

Send My Friend to School 2017: Opinion Line

Age range: 8 - 18 years

Time: approximately 30 minutes

Outline

This learning workshop uses an **opinion line** activity to encourage young people to think critically about the essential elements of a good quality education.

An **opinion line** is a helpful way to explore complex issues and diverse viewpoints. For example, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 agrees ambitious targets for providing a good quality education for all the world's children. However funding for global education is declining, making it more difficult to meet these targets.

Just how should young people respond to this challenging situation? The **opinion line** activity will help them to think critically, question their assumptions and reach conclusions.

How to run an **opinion continuum activity** is outlined in full in this Oxfam guide

Oxfam (2015) – [Global Citizenship in the Classroom](#) (page 16)

The guide may be downloaded free from the [Oxfam Education](#) website.

Learning objectives

- Participants attempt to identify the most important elements of a quality education
- Participants articulate their opinions clearly and review them in the light of the opinions of others

Outcomes

- Participants more deeply understand the challenges in providing a quality education for all.

Key questions

- Is it possible to agree on the elements of a quality education?
- Are any of the suggested elements of a quality education either absolutely essential or else absolutely unessential?

Resource

- Oxfam (2015) – Global Citizenship in the Classroom (page 16)
- [Send My Friend to School Teacher's Pack](#)

Secondary Curriculum links

England

KS3 & KS4 Citizenship (2014) – Purpose of study, aims, subject content.

Wales

ESDGC (Choices and Decisions) and PSE (Active Citizenship) – National Curriculum for Wales.

Scotland

Social Studies – Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

Session outline

1. Before you begin

Young people should have a basic knowledge of Education for All.

- View and discuss the Send My Friend PowerPoint presentation
- If you have time, work through some other activities on the Send My Friend website

2. The Opinion Line (30 mins)

This activity requires space for a continuous line (real or imagined) from one side of the classroom to the other. You may have to move furniture so participants can all stand in a line across the room.

In the activity participants are invited to stand or move along the line depending on their level of agreement (from totally agree to totally disagree) with a number of statements. The statements may be adapted depending on the age of the participants and the length of time available.

One end of the line represents total agreement with a statement while the opposite end of the line represents total disagreement. All the points in-between represent different degrees of agreement or disagreement. Therefore everyone's view will fall somewhere on the line. There are no right or wrong answers.



From Oxfam (2015) – Global Citizenship in the Classroom (page 16)

Begin with the young people standing along the line, explain the activity and read out the first statement. Ask the learners to move to the position on the line that best represents their opinion. Then ask volunteers at different points on the line to briefly explain why they have taken their position. In the light of the opinions expressed, ask if any participants would wish to change their position and explain why.

Repeat the process by reading and reviewing the remaining statements.

At the end of the activity debrief the young people

- How many changed their positions after hearing others' opinions?
- What led them to change their minds?

- What have they learned from the activity? Is it straightforward to identify the elements of a quality education?

Alternatively, encourage the young people to practise negotiation skills by dividing them into groups and asking them to come to a group view about each statement.

Possible elements of a quality education

These may be adapted depending on the age of the participants and the length of time available..

1. Computers
2. Toilets
3. Desks and Chairs
4. Blackboards
5. Textbooks
6. Exercise Books
7. Trained Teachers
8. Safety from Violence
9. School Lunch
10. Clean Water
11. Equality for Boys and Girls
12. Learning relevant for gaining a Job
13. Equal access for Children with Disabilities
14. Lessons delivered in Children's Mother Tongue

Differentiation

Make it easier: Reduce the number of statements and simplify the language

Make it harder: Add additional statements and discuss participants' responses more fully

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