

# SOME TOUGH CHOICES

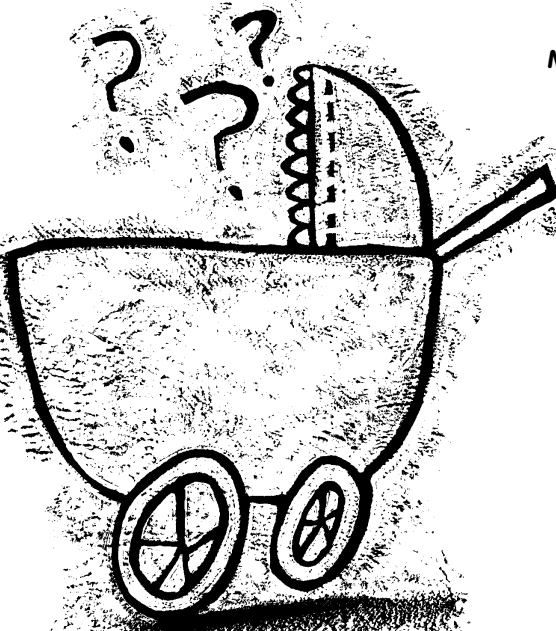


Have you ever wondered why you make the decisions you do?

How different would your life be if you decided things in a different way? What if you chose different friends, school subjects, hobbies, sports or items to buy?

You have probably made thousands of decisions in your life, but have you ever stopped to think about how you made them? A simple model called PRAM explains the four main questions that underlie successful decision-making. Consider these four steps:

- Purpose:** What is the end result that I want to achieve?
- Research:** What facts do I need to make a good decision?
- Alternatives:** What are the available options?
- Measurement:** What measures should I use to assess the benefits of the decision?





1. Read the decision that Josephine has to make.

Josephine has an important assignment due in tomorrow. Her best friend invites her out to the movies that night. The invitation sends Josephine into a spin. She spends some time considering each of the four main questions according to the PRAM model and the options available.

**Purpose:** To maintain the friendship; see the movie; get a good mark for the assignment.

**Research:** How long will it take to see the movie? How long will the assignment take? When else is the movie on? Can I postpone the due date of the assignment?

**Alternatives:**

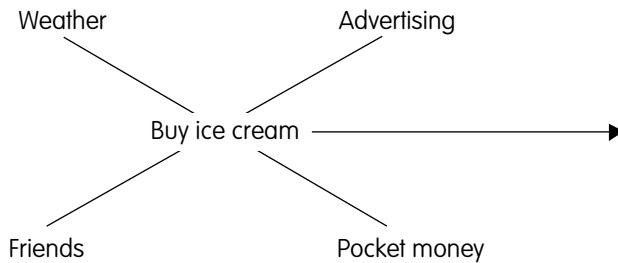
- Accept the invitation and
  - submit a poor-quality assignment on time, or
  - submit a good-quality assignment late, or
  - take time off school tomorrow and complete a good-quality assignment before the end of the school day.
- Refuse the invitation.
- Accept the spirit of the invitation, but postpone the date and time until tomorrow afternoon.

**Measurement:** To get a good mark for the assignment and also have a good-quality social life.

What choice would you make and why? Before you make your choice, think again about Josephine. Josephine has considered a range of important influences on her life. These include pressures from home, school and friends. Influences such as these affect most of the decisions we all make.

To further assist you, look at the graphic below which presents a more enjoyable decision.

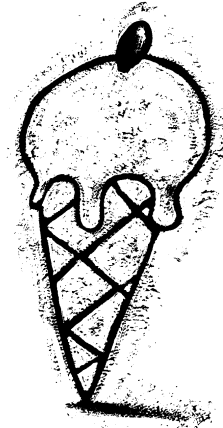
**Decision influences**



**Impact of decision**

- A good thing to do with friends.
- Relief from heat/hunger.
- Not hungry at meal time.
- Parents angry.
- Poor diet.

2. Think about some other important decisions you have recently made and list these. Have you made any decisions that you would now change? What thoughts and considerations did you have at each of the four decision-making stages.
3. Explain the reasons/influences that persuaded you to make your decisions. Which reasons/influences most occurred in your decisions?
4. Compare the influences on you with those of other students.



The PRAM model can be effectively used for personal decision-making.

Political decision-making also needs thought and consideration to enable a useful vote to be made so that 'your opinion counts'.

Outline how you could use the PRAM model to determine how you could make your first vote an effective one.