



## Activity: Tackling A Climate Change Statement

**Purpose:** Exploring the controversies, dilemmas and tensions relating to climate change

**Age level:** 14-18

**Time needed:** 20 minutes

### **Resources:**

- ✓ Five trays of badges (20 per tray for a class of 30), with symbols indicating five positions on a continuum of opinion ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement

++	Strongly agree
+	Agree
?	Can't decide or don't know
-	Disagree
--	Strongly disagree

- ✓ An open space where students can move freely about

### **Procedure**

A controversial statement, carefully designed to ensure a spread of responses (see some examples below), is written up on the board by the teacher.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> To defend the well-being of the planet, I have the right to break the laws of the country</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal freedom should be restricted by law in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions urgently</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Biofuel production should be restricted to ensure food security for all</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of climate change is so strong that climate change deniers should no longer be given the same media exposure as scientists in the name of 'balanced reporting'</li></ul> |
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Students are asked to reflect on the chosen statement (two minutes) and then to choose



and wear the badge which most represents their response to the statement. They next discuss the statement with a person wearing the same badge (three minutes). Students move on to discuss the statement with someone wearing a badge one position removed from their own badge (three minutes). They then discuss with someone wearing a badge two or more positions removed (three minutes). Finally, they are invited to return to the person with whom they originally talked in order to review what they have heard and learnt. Class discussion follows

## Extension

Students are encouraged to conduct individual or team research on different perspectives on the topic before bringing their findings to class for further debate and discussion.

## Potential/Facilitation Guidance

This activity seeks to clarify and challenge students' assumptions around controversial dilemmas surrounding climate change. During the activity, it is important for teachers to encourage students to engage in positive, constructive discussion and listening, rather than being defensive and argumentative. Students are also encouraged to think of real-life and hypothetical examples as they discuss. They can change badges between stages, should they wish. This activity can be used for different age groups by employing an age-appropriate statement. It can be used as an introductory activity to remind students of the fact that there are perspectives on a topic other than their own.

To trigger class discussion, the teacher can use the following questions (directed at the whole class rather than individuals):

- What badge did you first choose and why?
- As you engaged in successive rounds of discussion, did you begin to see the issue differently? Can you share why and how that happened?
- Did you change your badge? Why?
- In which round of discussion did you feel *most* and *least* comfortable, and why was that?
- When you returned to your original partner what did you share about the different perspectives you had heard?
- What issues has the activity thrown up that you would now like to research further?