

## Classroom Activity

**Title:** Making Democratic Decisions → Consensus in Action!

**Audience:**

Grades 9 to 11 (MYP 3–5) Individuals & Societies / Social Studies students.

**Overview:**

Students explore how democratic decisions are made by experiencing the challenges of reaching **consensus**.

Through a playful simulation, they must agree on a single menu for a class “field trip.” This simple task helps them understand the complexity of collective decision-making and draw parallels with how the Government of British Columbia makes decisions that affect citizens.

**Objectives:**

- Understand the difference between **consensus** and **majority rule**.
- Experience democratic collaboration through a practical group activity.
- Develop skills in **negotiation, compromise, and respectful communication**.
- Connect classroom experience to real democratic processes in British Columbia.

**Activities and Method:**

**Introduction (10 min):**

Class discussion on democracy and collective decision-making. Present the “menu challenge” scenario.

**Phase 1 → Pairs (10 min):**

Each pair chooses a full menu (starter, main course, side, drink) and must reach full agreement.

**Phase 2 → Groups of Four (10 min):**

Two pairs merge and must agree on a new menu, practicing negotiation and compromise.

**Phase 3 → Whole Class (20 min):**

Groups continue merging until one final class menu is reached. If there is no consensus, introduce **majority voting**.

**Reflection (10 min):**

Group debrief and short written reflection:

*“Describe one difficulty your group faced in reaching consensus and how it reflects the challenges of democracy.”*

### Preparation (by teacher and by students)

#### Teacher:

Prepare large sheets or whiteboard space to record group menus.  
Set timers for each phase.  
Review concepts of “consensus” and “majority vote.”

#### Students:

Review basic ideas of democracy and decision-making.  
Bring open-mindedness and willingness to collaborate.

### Suggested Duration of Activity:

1 hour total, but it could be less, depending on where you want to go in the process.

### Suggested Learning Outcomes:

#### Core Competencies

Communication: express and defend ideas respectfully.  
Thinking: analyze challenges in decision-making and generate shared solutions.  
Personal & Social: demonstrate empathy and cooperation within groups.

#### Social Studies Curricular Competencies

Explain the role of institutions and citizens in democratic societies.  
Analyze the impact of different decision-making processes on groups.  
Reflect on civic responsibility and participation.

### Materials & Resources:

Whiteboard or chart paper, markers or pens and a timer  
Optional: visual comparing *consensus* vs. *majority rule*

### Evaluation of activity:

Formative: observation of participation, collaboration, and communication.  
Summative (**optional**): short reflective writing linking the classroom activity to real democratic processes in B.C.

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**NOTE:** The ideas and opinions expressed in this classroom activity belong to their authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. The Parliamentary Education Office only edits for clarity.

