

Transport attitudes thermometer

Introduction

This short introductory activity encourages students to think about how different groups in society have different transport needs and a diverse range of views on transport policies.

Resources

Sets of the “postcode profiles” printed on card and cut up so that each student or pair can have one card.

The activity

Students will be given one of the “postcode profile” cards of typical areas around the UK. This includes the type of people who live there, and what sort of lifestyle they lead. They will need to try and think like people living in their postcode.

Individually (or in pairs) they should decide the following things:

- What sort of transport will their people use?
- Is public transport an option?
- How much leisure travel, and what type, do they do?
- What difference would car ownership (or not owning a car) have?
- What are the costs of the types of transport they use?

By using a postcode profile it is hoped that a wider variety of views on transport will be raised than would otherwise be the case.

Human Thermometer

Label opposite sides of the room “completely agree” and “completely disagree”. Put up one of the big statements on the board and ask students to stand along the line between completely agree or completely disagree. However, they are not expressing their own opinion, but those of their postcode people. Choose different students and ask them to justify to the class why they are standing where they are on the line (they may need to explain a little bit about their postcode person).

Repeat for each statement.

Big statements:

1. Aviation fuel should be taxed at the same rate as vehicle fuel
2. Car tax should be based on the number of miles driven, not the type of car
3. Public transport should be subsidised by car taxes
4. Bus lanes should be provided on all major roads in towns and cities

How Science Works

Ha Science-based technology provides people with many things that they value, and which enhance the quality of life or of the environment. Some technologies, however, have unintended and undesirable impacts. These need to be weighed against the benefits.

Hf Decision makers are influenced by the mass media, by special interest groups and by public opinion as well as by expert evidence.

Hg Many decisions about new technologies involve economic considerations, and raise social and political issues.

Hj Some decisions involve balancing the rights of certain individuals and groups against those of others.

5. Parents should have to pay to park at school to encourage children and young people to walk to school.
6. Local authorities should be allowed to charge workplaces a fixed amount for each car parking place they own.
7. All city centres should be pedestrianised
8. Out of town supermarkets should not be allowed to provide free parking for customers.

These statements are not a definitive list, and you may wish to supplement/replace them with other issues pertinent to your local area, or that are 'in the news'.

At the end of the activity, ask students to think about the costs and benefits of the different opinions they have expressed.

- What is their opinion about the different transport issues you've looked at?
- Why is it important for government to take into account the views of many different groups in society?

Note: The postcode profiles are based on those used on websites such as www.upmystreet.com. If desired you could replace one or more of them with more local postcodes.

A graphic consisting of a dark red rectangular box with a pattern of vertical bars of varying heights and shades of red and pink at the top. Below the pattern, the text "Transport attitudes thermometer" is written in white.

Transport attitudes thermometer

Introduction

This activity will help you to recognise some of the different attitudes to transport issues in the UK and to think about why it might be difficult to please everyone.

The activity

You will be given a “postcode profile” of typical people who live in different areas of the country.

Read through your profile.

Thinking about your profile, and the people described, answer the following questions:

1. What sort of transport will they use?
2. Is public transport an option?
3. How much leisure travel, and what type, do they do?
4. What difference would not owning a car (or owning one) have?
5. What are the costs (economic, social and environmental) of the types of transport they use?

Your teacher will put up a number of statements about transport. You have to decide whether your profile people would agree or disagree with the statements. Be prepared to justify your answer.

Postcode Profiles

<p>Commuter village Gill and John are well off, well educated professionals. They are both nearing 50, and their only child has moved out recently. They live in a large detached house. Many of the houses around them are also detached with large gardens. They both commute to work, and own a Lexus and BMW. In their spare time they enjoy walking, bird watching, fine wines, classical music and are members of the National Trust</p>	<p>Council terraces Nicole lives in a 2 bedroom council house on a large estate. She has four children, all under 7. She does not work, and does not own a car. She does most of her shopping at the local shopping centre, although she will go into 'town' by bus occasionally. She will go out to the local pub on a Friday night, as long as she can get a babysitter. She has only been on holiday once in the last 5 years, when she and a friend went to a caravan park for a week.</p>
<p>Family Suburb Mark and Sheena live in a four-bedroom semi built in the 1950's. They have 3 children, all at school. Mark has a company car and works as a manager at a local pharmaceutical company. Sheena works part-time as a Health visitor. She drives a MPV so that she can take the children to school and to their numerous after-school activities. They like to go abroad to Europe and the Mediterranean, but are also happy to go on a self-catered holiday in the UK.</p>	<p>Commuter town Martin and Joanne live in a detached house on a newly built estate. They are both in their early thirties and have two children, both in primary school. Martin is a car salesman and Joanne works as a radiographer in a local hospital. Joanne drives a large 4x4, and Martin drives a sporty coupe. They go on one main holiday a year to Spain, Portugal or Florida, and will also take weekend breaks now and then. They like to be active and Martin plays Rugby while Joanne does Pilates.</p>
<p>Local Authority Flats Enid is a widow who lives on her own in a 1 bed flat. Almost all her neighbours are over 60, and one or two are over 75. Enid lives on two small pensions which are worth less than £10,000 a year. She doesn't have a car, and shops mostly at the local precinct, or using a mail order catalogue. She goes on holiday once a year to stay with her daughter who lives in Scotland.</p>	<p>Rural area (Agricultural) George and Christine live and work on a large farm, although their household income is quite modest. They have 3 children, 2 of whom have left home. Their house is isolated, and they have 3 cars so that they can get out and about. They have limited spare time, and do not go out socially very much. Holidays tend to be within the UK</p>
<p>Prosperous suburbs Steven and Adele live in a large semi-detached house in an old, established suburb. Steven works for an investment bank, and Adele works from home part-time as an accountant. They have three children, one of whom is studying at the local University while living at home. The others are still at school. They are members of the local car pool and do not own their own car. Steven cycles to work. The younger children walk or cycle to school, while the eldest child uses public transport to get to lectures. When they go on holiday (or abroad for work) then they usually offset the carbon that they generate using a UN approved scheme.</p>	<p>Ex-council house neighbourhood Keith and Michelle live in a two bedroom semi-detached house. They bought their council house a few years ago, as did many of their neighbours. Since then they have done quite a lot of work on the house, replacing the windows and doors with UPVC ones, and getting a conservatory. Keith is a long distance lorry driver, and Michelle works part-time as a teaching assistant at the local school. They have one car, an older Ford which they bought second-hand. They have twins who are taking GCSE's. They take one holiday a year, usually a package holiday to Greece or caravanning in the UK.</p>
<p>Urban council house estate Dean and Kylie live in a 3 bedroom council house on a large estate built at the edge of town. They have 2 children, and Dean also has a child from previous relationship who stays with them sometimes. All three children attend the local school. Dean used to work for a car manufacturing plant, but has been unemployed since it was relocated to Germany. Kylie works shifts at a supermarket. They don't own a car. They don't always go on holiday, but if they do it will be a cheap package holiday, or camping in the UK.</p>	<p>Urban Flats Justin rents an apartment in a newly built block in the centre of a large city. He works for a consultancy firm and hopes to become a partner fairly soon. He earns a very good salary, but works long hours to do so. He does all of his shopping online, and only pops into the local shop if he runs out of milk. He doesn't own a car, but will hire one if he needs to. He likes to travel abroad and goes away a lot – winter sun, skiing, weekend breaks and long haul trips to Asia. He also travels regularly for work.</p>