

## Decision Making

It is now 1914, and you are a member of Young Bosnia. In 1912 and 1913, the Balkan Wars occurred, and now even Macedonia and Albania are freed from foreign rule. Now almost all Balkan peoples have their own countries. How unfair that Bosnia is still ruled by Austria! Five Great Powers dictate what happens in Europe. Austria is one of them, but there are four others, three of whom (Russia, France, and Britain) *might* take your side. How do you make the point that Bosnia deserves its freedom too and that someone should force Austria to let you have it?

You could hope for another revolution, but that could take many, many years, and you feel that NOW is the time to act. Some students have always supported the idea that the assassination of a political figure would prove very effective in provoking an international crisis. This would force the Great Powers to consider Bosnia's plight. On the one hand, your gut instinct is that killing is wrong. Your group would be seen as terrorists. On the other hand, some people argue that this is an act of war, not murder, and that a war of national liberation is a holy cause with which many others in Europe would sympathize.

The debate becomes more concrete in June 1914. It is learned that Franz Ferdinand, who is to be the successor to the Austrian throne when the elderly emperor dies, is to visit the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. It would be easy to assassinate him there. Many people believe that Franz Ferdinand wants to give Slavs more rights within the empire, something like the Hungarians have now. That would truly be a disaster in your eyes since the more conservative people, like your parents, might be satisfied with that and give up on the idea of an independent Bosnia. So killing Franz Ferdinand would be an important act in several ways.

Your group has just learned that the day Franz Ferdinand will arrive in Sarajevo is June 28, 1914. This is an important day in your national history – the anniversary of the day on which Serbs sacrificed their lives at the Battle of Kosovo to save the Christian world from the Turkish invaders. It would be the perfect day to assassinate another conqueror, who dares to parade down the streets of your capital! You learn that a group of students is planning to assassinate him and has the weapons necessary for this task. Your group has sworn to stick together, so you need to make a decision on what part to play (if any) in the coming deed.

**Your choices are as follows:**

1. You could join in on the assassination plot, knowing that the conspirators have vowed to kill themselves upon completion of the deed so that they will not be taken prisoner. This means that you would not live to see the liberation of Bosnia, if it comes, but you could possibly become a national hero whose name would go down in history.
2. You could decide not to participate in the assassination itself but agree to help any surviving conspirators escape from the police. Of course, this means you yourself would be in danger of being arrested as an accessory to the plot. However, you wouldn't actually have to kill anyone.
3. You could decide not to participate in any way. Then, you would be free to participate in a national liberation struggle later, but you would risk being seen by other groups involved in Young Bosnia as not committed to the national cause.
4. You could try to persuade the conspirators not to go through with the assassination attempt as it is dangerous and morally questionable.

**Part 4:**

*Before discussing the issue with your group, make your own decision, and write it on your individual sheet. Then write the reasons why you arrived at that decision.*

**Part 5:**

As a group, discuss what your decision should be. Remember that you are a secret cell, so you *have to* stick together as a group. You must come to an agreement. On the group sheet, list what your decision is and why you reached it.