



# CLASS 2

Democracy in Action

## MATERIALS NEEDED

Role-play cards  
Student Activity Handout

## CLASSROOM NARRATIVE

**ACTIVITY:** Students do a role-play as members of a farmer co-op. They make an important decision about whether to build a storage barn or pay themselves more money. Have four students volunteer to act out this role-play in the front of the room. Give them each one of these cards. Ask one of the students to read the setting to get the role-play started. Once students have completed the role play, ask students to write about which option they would vote for and why.

**DIALOGUE:** Gather the class again after they have completed the writing assignment and ask:  
What made this decision hard?  
Is there a right answer?  
How should a group of farmers make a decision like this?  
Should they talk about it until someone makes a proposal they can all live with?  
Should they vote and have the majority win?  
Which way did you vote? Why?



# Role Play Cards

## **BACKGROUND INFO**

You are a member of the Red Creek Farmer Cooperative. Your co-op signed on to sell your cocoa to a Fair Trade company and a good-sized check just came into the co-op to pay for all your cocoa beans. For the last two years, your co-op has not been able to get a good price and your family got very thin because there was so little food. Everyone has been thinking about all the things they'll be able to do now that they'll have good checks coming in.

## **FARMER #1**

You're excited about getting some money, but you have been thinking a lot about how best to use it. Part of the reason you made so little money over the last two years was that you lost a lot of your crop just when you were ready to ship it out. Storms came and destroyed it. You're thinking that all the co-op members should put their money together to build a storage shed to protect your crops. Waiting just a little more to get your money will mean there will be fewer times when you don't get it.

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## **FARMER #2**

You are so excited about getting some money. You are planning to put your money into rebuilding part of your house. It always feels like it will fall down during a storm and your children get scared. You are looking forward to building something just a little more sturdy for your family. You've heard a rumor that someone is going to propose that the co-op keep all the money at the meeting today, but you're sure no one could be that crazy.

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## **FARMER #3**

You're up for anything. You really want everyone to get along and you're not as concerned about what the decisions are. You've heard that some of the members want to invest in the co-op's future and some have things they feel their family needs to invest in. You see the wisdom in both choices.

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## **FARMER #4**

Your oldest daughter is interested in going to a business program at a community college in the city. If she goes, she might be able to really help the co-op better understand how to run the business with so many complicated things going on. You're really looking forward to having the money to pay for her to go.





