

The Long Column

Facilitator note: The skill is a two-sided decision paper: cost and gain, short and long, money and not-money, built in the student's own structure, plus the closing step - writing what would change her mind. Do not teach the answer (the program); teach the tool. Riva's mother, sister, and brother are all reasonable - this is not a story about ignoring family, it is a story about a decision only the decider can make, with the family's knowledge. The conditions line matters most: it is what separates a decision from a mood. Students are not asked to share real pending decisions; Activity 7 is a made-up case. If a student is facing a real summer decision, the hoped-for outcome is that she builds the paper and brings it to a parent, not that she decides alone.

Teacher answer key

1. Votes fail because each voter weighs their own life, not hers - Shevy loves art, her brother loves money, her classmate loves bread - and "nobody is wrong," so more votes only add noise. The decision is only hers because she alone holds all the true facts about her own long columns; what still belongs to parents and teachers: the fee discussion, the family's plans, and any real constraint (she decides with her family's knowledge, not instead of it).
2. Structure: JOB and PROGRAM down the sides; COST and GAIN across the top; a middle line dividing SHORT - THIS SUMMER from LONG - AFTER - two options times cost/gain times short/long makes eight cells; corner note "money is not the only currency." A plain list misses: time (short vs long separates this summer from the years after), kind (money vs not-money keeps wages from outshouting teachers), and symmetry (every box must be filled for both sides, so thin sides show).
3. SHORT: wages vs fee, standing all day vs hard critique, the smell of bread. LONG: savings and a reliable name vs teachers, portfolio, "a door toward the thing she has wanted since she was nine." Short boxes are a fair fight because both are genuinely good this summer; long decides it because only one side feeds the years after. Riva notices her own behavior first - "I keep adding to one side, and defending the other" - the pencil knew before she did.
4. All-in cost of the program: 900 forgone wages + 400 fee = 1300; the 250 tutoring comes in under either choice, so it cancels and stays out of the comparison. At a 1300 fee the cost is 2200. Whether that triggers her written condition "if the fee meant borrowing - the job wins" cannot be concluded from the exercise, which gives earnings but not her savings; the right move is to re-run the decision against her conditions, not to assume either answer. Accept only: must be re-run with the savings fact - without knowing whether 1300 means borrowing, no flip can be concluded. Steps shown.
5. A pros-and-cons list records the weighing once; the conditions list makes the choice testable later - if the facts change (fee, other earning, even long columns), the decision re-opens, and if they don't, second thoughts are named as moods. It looks the same at midnight because its

truth rests on conditions that don't move at midnight, not on courage, which does.

6. Open. The scene should show the two envelopes, the table, Riva mid-balance. Strong captions quote "The weeks are the same weeks" or "Loss, written down, where she can see it." Any honest rendering counts.

7. Sample - every line below that goes beyond the two given facts (the job offer, the course with a fee, same weeks) is an INVENTION for practice, labeled as a guess or possibility; students' own samples should carry the same labels: Henka's paper - JOB: short costs "no head-start before the hard year" (fact from the brief) and "three Elul weeks given to the studio" (fact); short gains "wages" (fact) and "the course fee not spent, this Elul at least" (fact). Long costs "another year possibly starting behind" (possibility, not certain) and "whether any makeup chance exists is unknown"; long gains "possibly a name for dependability" and "possibly a standing invitation from the studio - both maybes, to be checked, not assumed." COURSE: short costs "the fee" (fact), "three weeks of classes" (fact), and "the wages not earned that Elul" (fact); short gains "possibly a calmer first month, if the course is good" and "possibly the teacher noticing her effort early - both guesses." Long costs "the savings those wages might have become, if she would have saved them" and "possibly the studio contact not made this year"; long gains "the subject could stop being the one she fears" (hope, not promise) and "a stronger year might follow" (maybe). Conditions line: "If the fee meant skipping something the family needs - the job wins. If my teacher says the course is weak - the job wins." Decision either way counts if facts and guesses are labeled and the conditions are present.

8. PLAN row 1 columns 1-4; COST row 2 columns 1-4; GAIN row 3 columns 1-4; LONG row 4 columns 1-4; SIDE row 5 columns 1-4; MIND row 6 columns 1-4; JOB row 7 columns 1-3; LIST row 8 columns 1-4 What separates a decision from a mood is MIND (the change-your-mind conditions); the deciding column is LONG.