

## LESSON 3

# DECIDING THE BIGGEST PROBLEM

*This is one of our favorite activities. It is short, takes little advanced preparation, and serves as an instant assessment of students' grasp of key issues and related content.*

Have students work individually or in small groups to brainstorm a list of 5 problems faced by an individual or group about whom they are studying. Students should then rank these from most significant to least. Explain that students will have to give supporting evidence to justify their claims.

Students or small groups should be combined into several larger groups. In these larger groups, students should share their decisions. They should then come to consensus about the five problems and about the ranking of these problems. When sharing, students should proffer content to support their decisions.

### CORE STANDARDS

READING LITERATURE 1. Cite the text evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

READING LITERATURE 2. Determine a theme or central issue of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

READING LITERATURE 3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

READING INFORMATIONAL TEXT 1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicatory as well as inference drawn from the text.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING 1. Engage in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners..., building on others' ideas and express their own clearly.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING 4. Present claims finding, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning and well chosen details.

## STUDENT SAMPLE

### **THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN JAMESTOWN DURING WINTER 1**

1. Members of the gentry will not work.
2. People are getting sick.
3. Not enough houses
4. Not enough food.
5. If they go into the woods, they might get attacked.

(3rd grade group list)

## ADAPTATIONS

Have students:

1. Do this project from the point of view of different participants in the event. John Smith and Sir Edward Wingfield, one of the leaders of the colony, would make very different lists of problems in Jamestown.
2. Distinguish between an individual's problems and the groups' problems. Again, John Smith's problem list would be different from the list of problems faced by the colony.
3. Discuss solutions to the problems.

### **ONE ISSUE: TWO POINTS OF VIEW**

1. Did you list 5 problems in order of importance?
2. Did you explain why each problem is important to the group? Did you give specific examples of how and when each item on your list has been a problem?
3. Did each member of the group agree with all the items and the ordering?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The Problems Faced By: \_\_\_\_\_

**MY LIST**

| <b>PROBLEM</b> | <b>RANKING</b> (1 being most important Problem) |
|----------------|---|
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |

**GROUP LIST**

| <b>PROBLEM</b> | <b>RANKING</b> (1 being most important Problem) |
|----------------|---|
|                |   |
|                |   |
|                |   |
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