

Vote with your feet

● Encouraging students to use geographical knowledge to form opinions

Set up Time: 5 minutes

Activity time: 10-15 minutes

Aims of activity

To get students to have an opinion on big topic issues and be able to explain why they hold that opinion. This activity also aims to give students a sense of the topics covered in university level geography.

Key messages

Students are able to hear the opinions and thoughts of others and use their geographical understanding and knowledge to form rationales. Students should be able to make a stand on specific points. This is something they are required to do in exams, and instead of sitting on the fence making an active and informed choice.

Instructions

Put signs up around the classroom – ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Strongly Disagree’.

Using a list (not definitive) of a series of ‘big issue’ statements, present the statements one by one to your students. Then ask the students to move around the classroom depending on whether they agree/disagree with a particular statement, standing underneath the sign they feel relates most closely to their feelings on the statement.

Then ask students to defend why they’ve made that choice to promote debate/discussion. Encourage students to answer using geographical terminology and to formulate connections and links with other areas of geography.

Materials Required

A series of different statements that you can use on a PowerPoint (not a definitive list) to give students the chance to make a stand.

Adaptations

Get students to bring their own statements to the class. This could include statements about geographical careers, for example, “XXXXX is a geographically related career”.