to provide more background info. Instruct them to make their decisions based on the information available.

### Suggested discussion questions:

- Was your decision easy or difficult?
- Did everyone in your group agree from the start?
- Did you find yourself defending certain students? Why do you think you did that?
- How was your group able to finally arrive at a consensus? Which theory of substantive fairness did your group follow?

### Classroom application:

Younger students may find it easier to relate to a scenario in which a teacher is deciding which child to give a special treat to. The scenario would look like this:

**Juan** is the smallest, but he is the one who works the hardest and does the best work in class.

**Kishara** is older than Juan, and is competent. She has very few friends and is the one who needs the most praise to help with her poor self esteem.

**Benny** is the oldest and is graduating this year.

**Keara** is a natural leader and has a the best attitude. She is always willing to help.

**Ricky** is a good student and the principal's son.



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**You're an employer who, for budget reasons, has to let go of one employee. What is fair?**

**Able** is your newest employee. He's young, unmarried, and is your best producer. He gets more work done effectively than any other employee.

**Nettie** is a competent worker of four years, a single mother with three small children at home. She needs the job the most.

**Oldham** has worked for the company the longest (18 years) and is two years away from a pension.

**Tryhard** is a good producer with a terrific attitude. She's the hardest worker you have.

**Nepo** is a competent employee and the daughter of one of the owners of the company.