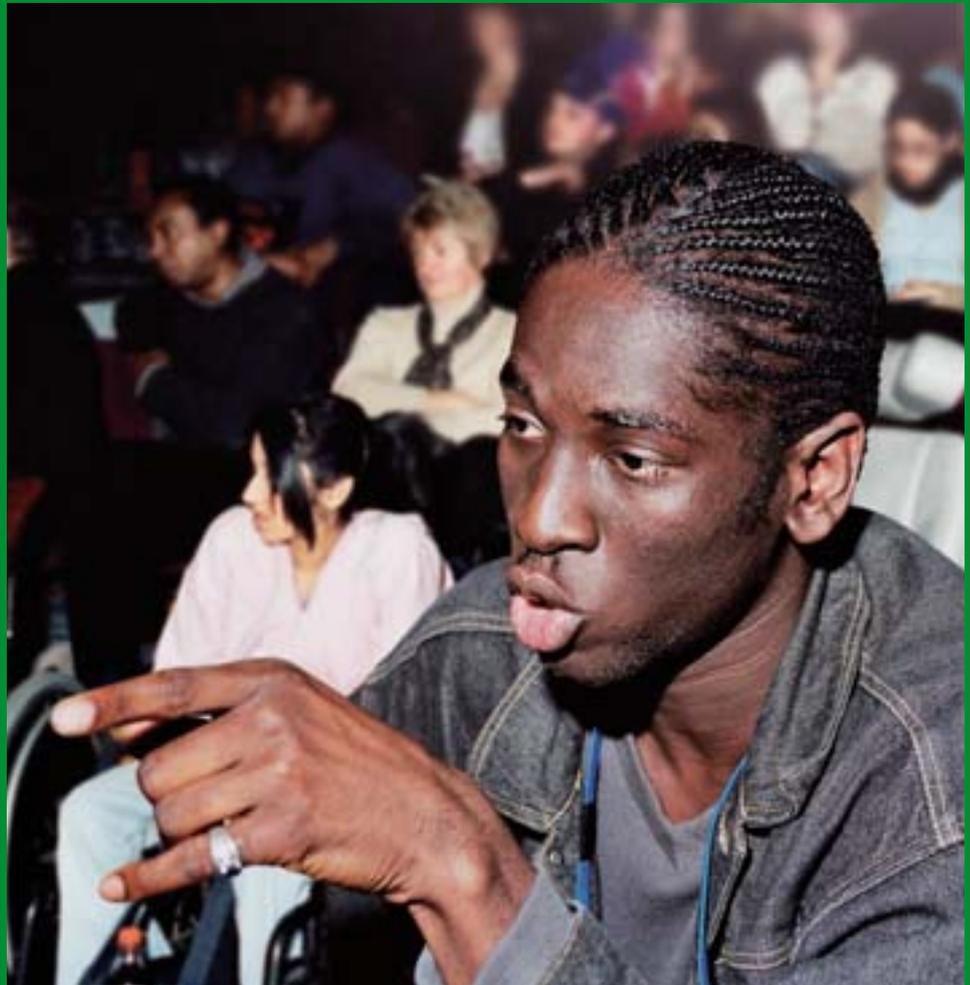


For the sake of argument

Discussion and debating skills
in citizenship



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Discussion and debating skills in citizenship

Introduction

Citizenship

Citizenship education is an important part of the development of young adults. It enables them to learn about their rights and responsibilities, and to understand how society works and decisions are made. It encourages them to take an interest in topical and controversial issues and to engage in discussion and debate. Citizenship addresses the concepts of social justice, human rights and global community, and helps young people to develop skills of critical thinking, debate and participation. Through citizenship education, young people are encouraged to play an active part in the democratic process by expressing their views, having a voice and taking actions that make a difference to the communities in which they operate, thereby becoming more effective members of society. Effective citizenship education increases confidence, self-esteem and motivation for learning.

Citizenship education can be delivered effectively in a variety of ways. Experience of the post-16 citizenship programme suggests that successful approaches to citizenship include: art, photography, video-making, role play and simulations, websites, music, newsletters, radio stations, discussions and debates, conferences, exhibitions, graffiti walls, banners, dance, comedy, drama, investigations, surveys, and campaigns. Whichever approach is used, learners and facilitators need to be clear about what is to be learned.

The ten QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Demonstrate understanding of respect for diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Represent a point of view on behalf of others
- Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

(Play your part: post-16 citizenship, QCA 2004 p 21)

Skills for active citizenship

Most of the QCA learning objectives, including 'discuss and debate citizenship issues', involve skills that are learnt, measurable behaviours. Effective citizenship relies heavily on young people learning and practising skills, and then applying them appropriately to different types of citizenship activity. It is often assumed that skills can be learnt through a one-off taught lesson, or can be 'picked up' simply through experience. But the process of learning skills effectively

includes a number of different stages, with reinforcement and reflection built in at each stage. The process of acquiring and applying skills takes learners from being unconsciously unskilled, to being consciously unskilled (a beginner), consciously skilled (competent) and finally unconsciously skilled (an expert).

At a skills seminar hosted by the Learning and Skills Network, young people and practitioners identified the stages that enable skills to be learned effectively. The stages are:

Identifying skills

During this stage, learners need to talk explicitly about what skills are; how, for example, they are different from attributes (such as confidence, patience, tolerance), and what knowledge and understanding are needed to acquire a skill. They should discuss which skills they will need to learn for different activities, to consider whether they have already used these skills and to assess how proficient they already are.

Developing skills

Once learners have considered what skills are, which ones they need to use, and whether they are already competent, they can begin to develop appropriate skills through various activities and interventions by the facilitator.

Practising skills

Skills should be used in a variety of different contexts and environments, in low-risk situations in which feedback is received. Learners need the opportunity to reflect on how their skills are developing.

Consolidating and applying skills

Active citizenship involves young people participating with members of the wider community. In these higher-risk situations, they can apply the skills they have learned and practised within their learning organisations.

Reflecting and reviewing skills

At each stage, learners need the opportunity to reflect on their skills development and review what they still need to improve. This is an important part of the learning process, as well as self-assessment.

Discussing and debating citizenship issues

The issues central to citizenship, which are often controversial, are ones that affect people's lives. Citizens need to be able to express their views on these issues and listen to what others have to say. The best way to do this is through the medium of discussions and debates that are conducted in a democratic, fair and reasonable way. This is vital because citizenship issues are usually bound up with the values of those involved, and it is easy to dismiss the views of others when you don't agree with their values, creating a potential for conflict. Because the role of reason, logic and evidence becomes all the more important when values are involved, it is essential that citizens learn how to argue, to make a case for their point of view, and to listen to the views of others.

In the public arena, it is often through debate that arguments are explored. One side deploys arguments which are contested by the other side. To take part in these debates citizens need to learn the skills of making a logical and coherent case for a particular viewpoint, to be able to

challenge the views of others through counter-argument, and to be able to persuade others that their case is the one that should be accepted. Equally important in a citizenship context is that the proceedings are conducted democratically. Having listened to the arguments put forward, people can then vote for the position they support.

This pack, which can be used by staff with learners, or by learners engaged in training their peers, provides activities at varying levels which can be adapted for different learners. It aims to:

- help staff and learners identify the skills involved in discussion and debates, particularly those connected with arguing a case
- encourage learners to articulate their views and express their opinions in a clear and logical way
- provide opportunities for learners to practise the skills involved in putting forward reasoned argument in a citizenship context
- help learners use critical thinking skills in debates and discussions
- enable learners to speak persuasively on citizenship issues.



Activity 1: Arguing

Background, organisation and resources

This introductory activity is designed to help participants identify and think about the skills they will be using in the rest of this resource pack. It also aims to help them distinguish between arguing and argument. The main thrust of the activities in this pack will be to encourage participants to develop their skills of expressing opinions in discussions, making reasoned arguments, and be able to evaluate and respond to the arguments of others in debates. You will need copies of the resource sheets 'Arguing and arguments' and 'Identifying skills' on pages 11–12. This activity could be used with a small or large group and should take 20–30 minutes.

Aims of this activity

- To identify skills involved in arguing in debates and discussions
- To understand the concept of argument
- To encourage participants to work together.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Show understanding of key citizenship concepts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the concept of argument
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Giving reasons • Justifying views 	

Tasks

Stage 1

Ask participants to work in groups of three or four. Give out copies of the resource sheet 'Arguing and arguments on' page 11. Read through the sheet with them and clarify the difference between arguing as a term in common use and 'argument' as a concept, that is a statement supported with reasons. Say that this is the basis of our idea of reasoned argument. Explain that throughout the rest of the pack the term 'argument' will be used in this sense. On the sheet participants are asked to think of one argument (one point plus a reason) to respond to the argument about prison sentences. You could ask them to suggest other arguments, perhaps to do with the other topics listed on the sheet.

Stage 2

Give out the sheets 'Identifying skills' on page 12 to the participants in their groups. Tell them that we are interested in skills that are relevant to arguing about citizenship issues in discussions and debates. Ask them to draw on a large piece of paper a big circle with two smaller circles inside like a target. Then ask them to take the skills listed and put them into the circles as follows:

- In the centre of the target put skills they think are essential to being able to argue well
- In the next circle put the skills they feel are relevant but not so important
- In the third circle on the outside put the skills they think are peripheral
- Outside of the last circle put any skills they think are not relevant.

Tell participants that they can add any skills they can think of that are relevant to argument on citizenship issues.

Stage 3

Go round the groups asking them where they put the skills to see if there is general agreement or where there are differences. Use this opportunity to tease out their ideas about the skills and provide clarification if needed.

Stage 4 – Reflection

Ask the participants to look at the skills they placed in the centre of the circle and pose to themselves these questions:

Which of these skills am I good at?

What evidence can I provide for this?

Which of these skills am I not so good at?

How can I improve these?

It might help to discuss these in their small groups; peer opinions on what people are good at can be revealing and informative. Participants could note this down in a skills' log, which they can add to as they progress through the pack.



Arguing and arguments

You will all have seen people arguing on television debates. Often people say what they think and people who disagree with them say the opposite. Usually, they end up shouting at each other.



But this type of arguing does not take us very far.

When we talk about an argument we mean **a statement (or conclusion) that is supported by reasons.**

The statement is often about something we should believe or accept, do or not do. The reasons are there to persuade us to agree with the statement (conclusion).

An argument could be just one statement (conclusion) plus a reason. For instance: *Prison sentences should be made shorter because there is not enough space in English prisons.*

You can agree with this or disagree. Think of one argument (one point plus a reason) to respond to the argument about prisons sentences made above.

Argument is at the centre of citizenship. We explore citizenship issues by arguing about them in discussions and debates. This is because they connected with our values and what we think is right or wrong, fair and unfair. On any particular issue there is usually a range of different arguments for and against a particular position, for example:

Animals should not be used in medical experiments.

Parent should not be allowed to smack children.

The UK should abandon the pound for the Euro.

Debts for poorer countries should be cancelled.

Identifying skills

- Expressing and justifying a point of view
- Thinking critically about arguments – what's weak or strong about them
- Presenting to an audience
- Researching information
- Working in groups
- Speaking clearly and fluently
- Providing evidence for a point of view
- Listening to others
- Analysing sources of information
- Talking persuasively
- Taking different points of view into account
- Recognise when language is being used persuasively
- Evaluating arguments
- Being able to tell fact from opinion
- Being able to detect bias and unreliable sources of information
- Explaining ideas clearly
- Putting what we say into a logical structure

Activity 2: Discussing citizenship issues

Background, organisation and resources

In citizenship discussions and debates you cannot separate argument from views and opinions. This is because most issues involve people's values and what they consider to be fair or unfair, right or wrong. However, this makes it even more important that people should engage in reasoned argument and give reasons for their views.

The aim of this activity is to get participants to practise the skills associated with expressing and justifying their opinions. The activity also demonstrates a method that can be used for many citizenship issues to encourage all people in a group to be involved in discussions. It also provides a base from which to engage the members of the group in a more in-depth investigation of the suggested issue connected with prisons and sentences. But you could replace this with any other issue of your choice. All you have to do is generate six (or fewer) statements for people to respond to.

You will need a set of the 'Statement cards' on page 15, cut out, for each group of twelve young people. You could have one, two or three groups depending on numbers. Alternatively you could work in groups of ten and use five statements (or eight and four statements). You will need a 'Recording sheet' on page 16 for each participant. The activity takes around 40–50 minutes.

Aims of the activity

- To encourage all young people to take part in discussions
- To encourage them to express opinions about a citizenship issue
- To develop the ability to make points which are relevant to a statement or the issue at hand
- To help them practise the skills of giving reasons for their views and justifying their opinions.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making relevant points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the citizenship issues that are in the activity
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Present an alternative viewpoint 	
Express and justify a personal opinion to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing an opinion • Giving reasons for opinion 	

Tasks

Stage 1

Arrange 12 chairs in a circle with 6 on the inside and 6 on the outside. The chairs should face each other.

Cut up the sheet 'Statement cards' on page 15. Give each person in the inner circle one of the statements to put to the person facing them and a copy of the 'Recording sheet' on page 16. Tell

the young people on the outside of the circle that you want them to give at least one opinion in response to the statement and to give a reason for it. Ask the people on the inside circle to note their response, writing their opinion(s) in the left-hand column and their reason(s) or justification in the right-hand column of the recording sheet.

Stage 2

Allow two minutes, then ask those in the outer circle to move one chair to the right. Ask the person in the inner circle to put the same statement to the new person facing them. Do this once more and then ask the two circles to swap positions so that the people in the outer circle now put the statements to those in the inner and record the responses. Do this three times as above.

Stage 3

Because you will have a lot of opinions to consider, you may wish to carry on the discussion of the topic. But remember the purpose of this exercise is to focus on the skills involved, and at some point you should move to the debriefing suggested below.

Stage 4 – Reflection

When the discussion has been completed, bring the group back together. Taking one question at a time, go round the group and ask the participants to read out some of the points that were made and the reasons supplied. Ask them:

- a. Was the opinion **relevant** to the statement?
- b. Was the justification **reasonable**?
- c. Was the justification a **relevant** and **sound** one?

Put these three questions on a board/flip chart in three columns and put a tick against each when the condition is fulfilled. The issue of relevance is crucial as many people do not stick to the point nor provide reasons that relate clearly to the opinion expressed. They have to learn this through analysis of their responses and being made aware when they are not making relevant points.

It is important to encourage reflection at the end of this session. You could do this with the whole group or use a self-assessment form with the questions below:

Was I able to express an opinion or make a point?

Was I able to do this confidently?

Were the opinions or points I made relevant to the issue?

Were the reasons I provided good ones or not so good?

On which of the above could I improve?

Statement cards



1

Sentences should be made tougher for all criminals.

2

Prisons should be made more pleasant and concentrate on educating and rehabilitating prisoners.

3

Young offenders under 18 should not be put into custodial institutions. They should serve their sentences in the community.

4

A life sentence for a crime like murder should mean that those found guilty should stay in prison for the rest of their lives and not be released early.

5

Criminals who have committed sex offences should be put on a register that is published.

6

Criminals who are convicted of three crimes should be put in prison for a very long time whatever they've done.

Recording sheet

Point/opinion	Relevant to statement	Reason/justification

Activity 3: Lines of argument

Background, organisation and resources

On any particular citizenship issue there is almost always a range of views, and people take different positions. Usually a proposition is put forward, for example: ‘Stem cell research should be allowed and legal in the UK,’ and people argue for and against the proposition. The arguments progress along certain lines with points and counter-points being made. This activity is designed to help participants develop their own ideas about the arguments on a chosen citizenship issue by helping them see the different dimensions of the issue and to begin to formulate arguments. This can work with small or large groups. You will need large sheets of sugar paper or flipchart paper. Participants work in pairs, then in fours. Everyone will need a copy of the ‘Lines of argument’ sheet on page 19. The activity takes around 30–45 minutes.

Aims of the activity

- To help participants develop their ideas on and arguments about a citizenship issue
- To encourage them to discuss the issue working in pairs, then fours, and then as a whole group, so that everybody is engaged
- To help them see that arguments are fluid and can take different directions.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making relevant points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the citizenship issues that are in the activity
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing an argument • Putting different viewpoints • Responding to different viewpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the many-sided nature of arguments on citizenship issues
Express and justify a personal opinion to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express a personal opinion 	

Tasks

Stage 1

Ask the participants to work in pairs. Give them a large piece of paper. Show them the example on animal rights on the ‘Lines of argument’ sheet on page 19. Ask them to write a proposition about a citizenship issue in the middle of the paper, for example: ‘Stem cell research should be legal in the UK’. You can use any issue that is current or one that the participants want to discuss. Ask them to draw lines off the proposition putting arguments for and against it, and any other points that occur to them. Sometimes points will branch off other points like a spider diagram or a mind map of the arguments.

Stage 2

After about 10 minutes ask each pair to join with another pair and put their diagrams together. Some of their arguments and points will be the same but others will be different and go off in

different directions. Use a fresh piece of sugar paper to draw a combined diagram. This also gives them a chance to start afresh now that they have seen different possible lines of argument.

Stage 3

After 15 minutes, ask different groups to hold up their diagrams and explain how their arguments developed. Compare the results from different groups looking for similarities and differences.

Stage 4 – Reflection

Ask students:

What skills have I used during this activity?

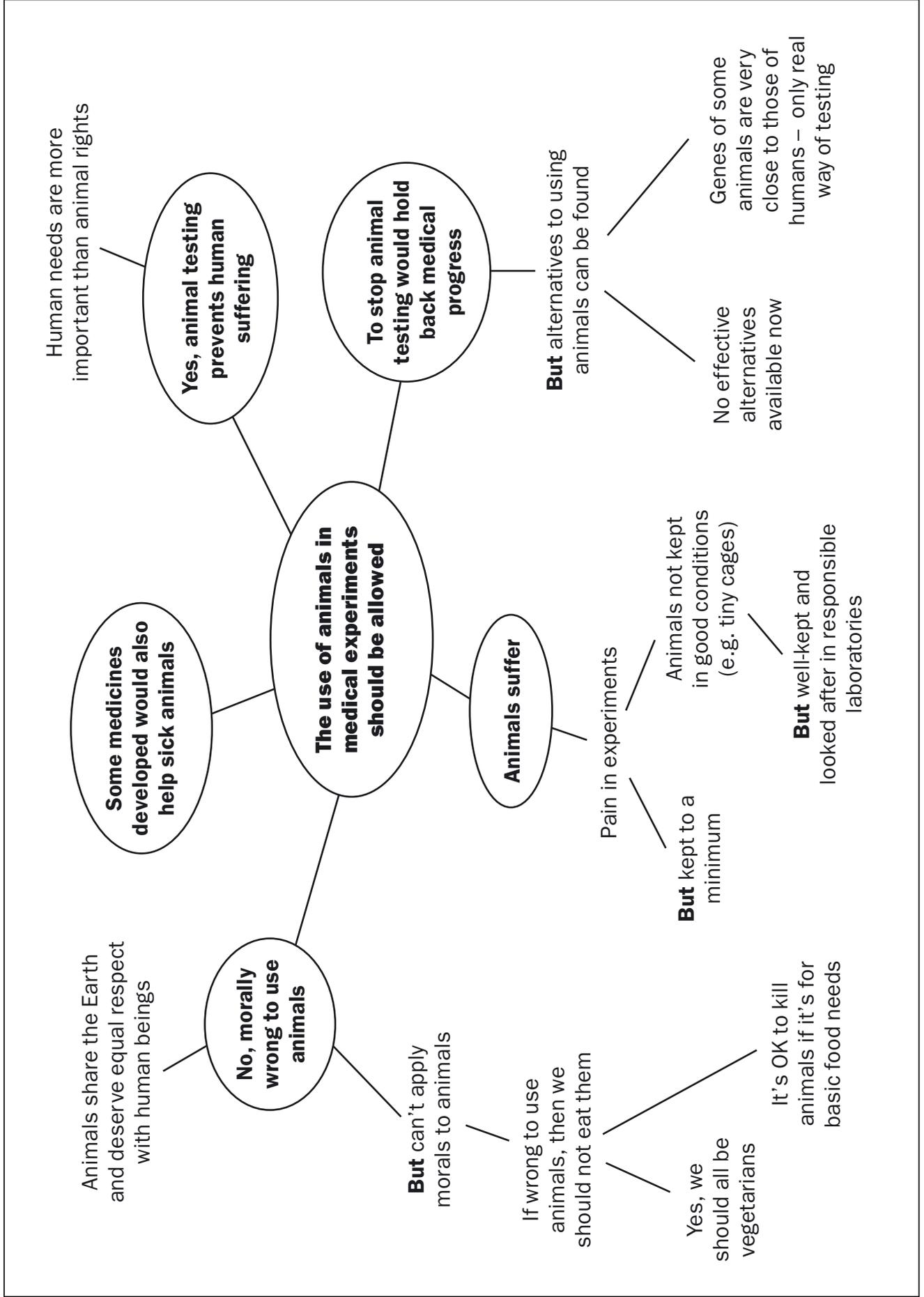
What have I learnt from this activity?

Was I able to develop arguments for and against?

Was I able to develop lines of reasoning about the issue?



Lines of argument



4

Activity 4: Making a case

Background, organisation and resources

To be effective, arguments need to be put into a logical and coherent structure. This means establishing a central proposition and making a number of points which are reasons why we should accept this proposition. The reasons can be strengthened by evidence. Evidence is more specific information that supports a reason. It can help participants to refer to this as 'big points' and 'little points': the big points being the ones that refer directly to the central proposition, the little ones being the evidence or further explanation which support these.

This activity aims to help participants understand what a logical reasoned argument is. It can be carried out with a small or large group. Since this is a card-sort exercise, you will need sufficient copies of cards cut up from the resource sheet 'Making a case' on page 22. The activity takes around 40 minutes.

Aims of the activity

- To model a reasoned argument
- To introduce the idea of evidence
- To enable participants to practise the skills involved in developing a logical argument.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making points that relate to a central proposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know about the citizenship issue that is used in the argument
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing a logical argument• Making points• Giving reasons• Using evidence to support reasons• Express a point of view you may not agree with	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know what a reasoned argument is• Know how evidence is used to support an argument

Tasks

Stage 1

Split the group up into smaller groups of three. Give to each group a set of cards cut out and from the resource sheet 'Making a case' on page 22. They will see a number of jumbled statements. Tell them to assemble these into a logical argument. They need to find the 'big points' that are reasons why they should accept the proposition and then match to these to the 'little points' which provide evidence or explanation to support the big points (see top of next page). Finally tell them to decide in what order they would put the 'big points' to make the case effectively.

Point out that when you make a case, you only give one side of the argument and you try to make it as convincing as you can.

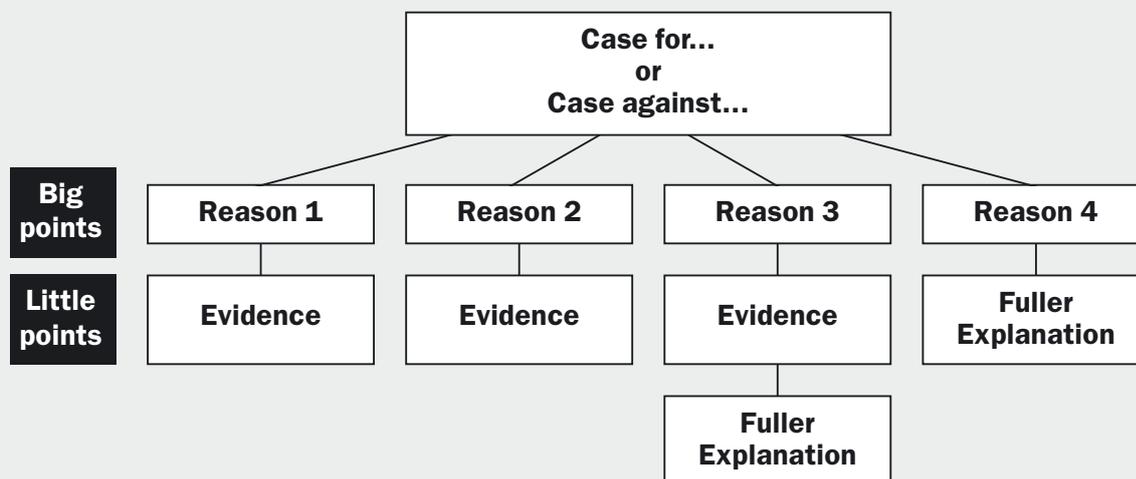
Big points	Little points
B	G
C	D
E	J
F	I
H	L
K	A

Stage 2

When they have finished, bring the whole group back together. Go round the groups finding out what order they put the points in and discuss which order might be the most effective. Check that the participants are clear about how the main points are relevant to the proposition and why this is important. Also check that they understand how the evidence and further explanation support these main points. Make them aware that in some arguments it is not so easy to find specific evidence in the form of figures, so the support often takes the form of a more detailed explanation of the reason.

Stage 3

Ask the participants to choose an issue and draw up a plan of a logical reasoned argument (see below). They need only make the main (big) points (reasons) briefly and indicate the sort of evidence and explanation they would use to support these. For example, they could put the case 'against' identity cards.



Stage 4 – Reflection

Ask participants to consider the following questions:

Do I know what a logical argument means?

Why is the order in which points are placed significant?

Do I know what a reasoned argument means?

Do I understand how I can use evidence to strengthen reasons?

Making a case

The proposition: 'Identity cards should be introduced in the UK'

A It will be much more difficult for terrorists to use a range of false identities to prevent the security services tracking them. It will also help prevent criminals using false documents for people trafficking and multiple identities for the purposes of money laundering or drug trafficking.

B Another real advantage is that the cards will mean that it is easier to use public services and stop people using them who are not entitled to do so.

C A key advantage of the cards is that they should help protect the public against identity fraud.

D An increasing number of people, up to 100,000 each year according to the government (Home Office) estimates, find themselves the victims of identity theft. This is upsetting because people can be asked to pay for things which they have no knowledge of when their credit cards are cloned or other people may be using passports and driving licenses in their name. It is also very costly. The latest estimate is that identity fraud costs the UK economy £1.7 billion a year.

E They will be an effective way of tackling all the problems connected with illegal immigrants and with people working illegally.

F The cards will have a great deal of useful information on them, for example proof of age and biometric details.

G Because the cards prove identity so clearly, people will be able to get the services they need without going through a mass of forms and proofs. This will be particularly useful for medical care when it is difficult to prove that someone is entitled to have free health care on the NHS. It will help prevent 'health tourism' when people come to this country from other countries just to get health care free. It will also prove that someone is entitled to other benefits, e.g. help and housing benefits, and so stop people gaining these fraudulently.

H There is a lot of public support for Identity cards.

I At the moment there are various documents used to prove age. The ID card should replace all of these and be an indisputable form of proof. It will be possible to put biometrics such as fingerprints or iris recognition on the card to establish a person's identity.

J People will be able to prove that they are entitled to work. Therefore illegal workers will not be able to get jobs and it will be easier for the police to prove that the firms employing them knew they were illegal. It will also be easier for the police and immigration services to check if someone is an illegal immigrant so that they can be deported.

K One major reason for introducing the cards is to make it easier for the authorities to deal with terrorists and criminals.

L Opinion polls and surveys have shown that the public supports the introduction of ID cards. A Mori poll (independent of the government) in 2004 found that 80% of the public were in favour of ID cards with only 11% against.

Activity 5: Responding to arguments

Background, organisation and resources

One of the most important skills and one of the most demanding skills in discussion and debate is to respond to what other people have said, particularly if they are arguing against you. It involves listening, quick thinking as well as knowledge of a topic. This activity is designed to help young people begin that process by practising quick responses. It should also be lively and can be amusing. It can be used with groups of different sizes from 3 to 30. Participants work in groups of three. Each group will need a set of 'Responding to arguments' cards cut up from the two resource sheets on pages 25–26. It will take a minimum of 30 minutes, or longer if you allow the participants to go on for more rounds.

Aims of the activity

- To demonstrate the skills involved in responding to arguments
- To encourage reflection of what participants need to do to develop these skills.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for a discussion or debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the citizenship issues that are in the activity
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Building on an argument • Presenting an alternative viewpoint 	
Express and justify a personal opinion to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing an opinion • Give reasons for opinion 	

Tasks

Stage 1

Ask participants to work in groups of three. Tell them that they are going to play three roles in rotation:

- Putting forward an argument or opinion
- Presenting a counter-argument or alternative viewpoint and
- Observer.

They will all get a turn in each role.

Give each group a set of 'Responding to arguments' cards cut up from the resource sheets on pages 25–26 which they should shuffle and put face down in the middle of the table.

Stage 2

Ask each group to split into the three roles. The person playing Role A should turn over a card and put the argument stated on it. The person playing Role B should try to respond as quickly as

possible by presenting an argument which puts an opposing point plus a reason. The observer scores this and comments as follows:

- 1 mark for a relevant point
- 2 marks for a reason which supports that point
- A brief comment as to whether it was a good response, not so good, or poor response.

(The observer should use the number of the card to show what argument is being used.)

Example:

Argument

Wind farms are good for the environment because they produce energy without making gases that contribute to global warming.

Response

They might help the environment in one way but they spoil it in another. They can ruin the look and attractiveness of beautiful places.

Note: Facilitators or the participants themselves could write the points of view or add to the ones provided here

[An alternative method is to work in groups of four. One player turns over a card and the person to provide the quickest argument plus reason scores 3 marks. If the point is not relevant, they have a mark taken away. If the reason is not adequate, they score no marks. If another player can provide it, they score two marks.]

Stage 3

After five turns the participants change roles. After a further five turns they change again so everybody gets a chance to play each role. They can carry on doing this as long as is feasible. They can start to work through the pack again, but this time they have to provide a different opposing argument to the one used in the first round. (For example, in the wind-farm argument, you could say that another point against them is the noise they make which can affect people living nearby.)

Stage 4 – Reflection

Go round the groups asking the observers to comment on how well participants did, who got high scores, what were good reasons, etc. Then ask each group of three to work together to answer these questions:

What skills did I use?

How well did I use them?

How could I improve them?

What else would I need to do to make sure I can respond to arguments?

Finally, discuss with the whole group the skills required to be able to respond in discussions and debates.

Responding to arguments – sheet 1



<p>1</p> <p>Animal experimentation is very useful because it tests medicines on animals before humans are involved.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>The government should not be able to tell us that we cannot smoke in public places. It's a free country and we have the right to smoke where we want.</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Capital punishment (hanging or lethal injection) should be used for people who murder children and policemen to deter people.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Parents should not be allowed to smack their children under any circumstances. It damages the children psychologically.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Using embryonic stem cells for research is wrong because it is against God's law.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>GM (Genetically Modified) crops should be introduced because they rid crops of diseases and pests.</p>
<p>7</p> <p>The voting age should be lowered to 16 so that young people become more involved in politics.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Grammar schools should be retained because they are the best schools for the most able students.</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Examinations should be abolished for everybody below 16 so that they enjoy their schooling more.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>The photographs of bullies should be put up in public to shame them so they stop bullying.</p>

Responding to arguments – sheet 2



<p>11</p> <p>Young offenders should be electronically tagged rather than being sent to a custodial institution because those places make them into criminals.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Everybody should pay the TV licence fee to keep the BBC going as it sets a standard for television.</p>
<p>13</p> <p>The ban against hunting with dogs is not working and should be overturned. Hunting should be allowed again.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Students should pay higher fees for universities so the standard of universities can be improved.</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Smoking cannabis should be made legal as it is no worse than tobacco.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Tobacco is such a health risk that people should be banned from smoking in their own homes if there are children living there.</p>
<p>17</p> <p>The NHS should not treat obese people unless they agree to lose weight first. It will cost the NHS less.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>We should let anybody who wants to come to this country because the existing immigration controls are not fair.</p>
<p>19</p> <p>People have a right to life. They also have the right to die if they want to.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>The age of criminal responsibility should be reduced to eight. There are young tearaways who do a lot of damage and know what they are doing is wrong.</p>

Activity 6: Challenging arguments

Background, organisation and resources

This activity seeks to build on the skills developed in the previous activity where participants practised the skills involved in responding to arguments. In more formal debates people do not just respond with different arguments but they challenge what the person is saying. This might involve questioning the evidence the other speaker is deploying or picking holes in the argument that is being put forward. This requires higher level skills involving listening and analysing the opposing argument, then responding. This activity is designed to help participants learn some structures which might help them to do this and could be run with large or small numbers of participants. They will need copies of the resource sheets 'Types of challenge' on page 29 and 'The Arguments' on pages 30–31.

Aims of the activity

- To understand how evidence is used in presenting arguments
- To develop skills of analysis and critical thinking
- To encourage reflection of what participants need to do to develop these skills.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Show understanding of key citizenship concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing and evaluating evidence • Critical thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the concept of evidence
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Analysing and evaluating what has been heard • Responding to the arguments of others • Developing a reasoned argument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about ways of challenging arguments

Tasks

Stage 1

Split the group up into smaller groups of two or three. Give out a copy of 'Types of challenge' on page 29 to each participant. Explain the importance of being able to challenge what people say in arguments (as described above). Go through the sheet discussing with participants the different ways of doing this. Point out that, of course, they have to fit the response to the particular argument.

Stage 2

Give each group one copy of 'Arguments' sheets 1 and 2 on pages 30–31 and ask them to work out which type of challenge might be applied to each of the arguments, as described on the 'Types of challenge' resource sheet on page 29. Tell them that some arguments may be challenged in different ways, (e.g. challenge evidence and question the logic).

Answers:

1. Nuclear – omissions no mention is made of the downside of nuclear, particularly the environmental implications of nuclear waste.
2. Passive smoking – unreliable evidence since it is produced by tobacco companies.
3. Television and video violence – lack of evidence
4. Environment – refer to another authority
5. Drinking hours – faulty logic
6. Terrorism – faulty logic and refer to another authority.

Stage 3

Work in groups of four. Bring in a range of newspapers (or use the internet) and look at the items that put forward an argument. Challenge these where they are weak. Also consider stories that are well researched and argued and say what makes the arguments contained in them convincing.

Stage 4 – Reflection

Ask the participants to think about the following:

What skills are used when challenging the arguments of others?

Which of these are difficult to do?

Why are they difficult?

What skills and knowledge are required to be able to challenge arguments?

How can I develop these skills?



Types of challenge

When you are arguing with people in a discussion or debate, you need to be able to challenge what they are saying. It may be that you accept part of their argument but want to challenge other parts. Here are some of the ways in which you can challenge arguments.



1. Challenge evidence

People should provide evidence to back up their views. So the first thing to do if someone puts forward a view which is not supported by evidence is to ask them: 'Where is the evidence for your statement?'

You might also disagree with the evidence, for instance, you might say:

- The evidence comes from a source that is biased and unreliable and so can't be trusted
- The figures are wrong
- You have figures that prove the opposite.

2. Reveal omissions

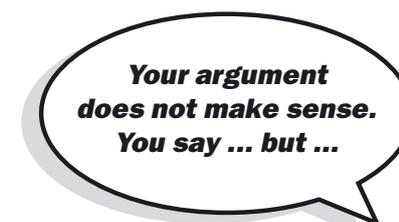
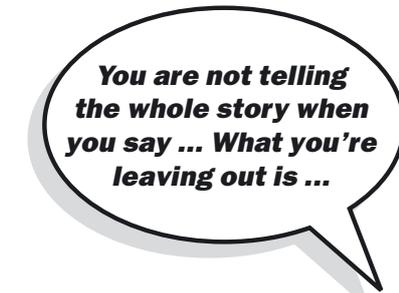
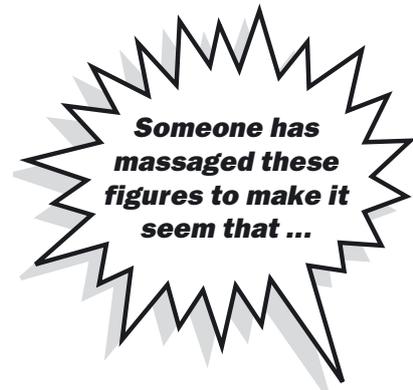
Sometimes people leave out important bits. They conveniently omit the bits that don't make their argument so convincing. You say what they are leaving out.

3. Refer to an authority

To make their argument seem stronger, people often refer to an authority or expert in the area being argued about. You can refer to your own respected authority who says something different.

4. Question the logic

Some arguments don't make sense. There is something wrong with the logic of the argument – the conclusion or point the person is making does not follow from the evidence or the supporting explanation.



The arguments – sheet 1

Read the arguments below and consider how they could be challenged. Write the type(s) of challenge in the box (using those on page 29) and add comments on the reasons why you think the argument can be challenged.

Argument 1

It is clear that nuclear energy is the answer to Britain's energy problems. Nuclear power stations are capable of producing a good proportion of the huge amount of energy we need unlike wind and solar power. It is environmentally clean because it does not produce any global warming gases.

Type(s) of challenge:

Comments:

Argument 2

Passive smoking is not as dangerous as it has been made out to be. New research carried out by scientists has proved that fewer people per thousand will die of lung cancer by passively inhaling smoke at work than had previously been thought. The research, which has been a long term study over the last two decades, was carried out by the tobacco industry's own laboratories.

Type(s) of challenge:

Comments:

Argument 3

Violence on television and in video games leads to violent behaviour among young children and adolescents. They are exposed to hour after hour of this mindless mayhem when they are desensitised to scenes of death and injury. The screens are literally dripping in blood. As a result they do not understand the consequences of hurting someone. This is made worse by rap music which glorifies the use of guns and the ill treatment of women. Is it surprising that we are seeing increasing violence on our streets?

Type(s) of challenge:

Comments:

The arguments – sheet 2

Argument 4

David Broughton has been a campaigner for the environment all his life and a supporter of protecting wildlife habitats. After an extensive study into the effects of climate changes, he maintains that it is not the activities of people that are causing global warming. What is happening is part of the normal process of climate change that has been taking place over thousands of years.

Type(s) of challenge:

Comments:

Argument 5

Allowing pubs to stay open much longer will help to solve the drinking problems and the trouble this leads to in town centres. People will have longer to drink so they are less likely to get drunk. It will also make the job of the police easier because not so many people will turn out on to the streets at the same time.

Type(s) of challenge:

Comments:

Argument 6

The war on terrorism will be won by hitting the terrorists hard whenever they raise their ugly heads. We will seek them out and destroy their bases. By taking them on at every possible opportunity we will show the world that they can never triumph. Yes, this will mean some collateral damage because the terrorists hide themselves in the local population and use them as a human shield. But this is the price that has to be paid to defeat this evil. When they realise they cannot win, the supply of people to become terrorists dwindles, and people will thank us for our tough action. This is the conclusion of our military experts at the strategic planning organisation.

Type(s) of challenge:

Comments:



Activity 7: Being persuasive

Background, organisation and resources

Arguing effectively is not just about the logic and content of the argument; it is also about convincing people that they should accept your arguments. This means that the speaker has to learn to argue persuasively. It is equally as important to recognise when someone is using persuasive techniques to win an argument with which you don't agree.

This activity aims to help participants begin the process of learning how to be persuasive. It is a three-person role play so could be used with groups from three to 30 (maximum). You will need a suitable room and a set of the 'Role cards' cut up from page 35 for each group of three. The activity could take between 40 minutes and one hour.

Aims of the activity

- To demonstrate the skills involved in arguing persuasively
- To encourage reflection on what participants need to do to develop these skills.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Arguing persuasively • Presenting a viewpoint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know techniques that can be employed to persuade people in argument

Tasks

Stage 1

Split the group up into smaller groups of three. Give each group a set of role cards from page 35. Tell the participants that they will play one of three roles:

- Persuader
- Subject
- Observer.

Also tell them that they will all get a chance to play each role. For the first role play, tell them to take a role each.

Stage 2

Read out the first scenario from page 34. Give them two or three minutes to prepare. Then tell them the person playing Role A has three minutes to 'persuade' the other person.

Note: You may prefer to write your own scenarios. Once they've got the idea, you could ask the participants in one group to write a scenario for another group.

Stage 3

After three minutes, tell them to change roles. Repeat the process and then ask them to change roles again. This completes one cycle in which all have played each role. You could stop here and reflect or engage in more role plays. There are enough scenarios for two cycles although, as suggested above, you can add others.

Stage 4 – Reflection

For a few minutes, ask participants to think about which particular techniques and use of language worked well. They can actually ask the subject which they found most persuasive.

Finally to the whole group, pose these questions:

Did the nature of the topic made it easier or more difficult?

Did they behave differently when they knew what techniques might be applied?

Did they improve as they practised?

Where might they have met these techniques in everyday life?

The scenarios

1. Persuade a meat eater to become a vegetarian in order to stop animals being killed.
2. Persuade a householder to pay more on their electricity and gas bills to support environmentally friendly methods of production, for example by wind, wave, solar or biomass.
3. Persuade someone that they should recycle all their household produce for the sake of the environment. This not only means putting out paper, glass and plastic in separate containers, but also composting all food waste by using worms and filtering waste water for use on the garden.
4. Persuade someone that they should give up a tenth of their income to fund a fresh water supply in an African village.
5. Persuade someone that they should give up all their Saturdays for ten weeks to take part in a community project to improve the local environment.
6. Persuade someone that they should take part in a letter-writing campaign for prisoners of conscience run by Amnesty International.

Role Cards



Role A: Persuader

Your role is to persuade the subject to do something he or she may not wish to do. You can use any tactics you like, but you must not touch the other person or offer them bribes. You only have three minutes to do this.

Here are some techniques you can use.

1. Use emotive words – words which play on emotions, for example ‘noble’ when applied to someone who undertakes a community project or ‘torture’ when applied to animal experiments
2. Make them feel guilty.
3. Appeal to their better nature.
4. Suggest it is for the good of others – for example, neighbours, animals or the world.
5. Praise them – for example, say you know they are good, fine, honourable, or skilled.
6. Imply some sort of threat – doom and gloom if they don’t do it
7. Be stubborn and relentless – keep on at them.

Role B: Subject

Your role is to listen to the persuader and fend them off by providing reasons why you don’t want to do what they are suggesting.

You should try to respond directly to the points they are making. If this is difficult, just say you really don’t want to do it.

If you actually do feel persuaded, you can say you will do it or agree to do something to help.

Role C: Observer

Your role is to observe the exchange between the persuader and the subject.

You should keep a brief record of this.

Your main focus is how well the persuader did:

1. Did he/she use a range of techniques and arguments?
2. List them.
3. Did he/she use particular words and phrases that worked well? List some.
4. Did the subject appear to weaken at any point? What were the triggers for this?
5. Was he/she persistent?
6. What other skills did the persuader use?



Activity 8: Making a persuasive argument

Background, organisation and resources

A good speech in a debate involves a mixture of elements – logical argument, clear points supported by evidence, use of persuasive language and good delivery.

This activity, which builds on the previous one, aims to help participants develop the skills and attributes required to make an effective speech. It can be used with small or large groups but no more than 30. The participants have to make short speeches on a self-selected topic. Ideally they would have the opportunity to prepare their speeches at home between sessions. You will need a suitable room and copies of the resource sheets ‘Using language persuasively’, ‘Two examples of persuasive speaking’, ‘Tips for presenting a persuasive argument’ and the ‘Peer evaluation sheet’ on pages 39–42. The activity takes around an hour to an hour and a half.

Aims of the activity

- To make participants aware of the elements involved in making an effective speech
- To enable participants to practise the skills of making a speech
- To help participants develop their ability to speak in public
- To encourage participants to reflect on their performance and see where they can improve.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the issue which they choose to speak about
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a logical argument • Making points supported by evidence • Arguing persuasively • Presenting a viewpoint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the techniques that can be employed to persuade people in argument. • Know about the range of attributes required in public speaking: tone and pace of voice, body language, eye-contact, etc.

Tasks

Stage 1

Divide the participants up into groups of three. Discuss with them the importance of being able to speak persuasively as well as presenting a logical argument. Give out and go through the resource sheet ‘Using language persuasively’ on page 39 which reprises and develops further some of the ideas used in the previous activity. Ask participants if they can think of examples of the different techniques identified and other ways language can be used persuasively. Give out and discuss the resource sheet ‘Two examples of persuasive speaking’ on page 40 to deepen understanding – ask them to identify the persuasive uses of language in the two examples.

Note: Explain to participants that the types of persuasive language referred to on page 39 may also represent weaknesses in arguments that can be challenged.

Stage 2

Working in their groups of three, participants have to prepare and make a short speech on a citizenship topic of their choice. This should last for between three to five minutes. They have to present a logical argument which is supported by reasons and evidence (at least three reasons). They also have to use persuasive techniques, gain the attention of their audience and sustain their interest. Give out copies of the 'Tips for presenting a persuasive argument' resource sheet on page 41 to help them. One person from the group should be chosen to make the speech.

Stage 3

Participants make their speeches while others observe, using copies of the 'Peer evaluation sheet' on page 42. The members of one group fill out the sheet for the speaker of another group. If this might cause difficulty and offend sensibilities, then ask the members of the speaker's own group to do the 'Peer evaluation sheet' for him or her. The facilitator should also make notes using the criteria on the evaluation sheet.

Stage 4 - Reflection

Use the 'Peer evaluation sheet' to reflect on the speeches. Discuss with the group what they consider are the key skills required to make a good speech.

Ask participants to identify what areas they need to work on to improve their ability to deliver speeches which present logical arguments and engage their audience.



Using language persuasively

It is important to recognise persuasive language when it is being used.



Persuader words

These are designed to lull you into accepting the argument without thinking about it too much.

Examples: 'obviously', 'clearly', 'surely', 'plainly', undoubtedly.

Emotive language

This is language which generates strong emotions or sympathy. It's often used to persuade you to believe an opinion and distract you from the logic of the argument.

Examples: 'noble' (actions) 'tortured' (animal experiments), 'yobs' (young people), 'slaughtered' (killed by soldiers), 'grotesque' (crime), 'degraded' (behaviour).

Appeal to celebrity

Increasingly used to sell products but also in popular newspapers, it is the idea that if a celebrity you admire thinks something then you should accept it.

Appeal to popularity

This the idea that everybody accepts this opinion, so you don't need to examine it too closely.

Appeal to guilt

Language which makes you feel guilty if you don't accept the argument (used by charities a lot).

Rhetorical question

A question for which there is only one answer. It is usually said for effect and does not expect the listener to respond. Examples:

'Who could doubt that ...?'

'Who in the world would believe that ...?'

False dichotomy

Suggests that there are only two options, one of which is unattractive – for instance, you can either give terminally-ill people the right to die or let them suffer in great pain.

Two examples of persuasive speaking

In favour of stem cell research

It is absolutely crucial that stem cell research goes ahead. Think of all the terrible diseases and conditions it might help to cure. Surely, you do not wish to see a great movie actor like Michael J. Fox, still at a relatively young age, suffering from Parkinson's disease. Before he died, Christopher Reeves, who we remember as a strong vibrant *Superman* campaigned for stem cell research which might help people with spinal injuries like his. Both of these men bravely come out in public in favour of life-saving and life-enhancing stem cell research. Have you seen a child struggling for breath in an asthma attack or scratching their skin raw from eczema? Stem cell research may be able to eliminate the genes that cause asthma and eczema. If one of your family were to fall victim to one of these complaints, would you not wish to give them the chance of recovery?



Supporting the monarchy

What a fantastic job our Queen has done over the past 80 years! With her parents she helped hold the country together during the war, the time of our greatest need. She has provided stability and continuity during a time of great change. The monarch in Britain performs a unique role because she does not get involved in political squabbles. As a politically unbiased head of state, she helps the country move seamlessly from one government to another. The monarch can act as a figurehead for the loyalty of the people of Britain particularly in times of sorrow or strife. And how well the queen has carried out this role! She is loved not only in this country but throughout the world. We owe her a debt of gratitude.



Some mean spirited people say the monarchy is expensive. But think of the millions of pounds the Royals bring in through the tourist industry. The monarchy is a huge draw for foreigners who are rightly envious of the glamour, pomp and ceremony which the Royal Family bring to our great country. And, if we got rid of the monarchy, who would you like as president in this country – a winner from *Big Brother*? That's a worrying thought, isn't it?

Tips for presenting a persuasive argument

Clear logical argument

The main feature of a good speech is a clear, logical argument where the audience can understand what points you are making and the reasons you are giving to support those points. Where possible you should use evidence to strengthen your reasons. The evidence should be as credible as possible, that is from a reliable source. It is better to make two or three points well than to rattle on and say too much.

Persuasive language

You also need to convince the audience that they should accept your argument. Use some persuasive techniques to do this.

Voice

Try to vary the tone of your voice. There is nothing worse than someone going on in the same monotonous tone. It is better if your voice goes up and down in volume and intensity, so raise the tone and stress some parts of your speech, while other bits can be said in a softer voice.

The pace of your voice is also important. Do not speak too fast. Make sure you say words clearly and cleanly. Alternatively, don't speak so slowly that it becomes a dirge.

Body language

The way you look will affect the audience. You should look confident and welcoming. Don't look as if you would like to melt into the wall as if you would rather not be there. Stand straight and look alert. Leaning forward suggests determination. Open palms suggest sincerity and openness; closed fists suggest aggressiveness and confrontation.

Gain attention and sustain interest

Make eye contact with the audience. Do not read directly from notes. Glance at your notes when you need to. Try to gain the audiences' attention. You might tell a story or provide an interesting example of what you're talking about. Sustain their interest by putting in little asides as you go along or perhaps encouraging them to participate at one point.



Peer evaluation sheet

Name of speaker

Content

Was the content of speech good?
Did the speaker make good points supported by evidence?

Argument

Was the argument clear and logical?
Did one point flow on from another?

Did the speaker use varied tone of voice?

Was the pace (speed at which person spoke) lively but not too fast?

Did the speaker make eye-contact with the audience?

Did he or she not read directly from notes?

Was the body language of the person positive?

Did the speaker use language to sustain interest and persuade the audience?

Activity 9: Spot debate

Background, organisation and resources

This activity follows on from the previous section where young people have been encouraged to listen to and think critically about arguments. It aims to get them to practise these skills in a quick-fire way that is stimulating and fun.

It also aims to introduce them to the more formal mechanism of the debate where two sides take opposing views on a citizenship issue. The purpose of this is to tease out the arguments for and against a proposition or 'motion', for example 'Animal testing for the benefit of humans should be stopped'.

For this exercise you will need a group of at least 10 (five for each side). but the group size can reach to 30 or even more. You will need no resources other than a microphone (ideally wireless) or another object which people pass to show who is allowed to talk at a particular time. It should take between 30–40 minutes, though a smaller group may complete this faster.

Aims of the activity

- To develop the skills associated with debating issues, especially argument and counter-argument
- To encourage participants to express views and justify these
- To encourage them to put forward views they may not hold themselves.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for a discussion or debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the citizenship issues that are in the activity
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Making points, supported by evidence • Building on an argument • Challenging viewpoints of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the processes of a debate and about how to treat fellow debaters fairly • Understand how to use emotive language
Express and justify a personal opinion to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing an opinion • Give reasons for opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to express a view you may not agree with • Understand that there are a range of views on a particular issue and that some opposing views are valid

Tasks

Stage 1

Chose a citizenship topic for the debate. This may be a topical issue that is in the news. It could be a topic the young people have already been working on, so they have information about and some idea of the arguments around the topic. Alternatively, the young people could suggest a number of topics and then vote for the one they wish to debate.

Draw up a proposition or motion which can be argued for or against, for example 'Animal testing for the benefit of humans should be stopped'.

Stage 2

Divide the group into two equal-sized teams – one half for the proposition and one half against. Put the two teams into different parts of the room. Tell them that they may be arguing against what they think or believe, but that this is part of the exercise.

Give them 10 to 15 minutes to prepare their arguments. Tell them that it is up to them to work out whether they will do this in one large group (i.e. their whole half) or in smaller groups.

Stage 3

When they come back together, arrange the group in a circle with the two teams facing each other. Explain the ground rules:

- You will go to each side in turn to make a point.
- People put their hand up if they want to make a point but they may only do this once.
- The facilitator gives the microphone or object to one of the people with their hand up and only that person can speak. All the others have to listen and not make any comments.
- If there is general agreement that the point is relevant, then the team scores five marks, partly relevant two or three.
- Go to the other team. Ask first if anybody wishes to make a counter-point to the one just made. If they can and it is a good response, they score 10 marks, not so good five or six points. One person can make any number of counter-points. (They can also make one main point for their team.)
- Then ask the same side to make their point.
- Carry this one to a suitable conclusion.

Stage 4 – Reflection

Leave time at the end for reflection on the nature of the arguments put forward. You could ask questions such as:

What were good quality arguments or points put forward?

Why were they good? (Good reasons, supporting explanation, evidence provided)

What good counter-arguments were presented?

Were these effective in the debate?

What could have made the arguments or points better? (Knowledge about topic, more research, specific evidence, quality of reasoning).

Activity 10: Formal debate

Background, organisation and resources

This activity, which builds on the previous one, is designed to incorporate all of the skills that the young people have developed in the pack up to this point. In the public arena it is often through the device of debate that arguments are explored and people are asked to deploy arguments (i.e. set out a series of points with supporting explanation or evidence) and to present counter-argument to challenge the views of the other side. Although there are opposing sides in a debate, people may adopt a variety of positions between the extreme viewpoints. It is important that young people realise that, having listened to the arguments put forward, they then vote in a fair and democratic way for the position they support.

It is important that the proceedings are conducted fairly and democratically, and according to agreed rules. These are set out on the 'How debates work' resource sheet on page 47. The role of the chairperson is also crucial in ensuring fairness and that as many people as possible get a chance to speak.

You will need a room large enough to accommodate a debate, depending on the numbers involved. You will also need copies of the various resource sheets for participants, but you may not wish to use all of these or you may wish to give one or two copies to each small group rather than one per person. It would be helpful if all participants had a copy of 'How debates work' on page 47, as well as the Self-evaluation and Peer evaluation sheets on pages 48–49.

The activity may take up to two hours, allowing one hour for preparation and one hour for the actual debate. There should also be time allowed at the end for reflection on the processes and skills.

Aims of the activity

- To enable participants to practise and reflect on their debating skills
- To encourage critical thinking
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a topical citizenship issue
- To encourage participants to express views and justify these
- To practise speaking in public.

Learning objectives

Targeted QCA learning objectives	Skills required in this activity	Knowledge and understanding required in this activity
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research information and views for debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the citizenship issue that is the focus of the debate
Discuss and debate citizenship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Making points, supported by evidence • Building on an argument • Challenging viewpoints of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know about the rules of a formal debate • Know about the role of the chairperson • Understand how to speak persuasively
Express and justify a personal opinion to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing an opinion • Give reasons for opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to express a view you may not agree with • Understand that there are a range of views on a particular issue and that some opposing views are valid

Tasks

Stage 1

Choose a topic for the formal debate using some of the ideas put forward in the previous activity. It is important that the participants themselves are involved in deciding the citizenship issue they want to debate.

Some participants should be identified for the key roles of chairperson and opening speakers for and against the motion. These participants may be voted for by the rest of the group or simply allocated roles. You can divide the rest of the group into two sides (for and against) although it is not necessary to have an absolutely equal division. Some people may be arguing a case with which they do not personally agree.

It is also helpful to allocate to some participants the role of responding to the arguments of people on the other side. Their job is to listen closely to the arguments and see if they can come up with counter-arguments. We hope other participants will do this, but it helps to have some with this specific task.

Stage 2

Give out copies of the resource sheet 'How debates work' on page 47 and go through this together.

It is helpful if participants work in pairs or small groups when preparing for the debate. They should research the topic, using the internet, books and any other available sources. It is helpful in a debate to have an idea of the other side's likely arguments, so tell participants not to restrict themselves to one perspective. They should collect evidence to support their argument or opinions and explanations that they can use. One hour has been allowed for this but they may need time out to prepare on their own or with friends.

The debate provides an opportunity for participants to develop their public-speaking skills. They will have had some practice in Activity 8 'Making a persuasive argument'. The resource sheet 'How debates work' is designed to provide more support. Self- and peer evaluation carried out after the debate is the most effective means of making progress in this area.

Stage 3

Hold the debate.

Stage 4 – Reflection

When the debate has finished use the Self- or Peer evaluation sheets on pages 48 and 49 for reflection. In the case of peer evaluation, participants work in pairs and take it in turns to evaluate their partner's role in the debate. Discuss these with the participants.

How debates work

The role of the chairperson

A debate is run by a chairperson. It is his or her job to keep the debate in order. The chairperson calls people to speak and makes sure that they stick to the time given to them. He or she may allow interventions. The participants in the debate must accept the control of the chairperson who has an obligation to ensure the debate is fair and that as many people as possible get a chance to speak.

The motion

You need a motion worded in a particular way, for example 'This house believes that ... people should be given the right to die when they choose'.

Structure of the debate

- Two people speak 'for' the motion. Each speaker has a limited amount of time. The second speaker should add something new, not just repeat what the first speaker has just said.
- Two people should speak 'against' the motion, also limited to a certain amount of time.
- Usually, the order is: Speaker 1 'for the motion', Speaker 1 'against the motion', then Speaker 2 'for' followed by Speaker 2 'against'.
- Speakers have to set out their argument making two or three points supported by evidence or further explanation.
- Speakers can be interrupted during their speeches as follows:
 - If someone thinks the speaker is off the point, he/she can call 'point of order'. The chairperson asks the challenger to say what the point is, and the chairperson decides whether or not it is a valid point.
 - If someone wants to ask a question or add some information, he/she can call 'point of information'. The speaker decides whether or not to allow this person to interrupt.
- When the first four speakers have finished, the debate is 'opened to the floor'. This means anyone can speak, but they have to get the attention of the chairperson. Only the chairperson can decide who speaks. The new speakers may make new points or

points reinforcing what the other speakers on their side have said. Or they may make points which counter the arguments put forward by the speakers on the opposing side.

- At the end of an agreed time, the debate is halted and it is time to vote. You can vote 'for' the motion, 'against' the motion or you can 'abstain' (not vote for either side). The votes are counted and the motion is 'carried' or 'defeated'.
- Sometimes there are amendments to the motion that may be voted on. If we take our example above, then someone might propose that the right to die could be allowed if the person has an incurable illness which is getting worse and if two doctors are involved. Then the 'house' votes on this amendment.

Making a speech

- After you have gathered information, list the points that you would want to make in your argument.
- It is better to make two or three points clearly than try to cover too much. Choose the ones you think you can speak about convincingly.
- Write each point out clearly and say it to yourself
- Then write down the evidence/reason you are going to use to support your point.
- Now write one point on a cue card.
- On a second cue card, in short notes, write the reasons that support the point. These should be set out clearly and fairly large so you can read them easily when you are standing up.
- Do the same for your other points.
- Practise saying them several times.

Talking to an audience

- Take your time and speak slowly and clearly. (It is difficult to get the pace and tone of your voice right. You can only do this by getting others to listen to tell you what they hear).
- Use your speech notes to help you remember what you want to say, but do not read them out word for word.
- Try to make eye-contact when you are speaking.
- Stop and look at your notes between points or if you get lost.

Self-evaluation

How well did I listen to other people's views?

Give an example of a good point someone else made

Did I make points or express my opinions?

Did I do this well, or not so well?

Was I able to back up my points with evidence/further explanation or justify my opinion?

Give an example

Did I speak clearly and to the point without reading out my notes word for word?

Which of these skills do I think I could improve and how?

Peer evaluation (in pairs)

Name of the person being evaluated and their role in debate

Skills demonstrated

Evidence (give examples)

Contributed to the debate?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Made points clearly/expressed opinions clearly?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Supported points/opinions with evidence/further explanation?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Presented a reasoned argument?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Spoke clearly with confidence?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Listened to other views in debate?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Responded to views of other side?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

References and resources

Play your part: post-16 citizenship. Guidelines for providers of post-16 citizenship programmes, QCA, 2004, www.qca.org.uk/post16index.html

Make it happen: effective practice in post-16 citizenship, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

In this video (in VHS and DVD), young people are seen taking a range of citizenship actions, including preparing for, conducting, and following up a debate.

Agree to disagree: Citizenship and controversial issues, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Many of the discussions and debates in citizenship will be controversial. This resource pack considers approaches to teaching controversial issues and has an activity about chairing debates and discussions.

Critical Thinking for OCR AS Level, Michael Haralambos and Rob Jones, Pearson Education, 2006

AS Critical Thinking for OCR, Unit 2, Jo Lally, Mark McBride, Dave Wells, Heinemann, 2005

These are useful textbooks on critical thinking. They look at the nature of evidence and arguments and demonstrate a range of different types of arguments and categorise the flaws in arguments. This is helpful for challenging arguments in debates.

Critical Reasoning: A Practical Introduction, Anne Thompson, Routledge, 2001

Making Sense of Citizenship: A continuing professional development handbook,

Ted Huddleston and David Kerr, Hodder Murray, produced by the Citizenship Foundation for the Department for Education and Skills, 2006

Other resources on citizenship from LSN

The Real Picture: Citizenship through Photography, LSDA (now LSN), 2004

More than words: Citizenship through Art, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Get up, stand up: Citizenship through Music, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Choosing an angle: Citizenship through video production, LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Reality Check: Citizenship through simulation, LSDA (now LSN), 2006

We all came here from somewhere: Diversity, identities and citizenship, LSN, 2006

Getting the show on the road: Skills for planning and running citizenship events, LSN, 2006

For access to LSN publications please see the Post-16 Citizenship website

www.post16citizenship.org

