

I agree, I disagree!

Aim - This activity aims to explore the statements below and thereby encourage the participants to analyse their own involvement in the issues involved in the banana trade.

Suitability - Statements vary in their complexity, so choose those that suit your group. Add some of your own!

You will need - Two large pieces of paper with 'I Agree' written on one and 'I Disagree' written on the other.

Let's get started

Stick the pieces of paper on walls at either side of the room. Ask people to listen to the statements as you read them out, and then move towards one of the signs, depending on how they feel. Those who are undecided can stay in the middle of the room.

Draw out why participants either agree or disagree with the statements.

- We shouldn't be able to buy bananas so cheaply. To make sure everyone gets a fair deal, they should cost twice the price.
- The issues in the banana industry really do not worry me. My concern is that I can give my family fresh fruit at a reasonable price.
- Pesticides are necessary for the banana trade to ensure healthy crops. The banana farmers should protect themselves against them.

- It is important how bananas look. I will always choose the healthiest looking fruit when I'm shopping.
- It's really not my responsibility how the banana growers are treated. We have enough workers' rights issues in Britain to worry about.
- Bananas should be cheap as we need access to affordable fruit. If farmers cannot produce them at competitive prices our supermarkets should just find other producers that can grow them more cheaply
- Subsidies for farmers, whether in the Caribbean or in Europe, are vital for their survival in today's global economy

Fairtrade Debate

Aim - This exercise adds to and compliments the activity 'I agree, I disagree'. It is a quick and accessible way for people to put the arguments for and against key questions and issues in the fair trade debate. There are no right answers, only opinions and points of view. The debate will help people to understand the complexity of the arguments.

Let's get started

The facilitator illustrates how to do this exercise using 3 volunteers and a banana.

1. Label 3 people person A, B and C.
2. Place a chair with person C sitting on it. Place the banana in front of them (or ask them to imagine there is a banana in front of them).
3. Person A stands just behind the chair on one side and person B stands on the other.
4. A tries to persuade C not to eat the banana and B tries to persuade them to eat it.
5. Person C, in the middle with the dilemma, listens to the arguments for and against eating the banana and decides whether or not to eat the banana based on the arguments they hear.

Split the group into teams of three and ask them to decide who is A, B and C. Give them a choice of statements - the list in the activity, 'I agree, I disagree' provides some ideas - to argue for and against.

Each time they try out a new statement they should swap round, taking it in turns to be A, B or C.

Ask volunteer teams to show their best argument to the rest of the class. Encourage discussion about the issues raised in each one.

Alternative method - try having more than one person A, and more than one person B. This gives people an opportunity to work together and pool their ideas, for and against the issues. This creates a very supportive environment whereby nobody is put on the spot.