

Decision-Making Activities Answer Key

Unit 1

Comprehension

1. Bridget Mergens sued Westside Public Schools because Westside High School denied her request to lead a student Bible club. **2.** Relations between church and state have been a source of friction throughout American history. The Puritans fled England to seek religious freedom in the colonies. In Massachusetts, the Puritans ruled completely, and church power touched the daily lives of every person. Those who did not agree with church teachings were shunned and fled Massachusetts to find religious freedom elsewhere. By 1776, church power lessened, and the nation moved toward strict separation of church and state. **3.** Westside students took both sides in the issue.

Critical Thinking

1. The First Amendment allows for separation of church and state ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion . . .") and also allows that people must be able to follow the religion of their choice (" . . . or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;"). Westside lawyers cited the former, while Mergens's side pointed to the latter. **2.** Allowing the Bible club might fulfill the wish on the part of some students to also allow an anti-Christian club or other clubs that would create strife among students. Denying the request for the Bible club could cause some students to feel discriminated against. **3.** Answers will vary, but students should demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses on both sides of the issue. (Note: Final resolution of this issue most likely will rest with the United States Supreme Court. A Nebraska district court decision in favor of the school board was overturned on appeal by Mergens to a federal district court.)

Unit 2

Comprehension

1. CCC, Peace Corps, VISTA, California Conservation Corps **2.** Workers would receive \$100 per week plus vouchers worth \$10,000 for each year of community service, or \$12,000 for each year of military service. **3.** Federal programs for financial aid to college students would be eliminated.

Critical Thinking

1. Answers will vary, but students should demonstrate clear thinking and an understanding of the issue. **2.** Answers will vary, but students could mention that some argue the Citizen Corps would provide workers for social service agencies, recruits for the armed forces, and the chance for a college education to young people who might not otherwise be able to afford it. **3.** Answers will vary but should demonstrate an understanding of each side of the debate. (Note: The issue of establishing a national youth service corps remains unresolved.)

Unit 3

Comprehension

1. A *curfew* is a law or ordinance in effect in a certain geographic area that restricts access to streets or public places during specific times. **2.** They argued that the law is vague; it infringes on a minor's freedom of travel and movement; it intrudes into matters best handled by the parents; it interferes with a person's constitutional rights. **3.** They argued that the law is reasonable because children need protection; parents do not always adequately supervise their children; it regulates only behavior; it helps maintain control of the streets.

Critical Thinking

1. *child*—basic constitutional rights of free speech and due process; *parent*—the right to set rules for the child; *the government*—the right to maintain order in the name of the community **2.** Answers will vary but should show clear thinking and an understanding of the effects of curfew laws. **3.** Answers will vary but should demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each side of the issue. (Note: The question of curfews for minors remains unresolved. As of June, 1989, the Iowa state supreme court had not reached a decision on *Simmons v. Panora, Iowa*.)

Unit 4

Comprehension

1. Plastic waste products that did not break apart and decompose had been clogging the city's landfills and incinerators in recent years. According to the EPA, such trash will make up 15 percent of the nation's solid trash by the year

2000. **2.** Grocers said a ban on plastics would drive up grocery prices and cause consumers to do their shopping outside the city. Plus, converting to new packing would cost each store approximately \$1.5 million. **3.** Vogt first became interested in the issue of plastic cafeteria trays when she wrote a current events paper for a social studies class assignment.

Critical Thinking

- 1.** From the grocer's point of view, a ban on plastic packaging would cost money and be inconvenient. Costs would be passed along to the consumer by increased prices. A grocer would likely tell his customers about these inflated prices to convince them to oppose the ban. **2.** Answers will vary but should reflect thorough library research.
- 3.** Answers will vary, but students should demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses on both sides of the issue. (Note: Many communities are presently considering bans on plastic throwaways. West Milford students overwhelmingly supported the ban and paid extra for paper trays.)

Unit 5

Comprehension

- 1.** These minors will be limited to three hours of work on days prior to school days and to eight hours on other days. **2.** four hours **3.** During summer vacation, 14- and 15-year-olds will be allowed to work later (until 9 P.M.).

Critical Thinking

- 1.** Answers will vary but should reflect the interests of each group. **2.** *positive*—source of income, builds personal and employment skills, fills students' free time in a productive way; *negative*—harmful effects on academics, school attendance, student health and energy, social development, leisure and family activities.
- 3.** Answers will vary but should demonstrate an

understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each side of the issue. (Note: As of June, 1989, the issue remained unresolved. No action had been taken on Governor Cuomo's proposals.)

Unit 6

Comprehension

- 1.** He argued that the company's presence in South Africa was too small to be significant and that the company's operations enabled many South African blacks to share in the company's profits and improve their lives. **2.** They replied that the presence of American corporations in South Africa was indeed significant and that the few black people benefiting from American business there made up only a tiny minority. **3.** It creates a black middle class that has a stake in maintaining the status quo in South Africa and leads to a division among blacks fighting apartheid.

Critical Thinking

- 1.** Boycott leaders hope to create pressure to end the company's financial support for the South African government. The company hopes that black South Africans will continue to be "devoted consumers" of their soft drink. **2.** Change can occur slowly, over a long period of time. Perhaps Bishop Tutu observes black South Africans benefiting from the Equal Opportunities Fund and feels that it is enough for now. Overthrowing the white government may be a long-range goal which he does not believe would be accomplished by the abrupt withdrawal of the soft drink company.
- 3.** Answers may vary but should demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses on both sides of the issue. (Note: Students continue their boycott of Coca-Cola products, and American corporations continue their debate over divestment from South Africa. On many college campuses, students urge university trustees to withdraw their schools' investments in South Africa.)

Decision-Making Activities Acknowledgments

Should High Schools Allow Bible Clubs? Opening quotation and quotations in paragraphs 3, 4, 14, 15, 16, and 17 from the *Chicago Tribune*, February 26, 1989.

Should the United States Establish a National Youth Service Corps? Opening quotation from the *New York Times*, April 15, 1989.

Do Curfew Laws Unfairly Restrict the Rights of Minors? Opening quotation and quotations in paragraphs 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17 from the *Des Moines Register*, November 6, 1988.

Should Throwaway Plastics Be Banned from Our Communities? Opening quotation and quotation in paragraph 8 from the *New York Times*, April 1, 1989.

Should Teen Working Hours Be Restricted? Opening quotation and quotations in paragraphs 12, 17, 18, and 19 from the *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*, May 27, 1989.

Should American Corporations Continue to Do Business in South Africa? Opening quotation from the *Cambridge Chronicle*, February 9, 1989; quotation in paragraph 9 from the *Cambridge Chronicle*, January 12, 1989; quotation in paragraph 11 from a letter by Archbishop Desmond Tutu to Carl Ware, April 10, 1989; quotation in paragraphs 13 and 16 from the *Cambridge Chronicle*, January 12, 1989.