

Silent Debate

This activity can be used as a starter activity before setting out on work around a theme. It can also be used to assess learning if repeated at different stages of a project. The activity is an effective way of engaging the whole class as all have to participate.

How it works

Place six pieces of large paper with a statement or question on around the room.

Students are allowed to go wherever they wish and write a paragraph either for or against the statement. (The first time you do this it may be beneficial to scaffold the language you would expect your students to use and give them sentence starters and phrases to build or refute an argument).

Once they have worked at two or three different stations ask them to refute the arguments that students have already written on the paper. (Again you will need to show them how to do this). They continue to move around the different stations providing alternative viewpoints.

The idea is that the pens are doing the talking and it should be silent.

This activity can be adapted by getting your gifted and talented students to create the questions or statements.