

Using the S.T.A.R. Strategy to Evaluate Multiple Solutions

Lesson Objective:

Students will practice evaluating multiple solutions to a problem using the S.T.A.R. strategy to develop decision-making skills.

Materials Needed:



- Copy of Chapter 25: Using the S.T.A.R. Strategy to Evaluate Multiple Solutions
- Paper and pencils
- S.T.A.R. Strategy Poster
- S.T.A.R. Strategy Worksheet
- Home Connection Letter

Introduction to the Topic (10 minutes)

Greeting Outline:

- Welcome the children and have them sit in a circle (if applicable)
- Briefly discuss the concept of evaluating multiple solutions

Greeting and Circle Time Teacher Script

Warm Welcome and Opening Discussion:

- "Today, we're going to explore how the characters in The Star Squad used the S.T.A.R. strategy to evaluate multiple solutions to a problem. We make choices every day, and sometimes, the best solution isn't the first one that comes to mind. Let's see how evaluating different ideas can help us make thoughtful decisions."

Discussion Starter :

- "Can you think of a time when you had to choose between multiple good options? How did you decide what to do?"
- "Why do you think it's important to consider different possibilities before making a decision?"

Read the Chapter (15 minutes)

Story Time Outline:



- Read Chapter 25 aloud.
- Ask questions during key parts of the story.

Story Time Teacher Script:

Prepare the Children for the Story:

- “Now let’s read a chapter from *The Star Squad: Navigating Fifth Grade Adventures* where the squad learns to evaluate multiple solutions to a problem.”

(Read the chapter aloud, pausing at key moments to ask questions and engage the children.)

Read the Chapter with Emphasis on Key Moments.

While reading, pause during key moments.

Ask Questions:

- What problem did the friends need to solve for the fundraiser?
- What were the three options they discussed?
- What were the pros and cons of the bake sale?
- Why was the car wash considered a lot of work?
- What made the fun run an exciting option?
- How did the group use the S.T.A.R. strategy to guide their decision?
- What solution did Harriet suggest to combine the ideas?
- How did the group reflect on their decision-making process?
- What did Buzz learn from evaluating multiple solutions?
- Why did the friends feel proud of their decision?

Chapter 25: Using the S.T.A.R. Strategy to Evaluate Multiple Solutions

With the school year nearing its end, the friends found themselves juggling multiple projects and decisions. Between planning for a class fundraiser, finalizing their group presentation, and thinking about summer activities, there seemed to be many choices to make.

One afternoon, the group met at the park to discuss the upcoming class fundraiser. Their teacher, Mr. Jenkins, had given the students the freedom to choose how they wanted to raise money, but the class had to agree on the best approach. Several ideas had been suggested, including a bake sale, a car wash, and a fun run. Each option had its pros and cons, and the group was divided on which to choose.

Evaluating the Options with the S.T.A.R. Strategy

The friends decided to use the S.T.A.R. strategy to evaluate each solution carefully:

1. Stop: They paused to consider the different ideas and acknowledged that each option could be a good choice, depending on how it was planned.
2. Think: The group discussed the pros and cons of each option:
 - Bake Sale: They could bake at home, and baked goods would likely sell well, but not everyone in the class had experience baking, and there were dietary restrictions to consider.
 - Car Wash: This would involve getting supplies like hoses, buckets, and soap, and they would need permission to use the school parking lot. It could be a lot of work, but it might bring in more money than the bake sale.
 - Fun Run: This idea was exciting and could involve the whole school, but organizing it would be time-consuming, and they'd need to find volunteers to help run the event.
3. Act: After discussing each option, the group decided to vote on which one they thought would be most successful. However, they agreed that if a clear favorite didn't emerge, they would brainstorm new ideas or find ways to combine the options.
4. Reflect: They would consider whether the chosen activity was working well during the planning process and make adjustments if needed.

Narrowing Down the Choices

The friends voted, and the results were close, with the bake sale and the fun run each getting several votes. The car wash received a few, but not enough to compete with the other two. Since there wasn't a clear winner, they needed to consider how they could merge the two top options.

“Why don’t we combine the bake sale and the fun run?” Harriet suggested. “We could set up a table with baked goods at the finish line of the fun run. That way, we could do both and raise even more money.”

Bennie nodded. “That’s a great idea! We could also give out free water to the runners and sell the baked goods to everyone watching.”

The friends agreed that this combined approach would allow them to use the best parts of both options, and it would make the event more exciting for everyone involved.

Reflecting on Their Decision-Making Process

The following week, as they began planning the fundraiser, the group met again to reflect on how using the S.T.A.R. strategy had helped them make their decision.

“I liked that we took the time to think about the pros and cons of each idea,” Sammy said. “It made it easier to see what might work best.”

Buzz added, “And combining the two top choices was smart because we didn’t have to choose just one thing. We found a way to make both ideas happen.”

Maya spoke up. “It showed me that sometimes the best solution isn’t the most obvious one. If we’re open to new ideas, we can come up with something even better than what we first thought.”

The friends realized that taking the time to evaluate multiple solutions helped them make more thoughtful decisions. It wasn’t just about picking the first idea that came to mind, it was about considering different possibilities and being flexible when things weren’t clear-cut.

Moving Forward

The fundraiser turned out to be a huge success. The fun run drew many participants, and the bake sale sold out quickly. The friends felt proud of their efforts, knowing that the time they spent using the S.T.A.R. strategy had paid off.

As they walked home together after the event, Ollie summed it up: “We’re learning that there are often many ways to solve a problem. Using the S.T.A.R. strategy helped us make a better decision by thinking about all our options.”

Harriet agreed. “And we’ll remember that the next time we have to make a tough choice. It’s about finding the solution that works best, not just the one that’s easiest.”

The friends felt more confident in their ability to make thoughtful decisions and knew that the skills they were developing would help them not just in school, but in all areas of life. As the school year continued, they carried with them the understanding that evaluating multiple solutions wasn’t just about picking the right answer, it was about considering all the possibilities and making choices that reflected their values and goals.

Post-Chapter Teacher Script

- **Teacher:** “This story shows us that there are many ways to solve a problem, and it’s important to think about all the options available to us.”

Post-Chapter Questions

These questions encourage children to think deeply about what they listen to and to understand that they can use the S.T.A.R. Strategy in many different situations.

- What was challenging about making a decision for the fundraiser?
- How did the S.T.A.R. strategy help the friends make their decision?
- Why is it important to think about the pros and cons of each option?
- How did combining two ideas make the fundraiser more successful?
- Can you think of a time when you combined two solutions to solve a problem?
- What did the friends learn about being flexible during decision-making?
- Why is reflecting on a decision important?
- How can we use what the squad learned in our class?
- What would you have chosen for the fundraiser, and why?
- How can using the S.T.A.R. strategy help us in everyday life?

Do an Activity (20 minutes)

- Students will practice evaluating numerous solutions to a problem.



Activity: S.T.A.R. Decision-Making Exercise

Introduce Activity

○ “Today we’re going to work in small groups to solve a fun, real-world problem using our **S.T.A.R. strategy**, a tool that helps us stop, think, act, and reflect before making decisions.

Here’s the situation:

The student council is planning an **end-of-year celebration**. They want your input! The three ideas being considered are:

1. A **talent show** where students can perform

2. A **field day** with outdoor games and activities
3. A **movie night** in the gym with snacks and friends

Your group's job is to use the *S.T.A.R. worksheet* to work through the decision process and choose the idea, or a combination of ideas, that you think would be the best for your school."

S.T.A.R. Steps:

- **S – Stop:** What are the options?
- **T – Think:** What are the pros and cons of each?
- **A – Act:** What do you choose? Why?
- **R – Reflect:** How will your choice affect others?

"Take your time, listen to each other, and make sure everyone gets a voice in your group. After you finish, you'll share your decision and how you used the S.T.A.R. strategy to get there."

Instructions

- Present a Problem Scenario:
Provide the following problem:
"The school is planning an end-of-year celebration, and the student council has asked for suggestions. The options are a talent show, a field day with outdoor games, or a movie night in the gym."
- Complete the S.T.A.R. Strategy Worksheet:
In small groups, students will use the S.T.A.R. worksheet to evaluate the three options.
 - Stop: What are the options?
 - Think: What are the pros and cons of each option?
 - Act: Which option (or combination of options) do you think would work best?
 - Reflect: How do you think your solution will affect others?
- Share Results:
Each group will share their chosen solution and how they used the S.T.A.R. strategy to make their decision.

Closing Discussion (5 minutes):

Sharing



- “Now that each group has worked through the problem and completed the S.T.A.R. worksheet, let’s hear what you came up with. When your group shares, tell us:
 - What option or combination of options did you choose
- One or two pros and cons you talked about
- Why do you believe your choice would be a great celebration for the school
- How do you think your choice will make others feel

Let’s show each group respectful attention as they present.”

Encourage questions or compliments from classmates after each group shares.

Wrapping It Up

- “You did an amazing job today using your voice, your thinking, and your teamwork to solve a real-life problem.
- Sometimes making group decisions isn’t easy, there are lots of opinions, and we have to think beyond ourselves. But by using the **S.T.A.R. strategy**, you stayed thoughtful, respectful, and focused.
- Whether you chose the talent show, the field day, or the movie night, what matters is *how* you made the choice, by listening, weighing options, and thinking about how it would affect others.”

Wrap Up the Lesson (5 minutes)

Review and Reflection Overview:

- Have students reflect on their experiences and what they learned.

Review and Reflection Teacher Script

Gather in a Circle for Reflection:



- “Let’s gather in a circle and reflect on what we learned by working through this decision together.
- When it’s your turn, finish this sentence:
 - **‘One thing I learned about making decisions with others is...’**
- You might talk about sharing ideas, thinking through consequences, or listening to your team. If you’d prefer to pass, that’s okay too.”

Closing

- “Being a good decision-maker means stopping to think and caring about how your choices affect people around you. Today, you showed what it means to be thoughtful leaders and community members.
- Keep practicing the S.T.A.R. strategy, because big or small, every choice we make is a chance to learn, grow, and make things better for everyone.”

Home Connection Letter

Sending Information Home:

- “Before you go, I have a letter for you to take home. It explains that we participated in a collaborative activity using the S.T.A.R. strategy, Stop, Think, Act, Reflect, to help them work through a group decision-making challenge.
- Students evaluated three ideas for a school celebration, discussed pros and cons, and considered how their decisions might affect others.
- Hand out the letters as the children prepare to leave.

Parent Letter

Sending Information Home:

- Provide each child with a letter to take home to their parents explaining the lesson.

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Today, your child participated in a lesson about using the S.T.A.R. strategy to evaluate multiple solutions to a problem. Students learned that thoughtful decision-making involves considering different options and being flexible when necessary.

Your child practiced using the following steps:

- Stop: Identify the problem and list the options.
- Think: Evaluate the pros and cons of each option.
- Act: Choose a solution or combine ideas.
- Reflect: Consider how the decision will affect others.



Encourage your child to share their experience with today's lesson and discuss how they can apply these decision-making skills at home and in the community.

Thank you for supporting their growth in making thoughtful, responsible choices!

With Gratitude,

S.T.A.R. Strategy



Stop -Take some deep breaths.

Think -What solutions are there?

Act -Pick the best solution.

Reflect -How did it go?



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S.T.A.R. Strategy Worksheet

Problem:

Options:

Stop: List the available options.

Think: What are the pros and cons of each option?

Act: What is your final decision? Will you combine options?

Reflect: How will your decision affect others?
