

# COULD YOU BE A YOUTH AMBASSADOR?

## TASTER ACTIVITY

**Age range:** 11 – 18 years

**Time:** 20 minutes to 1 hour

### Outline

This **opinion line** activity is the perfect way to recruit Oxfam Youth Ambassadors to your Oxfam School Group. It is designed to be used with students who might want to become Oxfam Youth Ambassadors but need to know more and to consider whether the opportunity is right for them. The activity enables young people to explore and discuss their own views regarding the value of campaigning to end extreme poverty, and their own enthusiasm for doing so with Oxfam. By the end of the activity some young people will be fired up and raring to go, and some will decide this opportunity is not for them. The important thing is that they will have reached this decision through a thoughtful, considered process. Once you have taken this step, your group can get started with enthusiastic participants who have a sense of commitment because they have actively ‘opted in’.

### Learning objectives

- Decide if they want to become an Oxfam Youth Ambassador.
- Better understand their own and their peers’ perspectives about campaigning and ending extreme poverty.

### Key questions

- What is campaigning?
- Do I believe campaigning is worthwhile?
- Do I care about extreme poverty?
- Do I want to support a movement that is working to end extreme poverty?
- What is an Oxfam School Group?
- Do I want to join an Oxfam School Group?

### Resources

- Space for young people to stand and move along an imaginary line.
- 1 printed copy of page 4 to read out.
- 2 sheets of paper to pin up – one labelled “totally agree” the other labelled “totally disagree”.

## Forming an Oxfam School Group: Essential steps

- Arrange a time during assembly, form time or class time where you can tell a large number of young people about the opportunity to join an Oxfam School Group.
- Use the PowerPoint to explain Oxfam School Groups.
- Invite those that are interested to attend your taster session.
- Complete the opinion line activity (described below) as your taster session.
- This session will identify the young people who want to join the School Group.
- **Are the young people on board? If so, then [complete the full registration form](#). We’ll explain the next steps (such as delivering the induction session) and send you ‘Oxfam Youth Ambassador’ wristbands. You will be added to the list of Oxfam School Groups and receive regular updates and resources.**
- Any questions? E-mail Jo-Anne at [jwitcombe@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:jwitcombe@oxfam.org.uk).

## Session outline

### Activity 1 (2-3 minutes)

*Introduction: What does it mean to be a Youth Ambassador in an Oxfam School Group?*

You've got more power than you think. We live in a time where big issues like war, climate change and hunger are keeping people poor. But with your help, change is possible.

By 2030, we could end extreme poverty for everyone, for good. But it's going to take all of us to make it happen. As an Oxfam Youth Ambassador you will help to do just that.

Oxfam Youth Ambassadors take the lead; you stand up for what you believe in and inspire other people to follow you. It's vital that we end extreme poverty as quickly as possible. And if we all work together, we can save millions of lives around the world.

As a Youth Ambassador you'll learn new skills, develop the confidence to speak out, become a better team player and take responsibility for your decisions. It's a different way of doing things that we hope you'll find rewarding and motivating.

The purpose of this activity is to help you decide whether you'll become an Oxfam Youth Ambassador. This will mean meeting and doing things in your own time, so we want to make sure you've thought about it carefully before you begin.

### Activity 2 (15-60 mins)

*Opinion line activity*

- Label one end of the room 'Totally Disagree', and the other end of the room 'Totally Agree'. Make sure there is a clear space between the two ends of the room that the young people can stand along as if on a line. Explain to the young people that you will read out a list of statements (on page 4). Explain that after each statement has been read out, they must consider how strongly they disagree or agree with the statement.
- Read out the first statement. The young people should then stand in a position along the line in a place that best reflects their opinion about the statement. They can stand anywhere along its length, depending on how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement.
- After the young people have moved into position along the line, ask them to volunteer to explain why they have chosen their position. It is a good idea to get a range of opinions by choosing young people from both ends of the line and from the middle. Use the notes (provided after the statements) to help you enrich and inform the discussion.
- After debating the statements, young people can amend their position on the line if their opinion has changed. If there is time, ask selected students to explain why they moved.
- When you have finished discussing the first statement, move on to the second and then work through the list.
- For more information about running an 'opinion line' (sometimes also called an 'opinion continuum' or an 'agreement line'), please refer to page 16 of Oxfam's Teacher Guide "[Global Citizenship in the classroom: A guide for Teachers](#)".

**Differentiation**

*Make it easier:* Instead of standing along a line young people could remain seated and hold up a red, amber or green object depending on how strongly they agree with the statements.

*Make it harder:* Young people could facilitate the activity themselves. Give them a print out of page 4 and explain how they could deliver the activity themselves.

**What to do next**

Complete the full registration form – see page 1.

## Opinion Line Activity: Statements to read out

(Read all statements marked with a ‘\*’ – you may leave out other statements depending on time)

- **I know what a ‘campaign’ is.\***

Put simply, campaigning means → applying pressure → to get the people who make the decisions → that affect the lives of millions → to do the right thing.

- **I have participated in a campaign before.\***

Some prompts that might help: Have you ever signed a petition? Shared information about an issue online? Written or contacted your MP about something? Designed a poster or a banner with an important message? Been on a march? Changed someone’s mind about an important issue? In an Oxfam School Group you will do this kind of thing but at the next level – you won’t just sign a petition; you’ll get hundreds of people to sign a petition too!

- **Campaigning works, change can happen when enough people demand it.**

Examples of successful campaigns include the [Suffragettes movement](#) which resulted in women in the UK (over 21) gaining the vote by 1928, the [anti-slavery movement](#) led to the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833, the [Make Poverty History campaign](#) in 2005 led to billions of dollars of debt being cancelled for 18 of the most indebted countries in the world.

- **I know what someone means when they say ‘extreme poverty’.\***

Living in ‘extreme poverty’ means living on less than \$1.90 a day (£1.46 in July 2017). But to the millions of people Oxfam works with across the world, it means so much more. It means not having enough money for basics like food, shelter and water. Or not being able to send your kids to school or get them seen by a doctor. Poverty isn’t fair, and it’s got to change.

- **I believe my generation can make a difference to ending extreme poverty.**

In 2005 Nelson Mandela said: “Overcoming poverty is not a task of charity, it is an act of justice. Like Slavery and Apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. YOU can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom”.

- **If there’s something I can do to help end extreme poverty, I feel passionately that I must do it.\***

Being part of an Oxfam School Group is a chance to make a difference. You decide how. You will take a vital part of Oxfam’s campaigns. You can also raise money for Oxfam if you wish to do so.

- **My voice is more powerful when I am part of a movement of other people (rather than campaigning alone).\***

Oxfam is many things to many people. It saves lives in emergency situations, it is a charity shop and it provides a way out of poverty. For some people, Oxfam is a movement: a platform they can stand on alongside thousands of others to demand an end to poverty and injustice.

- **I’d like to join a movement of people speaking out against poverty. I’d like to be part of an Oxfam School Group.\***

If enough people definitely want to form an Oxfam School Group then organise a time and date for your induction meeting. You will also need to register – see page 1.

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