

# Lesson Plan 1: Fairness

## Aims:

- To explore the concept of fairness and how people decide what is fair and unfair
- To underline the importance of seeing an issue from different viewpoints
- To provide a framework to explore the process of debate and compromise in group decision making

## Curriculum Links:

Citizenship/PSHE (England), PDMU (Northern Ireland), Social Studies (Scotland), PSE (Wales)English

## Citizenship:

- To talk and write about their opinions, and explain their views, on issues that affect themselves and society
- To research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- To reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences
- To care about other people's feelings and to try to see things from their points of view

## English:

- Ask relevant questions to extend understanding and knowledge
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Participate in discussions, presentations, role play and debates
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others

**Time:** Approximately 30-45 minutes

## Resources:

- A method of recording class decisions such as a white board or large sheet of paper
- A set of topics for each group (see the end of this section)





Before the session prepare a set of statements (like those found at the end of this section) for each group. Children will be working in small groups of three to five students. Each group discusses the same set of statements.

1. Explain to the class that they are going to be working in small groups to discuss a set of statements. For each one they will have to decide, as a group, whether they think the statement is fair, unfair or if they are unable to decide. Ask the groups to look at each slip of paper in turn and place it in a 'fair', 'unfair' or 'don't know' pile.

*Approximately 10 minutes*

2. As a whole class, discuss several groups' decisions: on which did everyone agree and on which were there a range of opinions? Ask the groups how they made their decisions. Point out that people do not always agree on what is fair and not fair. Also point out that each group had to make compromises to agree on some statements. Ask: 'What do we mean by compromise?' and work towards the idea that it involves people finding ways to work together when they have different viewpoints.

*Approximately 10-15 minutes*

3. As a class, go through each statement (or a selection of them), discuss the differing opinions and then make a class decision on each. Allow some discussion and then call for a show of hands. When a decision has been made, note this on the class board under the headings Fair, Unfair or Undecided.

*Approximately 10-15 minutes*

4. Use this discussion to point out that as a larger group there were also differences of opinion as to what was fair and unfair and as a group you have undertaken a process of debate and compromise to reach a decision. Explain to the class that this is a democratic method of decision making, one in which everyone can be involved. Point out that voting, after a discussion, is a good way of making a decision as a group.

*Approximately 5 minutes*

#### **Development**

Ask the class about any methods of voting they know of, such as: show of hands, secret ballot, placing marbles in a jar, division (moving to one side of the room). Discuss with the class some of the issues thrown up by democratic decision making. How did they feel if the decision didn't go their way? Introduce the terms 'majority' and 'minority' asking children to come up with ways of explaining them: a majority is more than half the total number of those involved, a minority is less than half. Is democracy always fair and how can the views of minorities be valued? Stress the importance of discussion and listening to others so that voting is based on understanding of all the issues. Point out that, in a democratic system, everyone can try to change things and get their message across (as explored in the next lesson plan).

## Statements for Fairness exercise

Add to and adapt these to suit your class.

Print out one sheet per group.

Cut out the statements and hand one set to each group face down or in an envelope.

**Adults do not have to go to school**

**Children have to go to school**

**Children have to do homework**

**Dog owners have to clean up after their dogs**

**Children are not allowed to drive**

**School holidays are usually at about the same  
time for all children**

**The school rules apply to all children**

**Some people can run faster than others**



## Lesson Plan 2: Changing things and getting your message across

### Aims:

- To underline the importance of having a clear motion when debating
- To introduce the idea of campaigning, exploring how views can be conveyed and people influenced

### Curriculum links:

Citizenship/PSHE (England), PDMU (Northern Ireland), Social Studies (Scotland), PSE (Wales)English

#### *Citizenship*

- To research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- To learn what democracy is and about the basic institutions that support it locally and nationally
- To recognise the role of voluntary, community and pressure groups
- To explore how the media present information.

#### *English*

- Ask relevant questions to extend understanding and knowledge
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Participate in discussions, presentations, role play and debates
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others

**Time:** Approximately 20 to 30 minutes minutes with potential for extension

### Resources:

- Pens/pencils and paper for each group
- Materials for creating posters for each group (optional)



### Before you begin

Before the session, select the motion(s) for the debate. These may have grown out of the other exercises in these resources or be local issues affecting either the community or the school. If you prefer you can use one of the following proposals for a new law:

- All school classes should have a pet so that children can learn about looking after animals
- Every school should provide children with bikes and cycle training
- School holidays should be longer
- School holidays should be shorter
- All pupils should be provided with tablet computers for use at school and at home

Children will work in small groups of three to five. You can give each group the same motion or each group can have their own. This can be given by you or chosen by the group.

I. Whole class discussion. Ask what a 'motion' is in a debate. Draw out the fact that it is a statement that gives the topic for debate. Ask for examples and ask which of the following could be debate motions:

- Children should get a free apple each day
- I am happy
- I'm looking forward to the holidays
- Cyclists should have to wear helmets by law

Point out that the word 'should' can help turn an idea into a motion:

**Idea:** Wearing cycle helmets is a good thing.

**Motion:** Cyclists should have to wear helmets.

Ask for suggestions about how to turn these ideas into debate motions. You're looking for clear 'agree or disagree' questions or statements.

- It is good for children to learn about healthy eating
- Raising money for charity is a good thing for schools to do
- Our school assemblies are quite short sometimes
- Our school assemblies are quite long sometimes

*Approximately 5-10 minutes*



2. Task setting and small group work. Point out that in a debate the side proposing the motion (those who are 'for' it) will want to get their message across in a clear way that will persuade people that it is right. Those opposing (against) the motion will want to do the same thing from their point of view. So the motion has to be thought about and discussed fully with all the 'for' and 'against' points considered carefully. Only once this has happened can a vote be taken to decide whether the motion is carried (agreed to) or not.

Give each group their motion or ask them to choose one of their own (see above: 'Before you begin'). Explain that their task is to take their motion and work out the most important thing they can say to support it. To do this they will need to think about:

- Why it is important
- What difference it will make
- Who it will help
- If it would cost anything and why it would be worth spending money on

The rest of this lesson plan focuses on slogans. Explain that these are short phrases that are easy to remember. They can be used by supporters of a motion to get their message across in a memorable way.

**Examples:**

**Motion:** All school classes should have a pet so that children can learn about looking after animals.

**Slogan:** Pets – every class should learn how to care!

**Motion:** School holidays should be longer.

**Slogan:** Longer holidays make happier learners!

*Approximately 10 minutes*



3. Introduce the idea of campaigning, explaining that a campaign is a set of activities to achieve a goal. Refer to any campaigns that the children may be aware of locally (such as keeping a school open), nationally (anti or pro badger cull, general election or talent show twitter campaigns), or historically (votes for women, abolition of the slave trade). Ask what methods are used by campaigners to get their message across and talk about press releases, social media, advertisement and posters, radio and TV interviews.

*Approximately 5 - 10 minutes*

**Development:**

Working in their groups or as individuals, children can create an attractive poster with the slogan and 'Vote for...' adding their chosen motion below. They should think about any design or illustration details that will help the poster to stand out.

Timing is flexible depending on the media used. This can be a continuing task to which children can return at different times.

Small groups can research a range of campaigns for charities and other groups that have a message they want to get across. What techniques do they use to persuade people? What makes a good campaign?

Timing is flexible and development activities can be worked around other tasks in 'free' time.



# Lesson Plan 3: Making decisions together: School Council Role Play

## Aims:

- To use role play to practice joint decision-making through democratic processes using a school council context
- To provide a context for learning how to debate an issue and reach agreement on a formal proposal

## Curriculum links:

*Citizenship/PSHE (England), PDMU (Northern Ireland), Social Studies (Scotland), PSE (Wales) English*

### *Citizenship*

- To participate (for example, in the school's decision-making process, relating it to democratic structures and processes such as councils, parliaments, government and voting)
- To make real choices and decisions, for example how to spend money
- To consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across in life

### *English*

- Ask relevant questions to extend understanding and knowledge
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Participate in discussions, presentations, role play and debates
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others
- Identify the audience and purpose for writing

**Time:** Approximately 35 - 45 minutes

This activity can take place in the school hall or in the classroom. It uses a simple drama/role play format allowing students to enact a situation 'as if' but without requiring any performance elements.

## Resources:

- A 'board table' and chairs for each group of five to eight students
- Pens/pencils and paper for each group
- A copy of Mrs Patel's letter (at the end of this section) sealed in an envelope for each group



1. Ask the class what they know about school councils: what are they, how do they work and what kind of decisions can they take? How are the members chosen and who can be a member? Has anyone ever been on a school council? Talk about the role of a chairperson; who are they and what do they do? Stress the importance of everyone agreeing to allow the chairperson to organise the discussions. You could say that they are a bit like a teacher that the students choose.

Point out that different schools may have different ways of choosing and running their school councils.

*Approximately 5 minutes*

2. Explain that the class are going to work in small groups to imagine that they are members of a school council and to role play a meeting. In each group everyone has just been elected (chosen) by their class to be school council members. Their first task is to choose who will be the chairperson. They need to think carefully about who will do the job well.

Send them off into their groups. They should be arranged if possible around a 'board table'. They should start with the chairperson's chair empty, ready to be filled when a decision is made.

*Approximately 5 minutes*



3. Give each group a copy of the letter from Mrs Patel. The letter can be adapted to create a local feel if required. Explain that this has been sent to the Head Teacher. Ask the chairperson in each group to open and read out the letter. Ask for discussion about its contents – in particular what the money should be spent on.

Go from group to group listening in to get a sense of the decision making process in each. Be prepared to explain any details of the task, checking that everyone understands the word 'will'. If helpful, suggest different areas they might like to focus on such as sports equipment, classroom equipment, a painting for the school, a camera, school council tee shirts, anything that will keep the debate lively. If the drama is 'flat' with too little debate, pull individual children from each group and give them a clear direction to argue for a different decision.

*Approximately 10 – 15 minutes*

4. Pause the drama and ask each group to report back briefly. How are they making their decisions? Allow a maximum of five minutes more and say that they must decide on one proposal for how to spend the money. Introduce the ideas of a 'proposer' (the person that puts forward an idea for debate) and 'seconder' (somebody who agrees with the proposer) for a 'motion.' This indicates that at least two people think the topic is worth debating. Explain that the chairperson can have a 'casting vote' if the council votes with equal numbers for and against the motion. Stress that a proposal needs to be clear, using as few words as possible and with only one idea that can be voted on. The groups return to their roles as school council members to make the final decision.

*Approximately 5 – 10 minutes*



### Optional:

Depending on how far along the groups are and how much time you have, you could include the following:

- The proposal can be formally written down before voting
- The voting method can be discussed – show of hands or secret ballot

5. Bring the class back together and explain that they have just been involved in a 'democratic process' – making a joint decision in a fair and thoughtful way. Ask:

- How did they reach their decision?
- Did they have disagreements and how were these settled?
- How did they get their views across?
- How did they feel if the decision went against them?
- Could the process be improved – how?

*Approximately 10 minutes*

### Development

Ask the groups (or pupils working individually or in pairs) to write a letter to Mrs Patel telling her of the school council's decision and the reasons for it.



To  
Mr O'Leary  
Head Teacher  
Greenfield Primary  
Galloway Lane  
South Haxell  
OZ2 3NM

Mrs Patel  
51 Edge St.  
South Haxell  
OZI 3NM

15<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Dear Mr O'Leary

My mother died last year after a very full and happy life here in South Haxell. She often talked about her happy times at your school and was thrilled when her grandchild became a member of the school council.

My mother was not a rich woman but she wanted to do something for the school that meant so much to her, so she has left £100 in her will for the School Council to spend on any project they think is worthwhile.

I hope that you will pass this on to the council and I would love to know what they decide.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Patel

# Lesson Plan 4: Formal debating

## Aims:

- To understand how a parliamentary debate takes place in the House of Commons
- To experience a formal debate procedure

## Curriculum Links:

*Citizenship/PSHE (England), PDMU (Northern Ireland), Social Studies (Scotland), PSE (Wales)*  
*English*

### *Citizenship*

- To research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
- To learn what democracy is and about the basic institutions that support it locally and nationally
- To participate (for example, in the school's decision-making process, relating it to democratic structures and processes such as councils, parliaments, government and voting)

### *English*

- Ask relevant questions to extend understanding and knowledge
- Articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions
- Participate in discussions, presentations, role play and debates
- Consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others

**Time:** Approximately: 45 minutes

## Resources:

- One chair per student with chairs arranged in two blocks facing each other
- One chair for the Speaker placed at one end between the two blocks
- Classroom board and marker pen for recording key points
- A bell to indicate a 'division' (optional, see 'Development')

## Before you begin

Before the session, select the motion for debate. This may have grown out of the other exercises in this pack or could be any issue that your class would like to discuss. It should be a topic on which there will be a variety of opinions. See lesson plan 2 'Changing things' for ideas for motions. The class should be familiar with the concept of a motion from other activities in this pack

The role of the Speaker: You can either take the role of the Speaker yourself or ask one of the students to. This option may lengthen the time needed for the activity as you will need to establish guidelines with them and offer support during the debate. It is also possible to allow different children to be the Speaker during the debate

Arrange the room into a chamber style with a roughly equal number of chairs in rows on two sides facing each other. Place one chair at one end of the rows for the Speaker. See the 'Interactive Map of the House of Commons' for a helpful layout illustration: [www.parliament.uk/visiting/online-tours/virtualtours/commons-tour/](http://www.parliament.uk/visiting/online-tours/virtualtours/commons-tour/)

I. Task setting. Explain to the class that Parliament is where decisions are made on many issues that affect everybody in the United Kingdom. Explain that Parliament is made up of two 'houses' (groups of people) who discuss and vote on issues. They are the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Explain that today the class will make a decision on their chosen motion in the same way that the House of Commons does.

**Explain the following:**

- That the House of Commons Chamber is a special room where MPs (Members of Parliament) discuss motions
- MPs represent different areas of the country. You could compare this to how school councillors represent each class and come together at council meetings
- Explain that for this session they will be debating the chosen motion, just like MPs, in their own version of the House of Commons
- Today those sitting on the right hand side will begin the debate arguing for the motion, those on the left against

Explain that debates in the House of Commons are chaired by a person known as 'The Speaker' who chooses who will speak and ensures that both sides of the argument are heard. Also explain that it is the Speaker who makes sure that everyone follows the rules. Once chosen, the Speaker should take his or her seat in the chair at the end of the rows.

**Explain the following rules for the debate:**

- Individuals stand up to show that they would like to speak. When the Speaker selects someone, everyone else must sit down whilst the chosen person makes his or her point. When they have finished they sit down again and everyone else who wants to speak stands up again
- Only one person may speak at a time
- Speeches should not go on for too long (you may wish to set a time limit of 3 minutes)
- If anyone breaks the rules or the session becomes too rowdy, the Speaker will say 'Order, order' which means 'be quiet'
- The Speaker's decision is final!

*Approximately 10 minutes*



2. Discussion in pairs. Ask the children to turn to the person next to them and come up with three ideas that explain why they are for or against the motion, depending on which side of the room they are sitting.

If using a student to act as the Speaker, ensure they understand the role. Take this time to go through expectations with them, instructing them to choose a participant from each side in turn and to call 'Order, order' when needed. Explain that you will help them to keep order if needed.

*Approximately 10 minutes*

3. Debating. Bring the class together. Explain that the debate will start when the Speaker stands and calls out the name of the motion. 'Today we will be debating [insert motion]'

Allow enough time for the students to debate the main points of the motion. If the students appear reluctant to debate, step in with questions. Record the main points on the board for the students to refer to if needed.

If you have a student Speaker, assist them and advise them who to call as necessary. It is important to point out that, although the students begin on one side or the other, they can be persuaded by the debate into changing their mind (although they do not physically move across the room).

*Approximately 10 - 15 minutes*

4. Voting. When you feel that the debate has run its course or you are out of time, the Speaker should announce that the debate is over. Explain that everyone can now vote on the motion. The Speaker should now repeat the motion and ask 'all those in favour say Aye'; those who agree will say 'Aye'. Then the Speaker should ask 'all those against the motion say no' and those who disagree will say 'No'.

Ask the Speaker to announce the results. If the result is not clear, the Speaker should call for a 'division', see 'Development' below.

*Approximately 5 minutes*



5. Summary. Explain to the class that they have just been involved in a democratic process by making a joint decision in a fair and thoughtful way. Ask:

- How did they reach their final decision?
- Did anyone change their mind and if so, why?
- What did they think of the process and could it be improved?
- Recap on the key terms (Parliament, House of Commons, debate, Speaker, motion)

Finally point out that in the UK's democratic system a key role is played by the House of Lords. This is a second chamber whose members also take time to consider and debate key issues. Link this to the discussion in Lesson plan 1 about taking time to consider all sides and valuing the views of minorities.

*Approximately 5 minutes*

### Development

After the Vote, discuss with the class their opinions of the verbal vote method. Draw out the difficulties with ensuring that this is fair, such as louder voices, and that it can be difficult to judge the winner. Explain to the class that if the MPs disagree with each other about the results of the verbal vote, or if it is too hard to tell who has won, they hold a 'division', where the MPs leave the Chamber and head to one of two voting lobbies. The 'Aye' lobby is on the right hand side of the Speaker and the 'No' is to the left. Explain that when there is a division, a bell rings out to signal the start. If you have a bell, ring it to call a division. Ask the Speaker to help you count the number of people on each side of the room.

Once everyone has been counted, ask the class to retake their seats. Ask the Speaker to announce the results: "Ayes to the right...[number of votes], Noes to the left...[number of votes]....so the Ayes/Noes have it"

Discuss with students what they think of these different voting methods. Do they have other suggestions for how to indicate support for a motion (such as a show of hands or secret ballot)?

