

DOES IT FIT?

A routine for thinking creatively about options

1. Fit your options to the **Ideal**
Identify what the Ideal solution would look like and then evaluate each option against it.
Ask yourself: How well does each option fit with the ideal solution?
2. Fit your options to the **Criteria**
Identify the criteria or attributes that feel are important for you to consider in this situation and then evaluate each option against those.
Ask yourself: How well does each option fit the criteria?
3. Fit your options to the **Situation**
Identify the realities and constraints of your situation, such as resources and time, and then evaluate each option against them.
Ask yourself: How well does each option fit the realities of the situation?
4. Fit your options to you **Personally**
Try out each option by running a “mental movie” in which you imagine yourself carrying out the option and try to get a sense of what it would feel like.
Ask yourself: Which option just feels like the best fit for me?

Purpose: Why use this routine?

To help students more effectively flesh out and evaluate options, alternatives, and choices in a decision-making situation.

Application: When and where can it be used?

This routine is part of an overall decision-making process that begins with the generation of options, choices, or alternatives for solving the problem or satisfying the needs of a situation. Once options are identified, they need to be evaluated in order to make a choice. Use this routine whenever students need to make a thoughtful and reasoned decision: the choice of a final project; direction for an investigation; making a group or whole-class decision on how to allocate time, money, or resources; electing a group leader or spokesman; choosing among possible classes, and so on.

Launch: What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

The four different “fits” represent four distinct approaches to evaluating options rather than a multi-layered routine. The first part of the routine involves making a choice as to which of the “fits” is best for the situation at hand. Then, that particular “fit” is carried out. To make this initial choice, students need some practice and discussion of each of the “fits” to see in what kinds of situations each works best. You might introduce this routine by briefly discussing each one and then have the whole class try out one of fits to make a decision. Initially, you might choose which of the four “fits” is best for a given situation and then gradually involve students in this process once all the fits have been practiced on several occasions.