



THINKING FAST VS. THINKING SLOW

What's in a Choice?
Series Part 3 of 3
Grades 4-6

TOPICS

Decision Maker Moves;
Helpful Habits

STUDENTS WILL

Define fast and slow
thinking

Practice responding to
scenarios using both their
fast and slow thinking
systems

WHY THIS MATTERS

Being able to recognize
when we are reacting with
our gut vs. thinking
something through with
our heads can help us
make better decisions

DECISION MAKER MOVES

Thinking beyond the pros & cons list

MAIN LESSON FLOW

1. The lesson begins with students playing a word-association game to get familiar with fast responses.
2. The main task introduces students to our fast and slow systems of thinking and invites them to brainstorm their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with these two types of thinking.
3. Finally, students practice applying both systems of thinking while considering a scenario. They are invited to reflect on the experience and consider where it fits in their daily lives.

USE THIS IN



Language Arts: While playing word-association, present words related to a topic or book you've been studying

Social Studies or Science: Tailor the guts vs. heads scenarios to relate to the content you are currently studying

Math: consider a scenario that requires a math concept in order to make

MATERIALS

- Guts vs. Heads card deck
- Chart paper (1 per group/partnership) & Markers
- *Optional: mini whiteboard or other non-permanent writing surface (1 per student)*

OTHER

Access Part 1 of this lesson series [here](#)

Access Part 2 of this lesson series [here](#)



The result of a collaboration between

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For more tools go to www.deltalearns.ca/decisions



INTRODUCTION

Play a word-association game (in pairs, groups, or as class): the leader says a word, and the participant(s) say the first word that comes to their mind. Play for a few minutes. Ask students their thoughts on the game. Did they find themselves ‘editing’ their responses? Do they feel like they were answering with their ‘gut’ or their ‘head’?

MAIN EVENT

1. Introduce students to the idea that we have two systems of thinking: fast and slow (see page 10 of the Decision Playbook for information). Create a T-chart or Venn Diagram on the board to sort some common scenarios into fast or slow thinking.
2. Divide the students into partners or small groups, and assign half of the groups ‘guts’ and the other half ‘heads’. Give the groups a few minutes to create a mind map of their ideas about making decisions with your gut or with your head. After brainstorming, give groups time for a gallery walk to see other groups’ thinking.
 - a. What kinds of decisions do we usually make with our guts/heads?
 - b. What feelings are associated with making decisions with our guts/heads?
 - c. What is good about making decisions with our guts/heads?
 - d. What traps could we fall into when making decisions with our guts/heads?
3. Present a scenario from the “Guts vs. Heads” card deck (page 6 lists scenarios) and or come up with your own and invite students to write their gut responses on personal whiteboards or cards.
4. Run through the rest of Guts vs Heads as per the instructions in the card deck. You may choose to do this the next day if you don't have a large block of time.

CLOSURE

Invite students to consider the experience of reacting quickly with their gut, then thinking slowly with their heads. Where can they see this process taking place in their lives? Students could share with a partner, as a whole-class discussion, or in an exit slip.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Students may benefit from printed words or using pictures instead of words for the word-association game.
- Tailor the scenarios for guts vs. heads thinking to the interests and comprehension level of your students. You could also incorporate content-area material.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Students will be able to explain the difference between fast and slow thinking.
- Students will demonstrate critical and creative thinking throughout the guts vs heads discussions.