

Product Comparison

Suggested Time: 45-60 minutes depending on age

Lesson Overview: Groups of students will compare four types of the same product and pick which one is the best choice. Before the group work, as a class, the students will come up with a list of design features. Each small group of students will talk about the products and compare the different features, weighing the pros and cons of each item and then picking the best one. This can be expanded by giving students a specific user to think about.

Learning Objectives:

- To gain practice collaborating with a partners
- To gain an understanding of constraints and criteria
- To understand that there is not one “correct” answer

Materials: Four of one type of object that students are familiar with (e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks, water bottles, etc.)

Criteria:

- Students must pick which one of the objects they think is the best. They can pick for a specific user (pencil for a 1st grader vs. teacher) or situation (water bottle for a classroom desk or a hike).

Directions

1. Explain to the students that will examine four objects and then choose the best one against the criteria they have outlined.
2. Model what they will be doing with a different type of object and talk about possible criteria and fill in a table about the object.
3. Place students in groups three or four.
4. Students will begin by picking five criteria that they think are important as they think about the object. The teacher can provide the cost of the objects.
5. Students will examine the objects and fill in the table.
6. Each group will pick the object they think is the best. They should be able to explain their reasoning about why they picked that object and the method they used to decide.
7. Each group will share their choice with the class and their justification.
8. The teacher may provide a specific user or situation and then facilitate a discussion with the class if the user or situation changes any of their choices.

Product Comparison

Name _____

Product	Criteria 1 Ex: Cost	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Notes

