

To Ski or not to Ski?

Introduction

In this pack you will find all you need to run a decision making session with your class. The activity takes about 1 ½ hours to run and is based on an application to build a water ski centre at Bottoms Reservoir. The pupils will take on the role of one the groups interested in the development, with the outcome being some consensus of how the development could take place.

Aim:

- To provide opportunities for pupils to explore a local issue using basic facilitation/decision making techniques.

Objectives:

- Pupils will have the opportunity to consider a real planning issue first hand.
- Pupils will have an opportunity to explore the differing views that people may have of a local issue.
- Pupils will have an opportunity to use facilitation methods to explore ways in which local planning issues can be solved.
- Pupils will have an opportunity to work together in a variety of different ways.

Resources:

- Role play cards
- Current Situation Sheet
- Spectrum Line Sheet
- Consultation sheet
- Flip chart paper / whiteboard and pens

NATIONAL PARKS

Britain's breathing spaces

Setting the scene:

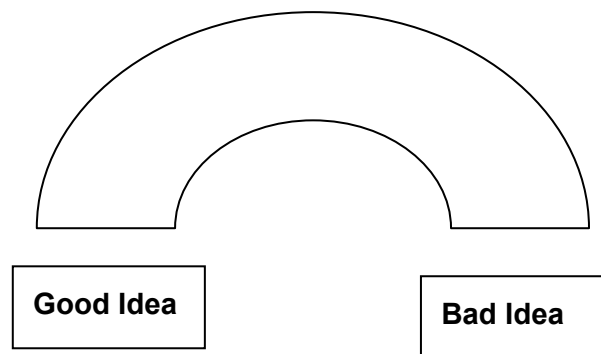
Pupils will need to discover what the site is like. This could be done by a visit to the site (which is accessible by train from Manchester), or by a web search. It would also help if they research the objectives of National Parks

(see www.nationalparks.gov.uk/aimsandpurposesofnationalparks).

It may also help if they consider the groups of people who might use the National Park. One fun way to do this is given below;

- Get into groups of three or four.
- You are going to be visitors who have come to this valley to enjoy its special qualities. What might you be doing.....?
- One person chose an activity that a visitor might be doing. Pick a short action that this visitor might have...perhaps 5 seconds. Do this action. Others must copy.
- Everyone will have go. Once you have had a go, go to the back of the group.
- Ok first person.....swap...swap....swap.

The proposal can be read to them (see the Current Situation document). This might be a good point to ask the pupils how they feel about the proposal and how it might affect the area around Bottoms Reservoir. This could be done by getting the children to form a horseshoe shape with one end representing total opposition to the idea and one total agreement. The space between can show where people have mixed feelings about the plan.



Some explanation of how planning applications work might need to be given. The idea that people with different view points need to be consulted and have the opportunity to have their opinions heard and considered. In the Peak District National Park the Planning department needs to consider the National Park objectives. Pupils will then be split into the seven different interest groups and issued with their roles.

Stage 1 Stepping into Someone Else's Shoes

It can be very hard for some children to 'step into' someone else's shoes and take on their opinion. The following ideas may help them to do this:

- Invent a new name for themselves
- They might need to decide what they do for a living, especially if they are in one of the local residents groups.
- Think what might be the most important object that person would carry around with them (for example a bird watchers might have some binoculars or a bird book).
- Then they could move to their group as their new character, so if they are a hiker they might stride along, an angler might be casting their rod etc.

Each group will need a place to work where they should be given an envelope with notes on the key issues for the group and work sheets (spectrum line and consultation sheet) for them to fill in individually.

Each group needs to:

- look at/read the evidence/background provided together. (5 min)
- think of where on the spectrum line they may be and to add a sticker. (5min)
- come up with two things that their person may say....' It's a fact that this water ski Centre... and this whole water ski development is making me feel.....because.....' and to fill this in onto the consultation sheet provided. (10 min)

Consultation

The children will now have a chance to tell the others in the group the kinds of issues they have about the development. They can use the sheet they have just filled in to read from. The scene needs to be set a bit like below;

'The Planning department needs to find out about any concerns or issues people might have regarding this development. To do this today you are going to a consultation meeting.'

Walk around and meet others. Chance to meet one person from each of the other groups and to tell them what your opinion is and what the whole development is making you feel. (10 min)

Remember to this is an important meeting, shake hands when you meet and introduce your new character. Remember to say thank you for listening/telling me about your views at the end!

Stage 2 Solving the Problems

When you feel it is time to stop the 'consultation', get the children to sit together and have a recap;

- 'There are some people who are very keen on this development. Who are they and why? There are some people who think that the development will cause problems...who are these people? People are at one extreme or the other. **(Look at spectrum charts)**.
- Instead of just saying yes or no, are there any ways of looking at the problems linked to the water ski centre and seeing if they can be solved? What are the problems? **(10 min) These can be listed on a flip chart.**
- We have identified? problems that will come if the water skiing takes place...(e.g. noise, loss of wildlife , traffic, litter, problems with fishing, pollution). We are going to mix up the groups. **Here the children will need to send one person from each group to form a new group 'jigsaw'.**
- **Each table is given a problem to tackle- they first write down their problem, followed by a brief summary of the problem.** You are going to work together to 'brainstorm' possible solutions to that problem and to put your ideas onto your flip chart (Our problem is... and our solutions are...). One person will have a special job - a scribe. An adult will help that person record the group's ideas. Try and help the scribe by coming up with a short way of describing your idea. (10 minutes)
- Scribes stay where you are to explain your ideas. Every one except the scribe will move round to the different groups. A visiting group may have suggestion to add or really like one of your ideas. If they like one of your ideas they can put a star or tick next to it. (5 min per table =25min)
- When you get back to your own group, your group have a chance to choose the three solutions which you think will work best and get ready to share them with the rest of the class. (10 minutes)

Round up.....

In real life decisions have to be made. In this case, the National Park have decided to allow the building of a Water Ski Centre. However, whilst they have 'approved' the building, there are conditions attached to the approval which have yet to be finalized. They are likely to be... that the Centre can only be used for water skiing (there is not going to be a shop, bar or café), it needed to be landscaped and the hours when water skiing will be allowed will be limited.

Planners decide about other things: roads, factories, swimming pools, park play areas. This is one way of making decisions. We have looked at just the start of one way of making decisions. Now it's up to you. You can take your ideas and make your own vision of how this area can be enjoyed by all of us... and thank you for your ideas and hard work today!

You are now out of role - just to prove it turn to your neighbour and tell them what the favourite part of the day was for you and what you want for dinner tonight.