

Smart Choices

Students explore how everyday choices affect long-term outcomes by connecting time preference to food, health, work, play, and education. Through discussion, a visual time-preference axis, creative superhero design, and a lighthearted comparison game, learners reflect on how small daily decisions build strength, focus, and future success.

📁 ACTIVITY TYPE Discussion · Drawing / visual · Creative craft · Game	🕒 DURATION 60 min	👥 PARTICIPATION Whole class · Small groups · Pairs · Individual
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🎯 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this activity, learners will:

- Understand that long-term thinking leads to stronger outcomes
- Apply time preference to everyday decisions
- Reflect on habits related to health, food, learning, and work
- Recognize that small choices compound over time

📦 MATERIALS

- Superhero templates (See Appendix A)
- Time Preference (See Appendix B) — [B · Time preference axis examples](#)
- Colouring pencils, crayons, or markers
- Beads or tokens for rewards
- Candy or small treats (optional)
- Hero Stat scoring guide (See Appendix C)
- Whiteboard or large poster space
- Markers
- Glue and scissors (optional)
- Timer or visual countdown clock (*nice to have*)

PROCEDURE

OPENING

1. Prepare the whiteboard with space for a time preference axis (*See Appendix B*).
2. Organize superhero templates, colouring tools, and game materials.
3. Prepare beads and optional treats.
4. Ensure clear space for group discussion and later game play.

PRE-ACTIVITY

10 minutes

1. Recap the previous lesson using *The Three Little Pigs*.
2. Ask: “Which house lasted the longest?” and “Why was it the strongest?”
3. Draw a horizontal line on the board to represent time preference.
4. Label the left side: High Time Preference - wants results now.
5. Label the right side: Low Time Preference - willing to wait for better results. Place straw, sticks, and bricks along the axis.

Objective In Student's Words

- “Learn how my choices today can make me stronger later.”

ACTIVITY

45 minutes

Setup

1. Explain that everyday choices are like building materials.
2. Explain that some choices are fast and fun but weak, while others take effort but last longer.

Model

1. Give an example such as candy versus a healthy meal.
2. Place each example on the time preference axis and explain why.

Carry Out

1. Discussion: Everyday Choices

20 minutes

1. Introduce categories: food, health, work, play, education.
2. Give examples for each category such as candy versus vegetables or rushing homework versus doing it well.
3. Ask students where each choice belongs on the axis.
4. Invite students to justify their placements.

2. Design Your Superhero

25 minutes

1. Hand out superhero templates.
2. Instruct students to name their hero, colour the costume, and choose favourites in each category. Encourage creativity and imagination.
3. Review student choices and assign strength points to each hero based on time preference.

3. Superhero Battle and Reflection

15 minutes

1. Pair students or form small groups.
2. Have students compare hero stats in Top-Trumps style rounds.
3. Emphasize that the goal is learning, not winning.

Checkpoint

1. Observe whether students can explain why certain choices create stronger heroes.
2. Listen for connections between effort and long-term outcomes.

Reflection

- Ask: “Which choices made your hero strongest?”
- Ask: “Is there one choice you want to improve?”
- Invite students to name one low time preference action they could try this week.

FOLLOW-UP

10 minutes

1. Review the idea that small daily choices add up over time.
2. Reinforce that effort now often leads to better results later.
3. Connect to real life by asking students to identify one habit they can practice today.

CLOSE

5 minutes

1. Collect materials and clean up craft areas.
2. Thank students for their creativity and honesty.
3. Final message: “Strong futures are built one small choice at a time.”

NOTES

Classroom management

- Keep tone encouraging and non-judgmental
- Emphasize that habits are explored, not graded

Extensions & Sponge Activities

- Redesign the hero after one week of better choices
- Delay-of-gratification challenge using a small treat and a bonus reward for waiting

Differentiation

- Younger students: fewer choices and guided selection
- ELL/Accessibility: visuals, modeling, buddy support
- Safety: supervise scissors and movement

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Marshmallow Test: Mastering self-control.](https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2014-43233-000)
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