Choices for Children: Why and How to Let Students Decide (*)
about how to solve a problem, accommodate other people's preferences, or rethink their initial inclinations. Moreover, 12 ... most students are excluded from direct participation in decision making, some students are turned into losers since

- Consider the conventional response when something goes wrong (as determined, of course, by the adults). Are two ... the reading? Hit them with a pop quiz. Again and again, the favorite motto of teachers and administrators seems to be

While each child ought to have more opportunity to make decisions than is typically allowed in American classrooms, such ... – but, strictly speaking, one person's freedom to choose is always compromised by a set of obligations to others. At

- Guidelines or principles, not to formulate a list of rules. (Specific admonitions tend to invite legalistic thinking ... What we want to promote are talking and listening, looking for alternatives and trying to reach agreement, solving

- Math assignment, but they certainly do not choose to miss recess; teachers do that

- Sometimes, however, the main barrier to giving children choices is a simple lack of gumption. Parting with power is not

- A structured opportunity for members of a class or school to meet and make decisions provides several advantages: it

- Effects on behavior and values.

- Effects on teachers.

- Teachers have themselves decided for one reason or another to exclude students from the selection of the subject matter, ...

- For example, by inviting children to discuss what they already know about the subject and what they would like to know.

- For example, see Charles E. Silberman, The Forgotten Man: A New History of Income Inequality (New York: Anchor Books, 1985). As a result, perhaps, scores of others in the profession, I would argue that there is a certain reassurance and satisfaction to be taken from making unilateral decisions. No wonder many teachers who express relief at having "a good class this year" use the word

- The Brighter Side of Human Nature: Altruism and Empathy in Everyday Life

- Education as Adventure: Lessons from the Second Grade


- Yackel et al., p. 401.


- "Responsibility" for making a bad one. This approach, however, assumes that "taking responsibility" for a poor decision means being made to suffer for it rather than being part of a nonpunitive problem-solving process.


- Phi Delta Kappan

- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology

- Journal of Research in Science Teaching

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