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What you are trying to achieve …

A recognition of the role and value of working in a group or team. Students will be able to:

- Appreciate how they can work in a group
- Recognise that disagreement is part of problem-solving
- Determine how they might improve their reciprocal skills.

Set up the Learning Challenge

Form groups of six including an observer.
Give each group a learning challenge sheet, or display this on the whiteboard.
Brief the observers (see Observation Sheet).
Outline the challenge to ensure everyone understands. Emphasise that they are working as a team to survive.
Groups to complete the challenge – 30 minutes
Warn when they have five minutes left.

Observers debrief groups

Groups complete the post-decision questionnaire (see below).
Observers join the group to relate what they observed.
Groups discuss their experiences using: – post-decision questionnaire
– observer information
– impressions of group members.

Plenary debrief

Inform whole group of correct ranking and reasoning behind it (see Answer Sheet).
Invite groups to work out the difference between their rankings and the correct one.

Extend understanding of reciprocity

Working as a co-operative group is a skilled activity.
We should expect disagreements.
For best results,

- Information must be accurately communicated — offer what you know.
- People should feel safe enough to challenge each other's ideas.
- Disagreement should be valued.
- We need to understand what others are feeling and why, as well as understanding ideas and information.
- We need to see similarities as well as differences between positions.

Group problem-solving tends to go through the cycle:

- Initial conclusion based on experiences and information
- Having the conclusion challenged by group members
- Internal conflict and uncertainty
- Actively seeking information, new experiences, new information
- Reaching new or reorganised conclusion taking into account reasoning and perspectives of others.

Hints and tips

Select observers carefully.

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A Learning Challenge – Stranded

Your challenge is to …

Make sure that your group survives in the desert. You have twelve items which you grabbed when escaping from the minibus.

Rank the items according to their importance to your survival.

1 = Most important
12 = Least important

You have 30 minutes.

Where you are and what you know …

You are on a field trip to study unusual formations in the desert. It is the last week in July. You have been driving over old trails, far from any road. At about 10:30 a.m. your specially equipped minibus overturns and rolls into a ravine and burns. Fortunately you were able to get out without many injuries

The nearest ranch is about 45 minutes to the east. You will be missed when you don't report to your hotel in the evening. Several people know sort-of where you are, but won't be able to pinpoint your position.

The area around is rocky and dry. There is a shallow water hole nearby but the water is contaminated by worms and several dead mice. The weather report before you left said that the temperature would reach 42˚. You are all in light clothing and you have hats and sunglasses.
When escaping from the minibus you each grabbed a couple of items. There are 12 in all.

- Magnetic compass
- 20' x 20' piece of heavy-duty, light blue canvas
- Book, *Plants of the Desert*
- Rear-view mirror
- Large knife
- Torch (four battery size)
- One jacket per person
- One transparent plastic groundsheet per person
- .38-caliber loaded pistol
- One 2-litre plastic bottle per person, full of water
- Accurate map of the area
- Large box of kitchen matches

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Observing a Learning Challenge: Stranded

Stranded

Names of group members

What people did …	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Offers ideas. Makes relevant contributions.					
Identify what the task is about.					
Respects the views of others.					
Criticises and disagrees with others' ideas					
Gives good reasons for their views.					
Encourages others to contribute.					
Helps to gain agreement.					

Put the name of each group member above the columns.

Record the number of times each member uses each behaviour

Use 𝍸 = 5 II = 2 III = 3

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A Learning Challenge: Post-decision Questionnaire

Stranded

(One for each group member)

	Not at all								Completely
1. How much did you share your own ideas and make relevant contributions?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2. How much did you help the group to identify what the task was about?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3. How much did you help the group to plan what to do?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
4. How much did you respect the views of others?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5. How much did you help the group to decide how it would survive?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6. How happy are you with the decisions the group made?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
7. How happy are you with your contributions to the group?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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A Learning Challenge: Answer Sheet

Your challenge …

	Experts' ranking	Group ranking	Difference score
Magnetic compass	12		
Heavy-duty canvas	7		
Book	10		
Rear-view mirror	1		
Large knife	5		
Torch	8		
Jackets	2		
Transparent plastic ground cloth	4		
Pistol	9		
2-litre water bottles	3		
Accurate map	11		
Kitchen matches	6		

Why?

1. You need to prevent dehydration	Stay calm, wear as many clothes as possible, stay in shade, minimise movement, drink water. Any activity will speed up dehydration. Therefore jackets and canvas for shade are as important as is the water.
2. You need to signal for help	The mirror is the best signalling device. It can generate 5–7 candle power of light which may be seen beyond the horizon. The canvas shelter can drop the temperature by 20˚ but also can easily be spotted from the air. The torch provides a quick night signalling device. The pistol is also a signalling device since speech is seriously impaired by dehydration. Building fires — smoke during day, fire by night — is also good for signalling.
3. Obtain as much water as possible	Obtain purified water by building a solar still. Stretch groundsheets a few inches above waterhole, tilting to drain into water bottles. Knife will help in cutting stakes for this.
4. Protecting yourself from cold	Jackets, matches and canvas important here.
5. Gathering food	Don't eat protein — it takes water to digest it. Don't hunt as this will lead to dehydration. Plant book will be helpful.
6. Don't walk	Therefore the map and compass are not helpful.