Snack Attack
(this works like Choosing an Earth Force Dog/Pet)

Purpose/Goal: Students will develop an understanding of the importance of criteria in a problem selection process. They will see how their choices and actions affect their lives.

Materials: Chart or butcher paper, a bottle of ketchup, a packet of ketchup (You can pick these up anywhere), markers, and chosen snack for the next session.

Directions: Explain to the group that they will be choosing a snack for tomorrow and that they need to develop criteria for choosing a snack. Talk about the bottle of ketchup and the individual sized packet. Ask them to estimate how many packets make up a bottle. Which one is better for the environment by leaving less waste in a landfill? Tell them you also don't have all the money in the world, so limit their budget to an appropriate amount. So basically it has to be cheap and good for the environment. Now the students start to generate criteria some of our students said "Sugar/sweet, crunchy, good, etc.". After you have a good-sized list have the students vote to narrow it down to a reasonable amount of criteria (4-5). Then list the students’ snack ideas in the criteria chart and vote. This was a great preliminary activity before actually voting on problems/issues. They also get the snack the day of the problem/issues selection so they know what they vote for is what they get.

Grade Level: 4th – 9th

Time: 45 minutes with group discussion

Source: Jen and Malachi McCabe