

Values Auction

This exercise has students decide which values are most important to them by forcing them to bid for them in an auction. In other words, they will not be able to have any particular value unless they outbid the other competitors to “win” that value.

Give each student the “Values Auction Chart” (copy it front to back) and tell them that they have \$10,000 to bid in an auction to win these values. Have them spend a few minutes filling it out individually and figuring where they would want to put the most money, etc.

Then get students in groups of 5 or so to discuss their values. Give them 10 minutes to work in groups to present their top values and why they chose them.

Once they are finished, inform them that they are now a team. Their team has \$10,000 and they will be competing against the other teams to bid on these values. Have them come up with a team name. Give them 10-15 minutes to negotiate between their individual preferences and decide on their team’s top values. They must reach a consensus and decide which values they prioritize and will try to win.

Write the team names on the board in a place where you can keep a tally. Start with \$10,000 under each team and then deduct for each successful/winning bid. Also, set a minimum bid of \$50 or \$100 so that you don’t end up with unending bids of \$10 each.

At this point, run it like a real auction with a caller (the more enthusiastic the better) naming the value that is up for bid and taking bids. For example:

“The value is ‘To be the richest person in the world.’ Who will start the bidding at \$500? I got \$500, do I have \$700? Alright \$700 to my left? What about \$800? \$800? No, how about \$750? Yes - \$750. Who will bid \$800? \$800? Last bid is \$750 – going once, going twice... SOLD to the Great Gauchos!”

If you wish, you can have premade signs with each value on it and hand each one out as they are won by each team.

After each winning bid, add that to that team’s tally and subtract to give them their new available total they have left to bid. Also, after each winning bid, give the teams a minute to renegotiate their lists as certain values are no longer available.

Process:

When you did this solo, what did you learn about your own values?

Did anything change about your priorities when you realized that you could only have a few?

How did you decide for yourself among all these values?

Which ones were most important to you and why?

Which ones did you debate about?

Which ones were not important to you? Why?

How did your team go about coming to consensus?

How did you negotiate your values in the group? Were you happy with the results?

Were there certain values that you fought harder for than others? How did that work out?

Did anyone push really hard or give up really easy? How did that strategy work?

How do you feel about the outcome of the auction?

Was your team happy with the results? Why?

What did your team lose out on that you really wanted?

Did anyone in your team become a renegade and bid without the group's permission? What happened?

How do you think you developed these values? Which ones come from your parents?

Your community? The opinions of your peers? Media? Other?

Have any of your values been affected by your college experiences? Say more.

How do you think your values might shift as you get older? Why?

How might you meet other people with similar values in college?

Anything else?

Values Chart

Item (and values it represents)	Amount That I Budgeted	Highest Amount I Bid	Winning Bid
A long vacation with nothing to do but enjoy myself (pleasure, health, relaxation, leisure, comfortable life).			
The opportunity to do what I want when I want to do it (autonomy, independence, freedom, skill, power, pleasure).			
To know the meaning of life (wisdom, knowledge, intelligence, spirituality, influence).			
The ability to provide all people with adequate food, water, shelter and medical care (altruism, health, friendship, security, spirituality).			
A satisfying and loving partnership and a happy, fulfilling family life (love, family, security, happiness, loyalty).			
Travel and tickets to any concert, sports event, play, etc. that I want at any time in any place (pleasure, exciting life, creativity, travel, freedom).			
To be acknowledged as the most attractive by everyone I know (physical appearance, recognition, status, prestige, self-esteem).			
An opportunity to set my own ideal working conditions at every job (autonomy, freedom, power, independence, pleasure).			
The have best food from the world's best chef for the rest of my life (pleasure, health, a comfortable life, happiness, prestige).			
To be the richest person in the world (wealth, pleasure, a comfortable life, influence, material possessions).			
To live with the greatest person of my spiritual faith (religion, salvation, wisdom, justice, power, love).			
A pleasing personality and the assurance that I am well liked by everyone I meet (social recognition, popularity, friendship, self-esteem, happiness).			
A world free of prejudice and unfairness for everyone (justice, equality, forgiveness, altruism, morality).			
An opportunity to direct the destiny of the nation or an international organization (power, security, recognition, ambition, responsibility).			
The ability to provide outstanding service to the poor and the sick of the world (altruism, love, morality, health, justice, spirituality).			
A learning center with all the knowledge and learning aids (experts, etc.) for my private use (knowledge, creativity, intellectual stimulation).			
To know, for certain, who I am and what I am supposed to do with my life (knowledge, security, spirituality, inner peace).			
A beautiful home with a scenic view, car and the material possessions I desire (security, esteem, recognition, happiness, pleasure, wealth).			
A world where people give and receive love freely (love, altruism, friendship, happiness, spirituality).			
A long life without illness for me and my immediate family (health, happiness, security, love).			
I would have international fame and popularity and would be treated like royalty wherever I went (recognition, power, popularity, influence).			
Mastery and success in my chosen career (achievement, skill, knowledge, self-respect, recognition, accomplishment, ambition).			
The ability to end all war around the world (altruism, security, power, influence, justice, morality).			
Total must equal \$10,000			