



EduTrend Contents

P4C · FAIRNESS AND JUSTICE · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Who Deserves the Prize?

Effort, results, need or luck: what should decide who gets a reward?

Ages 11–13

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 03

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 03 · AT A GLANCE

Who Deserves the Prize?

Students imagine the class has one prize: a trip to a science centre. Candidates include the student with the best test score, the one who worked hardest, the one who has never been on a trip, and a random draw. Groups rank the options and give reasons, then the class creates questions and enquires into what it means to deserve something.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- compare principles of distribution;
- explain desert and merit;
- use counter-examples;
- reach and defend a reasoned judgement.

KEY WORDS

deserve · merit · effort · need · luck
· distribution

CURRICULUM LINKS

Citizenship: fairness. PSHE: effort and reward. Maths: probability of a draw.

1

STIMULUS

Share something to think about

2

THINK

Quiet thinking time

3

QUESTION

Create and choose a question

4

ENQUIRE

Reason together

5

BUILD

Agree, disagree, add

6

REFLECT

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Candidate cards
- Ranking strips
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people, and use the story or invented examples rather than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 03 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Present the class prize candidates.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"What should decide who deserves a reward?"</i>
44–50 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Decide who should get the prize and defend your rule against one objection.

ACTIVITY 03 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Theories of justice disagree about whether rewards should follow merit, effort, need or equal chance.

Ranking tasks make students give reasons and expose disagreements to discuss.

Common ideas to listen for

- “Results show effort.” Not always.
- “Random is unfair.” It gives everyone an equal chance.
- “Need always wins.” Other principles matter too.

Adapting the activity

Support

Limit to three candidates.

Stretch

Design a mixed rule that combines two principles.

WORKSHEET 1

Rank the options

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Give reasons.

Rank the options

Rank	Option	Reason

WORKSHEET 2

Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

Thinking moves

Thinking move	My example
I agree with... because...	
I disagree with... because...	
An example is...	
A counter-example is...	
Building on what... said...	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Is luck ever a fair way to decide? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Who Deserves the Prize? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Fairness and Justice programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

© 2026 EduTrend Contents. This activity may be printed and copied for use with students in your own school, club or home. It may not be resold or published elsewhere. Photos: TopSphere Media / Unsplash.