Decision Making 101 Lesson Plan

The DM101 worksheet can be introduced in just a few minutes. Students can then practice PS123 together by going through and discussing 2–3 real-life scenarios each week.
(See pages 4-5 for sample scenarios.)

The teacher should model the process on the whiteboard, writing each step as the class goes through it.

Students can keep using the main DM101 worksheet throughout the course. As they learn B/BB from *DM101 Test the Thought*, they can use B/BB in the worksheet's extra writing space.

A teacher could teach Decision Making 101 in a 5-week format using weekly 30-minute practice sessions.

Worksheets are available at decisionmaking101.com
Students can take some worksheets home to practice on their own.

DM101 progression:

Lesson 1: Compare options. PS123. (DM101 worksheet)
Lesson 2: Test thoughts. B/BB. (DM101 Test the Thought page 2)
Lesson 3: Test actions/consequences. BB. IF →THEN →THEN pros cons.
Lesson 4: Test advice/opinions. Use lessons 1-3: PS123. B/BB. Test actions.
Lesson 5: Discuss decision making principles.
See decisionmaking101.com Biblical answers for Christian Living

Additional Decision-Making Resources

• Alliance for Decision Education – Excellent articles, videos, and classroom resources on decision-making. alliancefordecisioneducation.org

Decision Making 101 Lesson Plan

Why Learn Good Decision-Making?
Decisions have consequences.
Bad decisions often harm us and others.
Good decisions often benefit us and others.
Better decision-making tends to produce better outcomes.
Decision-making is a skill that improves with practice.
The purpose of this course is to help you make better decisions so you can live a wiser, healthier and more fulfilling life while helping others.
Decisions Determine Destiny. Be careful. Try to make good decisions.

Week 1 — PS123 (DM101 worksheet)
Students practice Compare Options:

- Hand out DM101 worksheet.
- Go through DM101 Teacher's Guide example and then other scenarios
- defining the problem
- brainstorming options
- writing all pros and cons
- defining the goal
- choosing the best option

This helps students build the basic habit of slowing down and comparing options before making decisions.

Week 2 — PS123,BB (DM101 Test the Thought page 2, top half)
Students learn to Test the Thought:

- Hand out DM101 Test the Thought.
- B = Thought
- BB = Truth
- emotions
- assumptions
- "TEST the thought" "TEST the premise"

Students learn that thoughts, assumptions, emotions, and beliefs should be tested rather than automatically believed.

Week 3 — TEST action (DM101 Test the Thought page 2, bottom half)
Students practice:

- BB. IF→THEN→THEN pros cons
- short-term vs long-term thinking
- consequences
- evaluating results

This section is still concrete and practical.
Example: "IF I skip homework THEN free time now THEN stress later."
Students learn to think through likely consequences before acting.

Week 4 — TEST advice/opinions using lessons 1-3. (Page 2 bottom half)
Students are now ready for more advanced social reasoning skills such as:

- "Ask why"
- =B. What does this imply? (hidden assumptions). BB. Truth
- Test the action. IF →THEN →THEN pros cons.
- "maybe right, maybe wrong"
- assertive disagreement
- 1. advice → S1. (one option to consider)
- 2. Compare all options. S1,S2,S3…pros cons

Students can practice taking a real advice statement or opinion ("B"), identifying the suggested option ("S1"), testing the reasoning, assumptions, truthfulness, and likely consequences, and then comparing it with other options S1,S2,S3…

Homework: Read through the first 4 posts in Biblical answers for Christian Living in decisionmaking101.com. Jot down some decision making principles for next week's discussion.

Week 5 — Discuss decision making principles

- Read and discuss decision making principles from the first 4 posts in Biblical answers for Christian Living in decisionmaking101.com
- What are your main goals, needs, purpose, values, priorities, duties?
- What are good, God-pleasing goals, needs, purpose, values, priorities?
- How does God's Word help define our goals?
- What are some bad motives/reasons for doing something? What are some good motives?
- Beliefs → Values → Principles → Priorities/Goals → Decisions → Actions → Results
- Handout page 6 Default Decision Methods. Have students fill it out and discuss.
- What are the most common fallacies? What fallacies have you used? How do you make decisions?
- How does motivation affect our decisions?
- How does attitude affect our decisions ? (see DM101 book p33)
- Apply these principles to real-life decisions.

After week 5 — continued practice and learn optional tools from "More Resources"
Continue using Decision Making 101 worksheet on several scenarios each week.
Teachers can use their discretion regarding which additional tools from "More Resources" they want to introduce. Different tools may be more helpful for different students, situations, age groups, or class discussions. Teachers may choose to introduce only one additional tool or concept at a time as needed, while continuing to practice real-life scenarios using the DM101 worksheet.
I recommend starting with the Decision Criteria worksheet. Also check Teacher's Guide and DM101 book for Fallacies, Impact & Probability, Test Advice and EG Truth Tests.
See DM101 Book "Table of Contents" and ""Index" for a list of more optional Tools to choose from. Review the alphabetical index and book summaries. Highlight or "X" the topics you would like to teach.
See Alliance for Decision Education for more decision Tools, articles, videos and classroom resources. alliancefordecisioneducation.org. PS123-G, B/BB. Compare the options pros, cons, goals

Sample scenarios for PS123,BB practice and discussion.

SCENARIOS FOR PS123,BB practice

😔 Sad 😡 Angry 😰 Anxious 😕 Confused 😬 Afraid 🤑 Greedy

C. FEELINGS: concerned, bothered, troubled, unsure, angry, worried, anxious, afraid, sad, guilty, shame, disappointed, bored, regret, nervous, proud, annoyed, depressed, unhappy, disturbed, doubt, lonely, embarrassed, discouraged, covet, envious, jealous, rushed, humiliated, hopeless, arrogant, overwhelmed, tired, stressed, amazed, confused, regret, gullible, empty, stubborn, tempted miserable, feel bad, heartache, uncomfortable, discomfort, feels questionable, feel off, uncertain, Red Flag! Anxious! OK=acceptable

😊 Happy 😌 Calm 😎 Confident

happy, calm, content, satisfied, feel good, feel OK, peaceful, motivated, encouraged, hopeful, assertive, bold, discerning, understood, comfort, comfortable, insights, risk, excited, confident, courage, thankful, fulfilled, humble, observation, comforted, feel loved
feel better, peace, gut feeling, intuition, analyzing, compassion, love, observe, "I noticed", observant, objective, energized

SCENARIOS or SITUATIONS or PROBLEMS

one way to decide your B.thinking about the situation is to
pick a Scenario/Situation.
pick a Feeling (angry, anxious, afraid, sad, depressed, bothered, discouraged, stressed).
This Feeling will indicate B.my thinking which will lead to S.my action.
What is the BB. truth or better thinking? This will lead to S+ better action.

SCENARIOS (organized by ChatGPT)

1. Personal Growth & Internal Struggles

- I'm ashamed of my past mistakes.
- I feel like a failure when I mess up.
- I keep falling into the same bad habit
- I feel overwhelmed and burned out.
- I doubt my worth or value.

2. Relationships (Family, Friends, Romantic)

- My friend betrayed me or gave me bad advice.
- My sibling and I are constantly fighting.
- My parents don't support my goals.
- I'm jealous of my friend's success or lifestyle.
- Should I date, break up, or marry this person?
- I'm lonely and want deeper friendships.
- A friend is in need, but I don't know if I should help.

3. Work, Career, & School

- I made a mistake at work and my boss is angry.
- I was offered a new job but would need to move.
- I didn't get the job I wanted.
- I don't like my job and feel stuck.
- What college should I attend?
- I'm failing a class and don't know how to catch up.
- I'm being treated unfairly by a teacher/boss.

4. Health & Wellness

- I broke my leg and can't work for a while.
- I'm tired and feel physically unwell all the time.
- I'm battling depression or anxiety.
- I'm addicted to something (food, gaming, alcohol).
- I want to be healthy but can't stay motivated.

5. Financial & Material Needs

- I lost my job and can't pay rent.
- A beggar asks me for money – should I give?
- I want to buy a car – new or used?
- A friend needs money – should I loan it?
- I don't have enough to cover all my expenses.

6. Moral, Ethical, or Spiritual Dilemmas

- Someone offers me drugs or alcohol.
- I know what's right, but I don't want to do it.
- I feel God is calling me to something hard.
- I'm tempted to cheat, lie, or cover up a mistake.
- I know I should forgive someone, but I don't want to.
- Should I confront someone about their sin?

7. Life Transitions & Major Decisions

- Should I move to a new city or stay here?
- Do I accept a new job or keep the one I have?
- Should I rent or buy a home?
- What church should I attend?
- Should I take a gap year before college?
- Should I marry this person or wait longer?

8. Community, Church, & Service

- I feel called to serve or volunteer, but I'm already overwhelmed.
- I want to help the poor, but I don't know how.
- Should I speak up about a community injustice?

9. Time Management & Priorities

- I don't have time for everything I care about.
- Should I say "yes" to this opportunity or decline?
- I want to read my Bible but always push it off.
- I want to balance school, friends, and faith better.

10. Real-Life and student-generated scenarios

- Make a list of scenarios from teachers and students
- Teacher or students bring real-life scenarios.
- Use current events, movies, TV shows, books, Bible stories, or history.
- Ask ChatGPT to generate additional scenarios.

🌠 What is my default decision method? Check all that apply.

☐ **Authority**: "What did that person tell me to do?" "He said it, so I should do it."
☐ **Majority**: "What is everyone else doing, saying or thinking?" "The majority knows best."
☐ **Fear of disapproval:** "What will people think?" "I must avoid criticism, rejection, or looking bad."
☐ **People-pleasing**: "How can I make her happy?" "I must be nice and please her, not upset her."
☐ **Avoidance**: "How can I avoid discomfort?" "My goal is to avoid discomfort, pain, risk, change."
☐ **Fear**: "What am I afraid will happen?" "I will decide based on my fear."
☐ **Hasty decision**: "I must decide quickly so I don't look stupid."
☐ **Emotion:** "Base my decision on emotions: anger, pride, flattery, excitement, romantic, impatience."
☐ **Desire:** "IF it feels good, do it." "Base my decision on pleasure, covet, lust, greed, envy, self-pity."
☐ **False assumptions**: "I don't need to check the facts."
☐ **False dilemma**: "Which of these 2 choices should I take?" "There are only 2 options."
☐ **Go with the flow**: "What is easiest?" "Go with the flow and status quo." "Do what is easiest."
☐ **Short-term thinking**: "What will make me feel better right now?" "IF it feels good, do it."
☐ **Serve the Lord**: "What does God say or want?" "How can I serve God?" "Is this wise and loving?" "How can I help/love others?" "How can I make it better?" "What is the best option?"

What decision methods have I used?

What results have these methods produced?

Which method causes me the most difficulty?

What is a better Decision Method?

🙂 **A Good Decision Method: PS123-G, B/BB.** ASK: "What is the best option?"

Compare options, pros, cons, goals. Test the Thought.
Choose the best option. Be Assertive.

Situation → Decision-making method → Decision

- **PS123-G:** What are my options? What is my goal? Compare outcomes → choose S+ best option
- **People pleasing:** What will make this person happy? → choose that
- **Authority:** What did this person tell me to do? → do it
- **Hasty decision:** What's the first/easiest answer? → do it
- **Fallacy/bias:** distorted reasoning → decision influenced by the distortion
- **Going with the flow:** don't deliberately decide → drift into an action

A wrong decision method asks the wrong question.
The wrong question can produce the wrong decision.
I cannot control how other people decide. I can deliberately choose how I will decide.
My decision method: PS123-G, BB (GoodThink).
GoodThink is good thoughts, good attitude, good action, good decision method (compare options)