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# **Active Methodologies for Active Citizens**

## **Sample Activities**

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**Reykjavik, 29th May 2006**

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## THE ACTIVE CITIZEN ACTIVITY

### ACTIVITY:

Photocopy the sheet of 'Active Citizen' Cards and cut them up for use by groups. For a class of 30 students you will need 7/8 sets of cards.

Divide the class into groups of 4 or less.

Give each group a set of cards. Tell them this is a card-sorting exercise. They are to discuss each card and then put each card in one of three piles:

- cards you agree with;
- cards you disagree with;
- cards you're not sure about or can't agree on.

Allow 15 minutes of so for the students to sort the cards. tell them that when they have finished one person from the group will have to report back to the rest of the class showing two cards the group agreed with, two cards they disagreed with and two cards they were unsure about.

A student from each group explains to the class why the group came to the decisions they did about particular cards. The teacher draws the class to a close by summarising the views of the class as to what an active citizen is, what an active citizen is not, and areas of citizenship the class is unsure about. It is important to draw the students attention to the fact, reflecting reality, that the definition of active, participatory citizenship is not clear-cut and attracts a range of differing opinions.

### EMPHASIS:

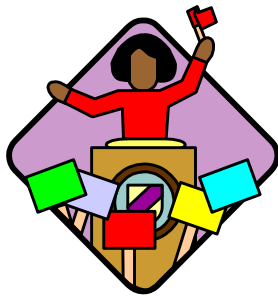
The purpose of the Civic, Social and Political Education course is to enable students to take an active role in the communities they are part of. This activity gives students an opportunity to think about these roles and to consider some of the rights and responsibilities related to citizenship.

### FOLLOW-UP:

For homework ask the students to make up three new 'Active Citizen' cards containing some of their own ideas about what active citizens should do and how they should behave.

In a follow-up class you could select some of the cards and behaviours of active citizens there was disagreement about and run mini-debates where two students say why an active citizen should/would behave like this and two students say why an active citizen should/would not behave like this.

## VIRKUR BORGARI



Gengur í stjórnmálaflokk

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## VIRKUR BORGARI

Skilar ávallt  
bókasafnsbókum á réttum  
tíma



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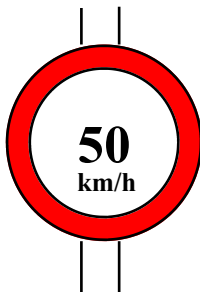


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Heldur aldrei veislur vegna  
hættu á trufla nágranna

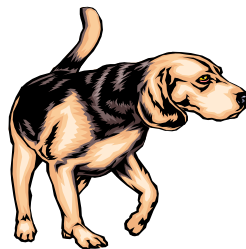
## VIRKUR BORGARI

Ekur ávallt á  
löglegum hraða



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Lætur hundinn sinn ekki  
sóða út gangstéttar

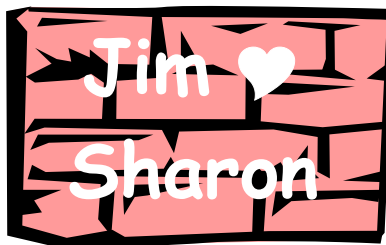
## VIRKUR BORGARI

Kýs ávallt  
í kosningum



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Krotar ekki á vegg

## VIRKUR BORGARI

Skrifar nafn sitt á  
undirskriftalista til að láta í  
ljós sterkar skoðanir



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Tekur upp rusl og fer  
með það heim eða setur  
það í ruslakörfu

## VIRKUR BORGARI

Reynir að koma í veg  
fyrir glæpaverk verði hann  
vitni að því



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Fer ávallt með tómar  
flöskur í endurvinnslu

## VIRKUR BORGARI

Tekur þátt í  
þrýstihópum til að  
knýja fram breytingar



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**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**



joins a political party

**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**

always returns library books on time



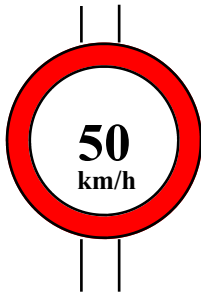
**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**



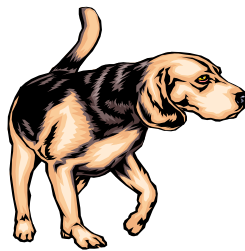
never has parties because of the disturbance to neighbours

**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**

always obeys the speed limit



**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**



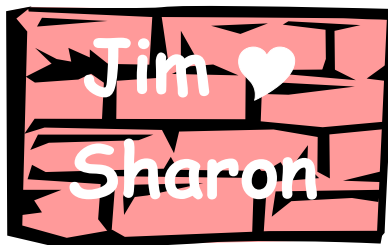
does not allow their dog to foul the pavement

**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**

always votes at the time of an election



**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**



never writes on walls

**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**

signs petitions to show strong opinions



**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**



takes litter home or puts it in a litter bin

**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**

tries to stop any person they see committing a crime



**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**



always takes empty bottles to the bottle bank for recycling

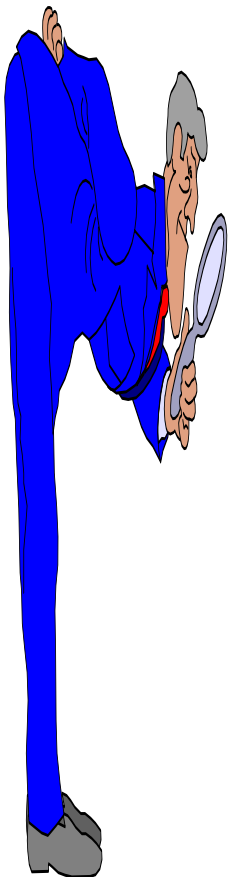
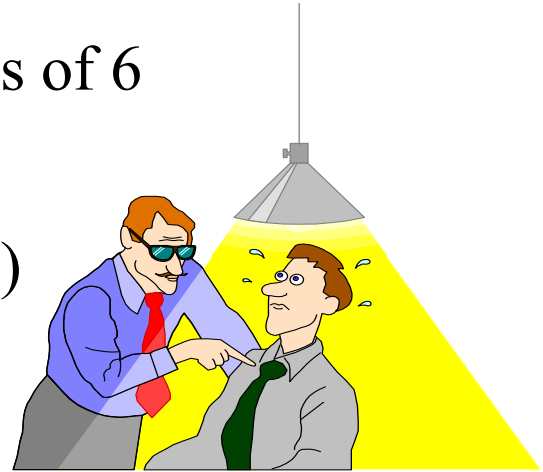
**AN ACTIVE CITIZEN**

joins pressure groups to try to change things

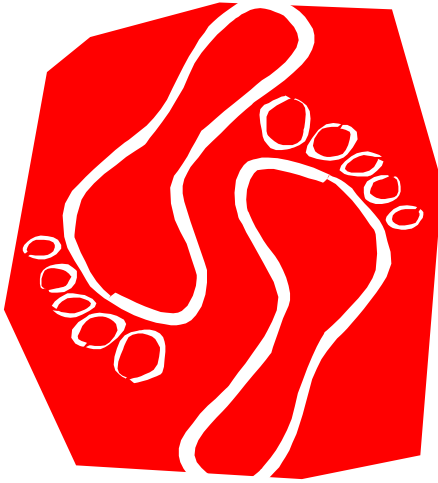


# Structured Discussion Methodology

- Provide context for discussion
- Divide the class into groups of 6
- Provide a stimulus
- Work on their own (3 mins)
- Work in pairs (3 mins)
- Work in groups (6 mins)
- One member feeds back findings to class
- Teacher draws out main points from feedback
- Follow-up work and/or homework



- Make sure that the students can read and/or understand the stimulus
- Initially you may decide that the students work alone and/or in pairs. Larger group work may come later
- If the tables are fixed, pair work may be the only practical option
- This approach requires preparation but gives you more time in class to observe and direct learning



# Giant Steps

## What you need to do

- Brainstorm on what are the rights we need in order to develop - i.e. the right to food; the right to education; the right to shelter, etc.
- Photocopy the role cards and give each person one to read.
- Ask them to think about who they are, where they live, how many are in their family, etc. Now ask them to stand in character at one end of the room. Ask the groups to stand with their backs against the wall and use the full length of the room.
- Explain that you are going to call out some statements. After each statement is read they must take a giant step, baby step or stay where they are depending on what the statement means to them; Take a giant step if you can do it easily; Take a baby step if you can only do it with difficulty. Don't move if you can't do it at all.
- Emphasise that the aim of the activity is to try to experience what life is like for their character - it is not about reaching the end first!
- Now call out the first statement. Once everyone has responded move on to the next statement and so on.
- When all the statements have been read begin the debriefing.

### STATEMENTS

I have been to primary school.  
I can speak out about school rules that affect me.  
I can learn to speak my own language at school.  
I could go to university.  
I can choose what subjects to study.  
I can wear clothes or jewellery I like.  
I can play games or sports or rest every day.  
I can live with my parents.  
I can meet my friends.  
I can criticise the government if I like.  
I have enough to eat and drink.  
I am paid the same wages as anyone else doing the same job.  
I can practice my religion.  
I can travel by bus.  
I can speak out about things that affect me.  
I can get information I need.  
I can go to a doctor when I am sick.  
I can marry whoever I like when I am old enough.  
I can join any group or organisation I like.  
I have a rich culture and heritage.  
I live in a clean environment.

### DEBRIEFING

Who got the furthest along? Why?  
How did you feel when you took a giant step/baby step/couldn't move? Why?  
How did you feel when others were moving faster/slower than you?  
What are the main obstacles to development that people face in their lives?  
Why do you think such differences exist in your country?  
Choose any **ONE** character and discuss what could be done so that s/he could fully enjoy his/her rights.

**I am  
DEAF**

Ég er heyrnarlaus

**I am  
BLIND**

Ég er blind/blindur

**I am  
GAY/LESBIAN**

Ég er hommi/lesbía

**I am an  
AMPUTEE**

Ég er aflimaður

**I am a  
WHEELCHAIR  
USER**

Ég er í hjólastól

**I am  
FULLY ABLE  
BODIED**

Ég er fullfrískur

**I am  
DYSLEXIC**

Ég er lesblindur

**I am  
MENTALLY  
HANDICAPPED**

Ég er þroskaheftur

**I am a  
POLITICIAN**

Ér er stjórnmalamaður

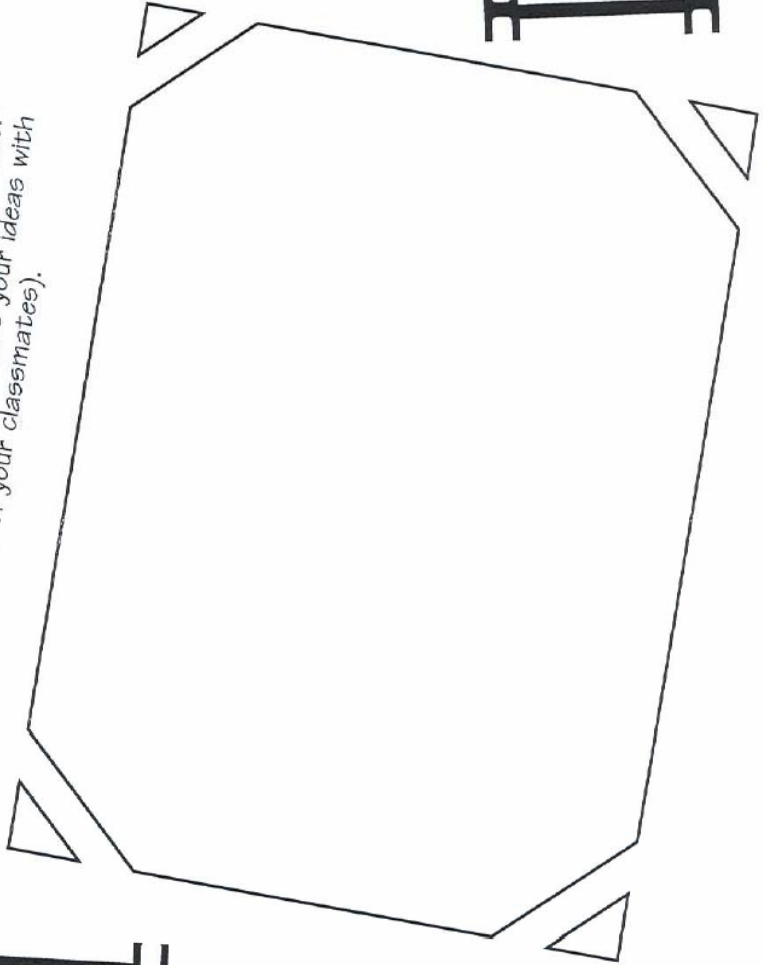
**I have a  
SEVERE SPEECH  
IMPEDIMENT**

Ég er mjög málhaltur

# WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?


*Place your chosen photograph in the centre of the page and spend some time thinking about the questions which surround it*

*Gather your thoughts on the different questions (maybe jot down some words which will help you remember because you will be asked to share your ideas with some of your classmates).*





## Use of Stories in the Classroom

- Alternative Title
  - Guided Imagery
  - Illustrate
  - Cartoon Strip
  - Dramatise
    - Role play
    - Mime/  
narrate
  - Objects in Story
- 
- Interview Characters
  - Write to Characters
  - Newspaper articles & Headline
  - Then What? (Prediction)
  - Diary
  - Quiz
  - Worksheet



**Ég er sammála**



# I Disagree

**Ég er ósammála**



## Walking Debate - Explanation

- 2 signs: I Agree and I Disagree
- Students stand in the centre of the room.
- Leader reads out a contentious statement.
- Participants show their opinions by moving towards either sign.
- Leader may ask a student to explain why s/he has placed him/herself where they are
- As a student speaks, others may move towards or away from that opinion.

## Walking Debate - Why?

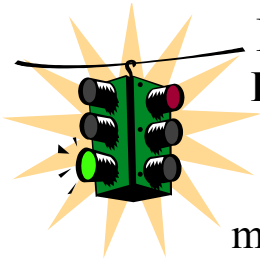
- Provides opportunities to explore controversial issues
- Encourages discussion and reflection.
- Enables students to express an opinion
- Encourages listening
- Helps students to appreciate and respect differing views
- Helps students to respect the freedom of someone to hold/change an opinion.

## Walking Debate - Tips

- The purpose of the statement is to generate discussion, questions, statements, comments.
- In order to do this a statement may need to be topical, biased, provocative, controversial.
- A statement needs to be appropriate to the age and ability level of the student.



# Walking Debate - Dos and Don'ts



## **Dos**

**Do** set ground rules, e.g. one person speaks at a time

**Do** explore the issue as far as possible in an atmosphere of mutual trust but keep control of the direction

**Do** remember that students may already have some knowledge of the topic/issue. Use the knowledge they have to lead them to further challenges.

**Do** invite as many students as possible to contribute.

**Do** take extra care with the vocabulary you use and watch for opportunities to extend the vocabulary of the students and make it more precise and accurate. Debate offers lots of opportunities for this: Seize them!

**Do** remember to bring students out of role and allow sufficient time for discussion.

**Do** point out to students what has been happening and the skills they have been developing.

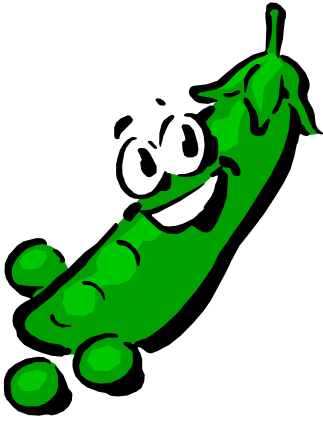


## **Don'ts**

**Don't** remove any of the protective strategies you have in place. The classroom is not an appropriate place for unprotected debate. If some personal vulnerability accidentally occurs either gently lead out of the role play or simply stop it. You are in charge!

**Don't** use value judgements which are inappropriate. 'Good' or 'Bad' points are not at issue here. Challenge, but don't judge!

**Don't** panic! Walking debates as a teaching method can be very effective. Take your time.



# The Peas Power Activity

## Aim:

It is the aim of this activity to stimulate feelings of fairness/unfairness, etc. to lead into the study of Human Rights.

## Materials needed:

Packet of marrowfat peas, blindfolds and material to tie hands and feet.

## Instructions:

- Ask the class to respect each other's safety.
- Divide the class into four groups.
- Group 1 should have their hands tied together.
- Group 2 should have their feet tied together.
- Group 3 should have their members blindfolded.
- Group 4 should be left as they are.
- Empty the marrowfat peas onto the floor and tell the students that they have may move forward and collect as many peas as possible on the command 'GO!'.
- When all of the peas have been collected, each group counts their peas.
- Afterwards, discuss how they felt while taking part in the activity.
- **NB.** This may be further developed if each group is given an identity, e.g. people without access to education in a Developing country, people with a disability, with no transport, no buying power, etc.

**It is essential when planning these activities to allow enough time for students to emerge from their roles and discuss the experience.**

