

Activity 9: An opinion continuum: Where do you stand?

Learning objectives

- To apply personal values and opinions to an informed discussion of the refugee crisis and to begin to suggest what a good future would look like.

Time required: 15–45 mins

An **opinion continuum** encourages young people to think about where they stand on an issue. It helps them to explore complex and controversial issues and diverse viewpoints. This activity will help young people to explore their opinions and values about the topic of refugees.

- Set up the classroom so there's space for a continuous line (real or imagined) from one end of the room to the other. Explain that one end of the line represents **total agreement** with a question and the other end represents **total disagreement**.



See: Oxfam GB (2015) *Global Citizenship in the Classroom. A Guide for Schools*, p.16.

- Read out the statements below one by one. Everyone's opinion about each will probably fall somewhere on the line between **total agreement** and **total disagreement**. There are no right or wrong answers.

When you read out each statement, ask the young people to choose a place to stand on the line, depending on their degree of agreement with the statement. If they are mainly in agreement with the statement, they should stand near the “totally agree” end and if they are mainly in disagreement, they should stand near the other end. There may be huddles of young people at certain points on the line. Tell the young people that they may talk to each other as they choose where to stand. In fact, this is an important part of the process, so encourage them to question each other about why they have chosen their positions and allow them enough time to negotiate their places with each other.

- When they have formed a line, ask some of them to say why they have selected their position. After the class has listened to several people, give them the opportunity to change their position on the line in light of the arguments they have heard. You could then lead a short discussion on what led individuals to change their minds.

Statements

You may devise your own statements, depending on the issues raised by the activities in this series. However, we suggest that these statements would be a good place to start. Below there are links to the UN Conventions to support discussions.

1. Every human being has the right to live in peace and security.
2. The UN Convention on Human Rights provides good protection for people living through conflicts and crises.
3. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides good protection for children living through conflicts and crises.
4. I believe countries' governments respect the rights of refugees.
5. The refugee crisis is one of the most serious challenges facing the global community today.
6. The UK is doing enough to support people forced to flee from conflict and disaster.
7. Wales is a welcoming country.
8. I think we as a country should do more to support people forced to flee from conflict and disaster.
9. I feel that young people like me can make a difference to support people forced to flee from conflict and disaster.

[A simplified version of the UN Convention on Human Rights can be found here.](#)¹

[A simplified version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can be found here.](#)²

This activity is open-ended and consists of as many statements as you feel is appropriate. By the time you finish, young people should have explored their own and each other's **values** in greater depth.

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¹<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-1-15.html>

² <https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf>