

## Energy Source Cost-Benefit Analysis Learning Strategy

### What is a cost-benefit analysis?

This is an individual, pair or small group learning strategy which is used to help students organize information for the purpose of making a decision. People often use this method informally to make decisions about their own lives.

### Why use it?

- To develop decision-making skills
- To identify the costs (disadvantages, downsides, etc.) and benefits (advantages, upsides) of a given issue or choice

### How do I use it?

- Students first think and list the positive aspects (benefits) as well as negative aspects (costs) of a given event, scenario, etc. This may require research.
- Next, students sort and list the costs and benefits in the appropriate columns of the **Energy Source Cost-Benefit Analysis Template BLM**. If they are unsure if a given item, scenario, etc. is a cost or a benefit, it can go in the “Unsure” column.
- After they have entered the costs and benefits, the students need to weight the strengths of each, from +5 for the greatest benefit to -5 for the greatest cost. These numbers will be entered into the chart beside the cost or benefit. Finally, each column of weights is totalled and the totals from the columns are entered into the equation at the bottom of the page. A descriptive conclusion is then written based on the evidence.

### Tips for success

- The given issue, scenario, event, etc. must have some inherent costs and benefits that are readily discernible by the students.
- More than one source document, video, etc. may be required in order for students to understand the various costs and benefits involved in the issue, scenario, event, etc.

### Variations

- Before doing curriculum-related cost-benefit analysis, students could do a practice cost-benefit analysis on an unrelated topic such as “Should I go on a summer exchange to Japan?”
- Students could complete chart individually and then partner with another to compare their +’s and -’ and then make a conclusion.

### Assessment

- Students can assess their cost-benefit analysis using the **Energy Source Cost-Benefit Analysis Self-Assessment BLM**.