

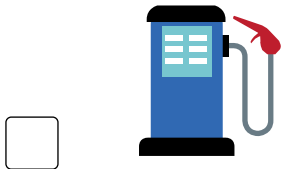


Adult

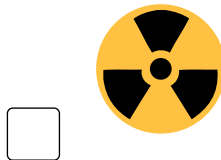
# A Matter of Opinion

## Part 1

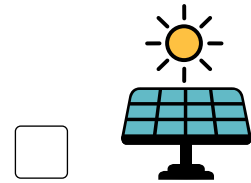
A. Write the number (1-4) that matches your opinion about each energy source.



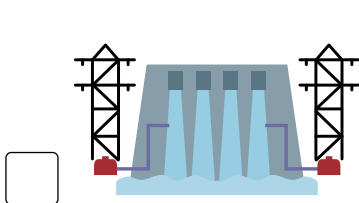
Fossil fuels  
(coal, oil, and gas)



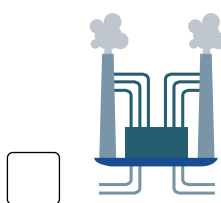
Nuclear power  
(electricity from nuclear energy)



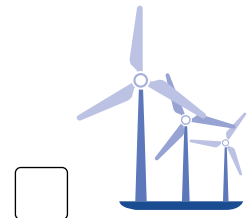
Solar power  
(electricity from the sun's light and heat)



Hydroelectric power  
(power from water to make electricity)



Geothermal power  
(heat from the **center** of the Earth)



Wind power  
(power from the wind)

1. I'm completely **in favor of** it.
2. I'm completely against it.
3. I think there are pros and cons to it.
4. I have no opinion about it.

 center in favor of	 centre in favour of
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B.  Listen to people being interviewed about nuclear power. Check (✓) who agrees with each statement.

	Man	Woman
1. Nuclear plants are dangerous for national security.		
2. Modern nuclear technology is very safe.		
3. Nuclear power is cleaner than fossil fuels.		
4. Nuclear plants can have serious accidents.		
5. There is no safe way to store nuclear waste.		
6. Nuclear power is constant.		
7. Nuclear plants are expensive to build.		
8. Nuclear plants are cheap to operate.		

C. Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

1. Do the speakers generally agree or disagree about nuclear power?
2. Does either speaker list only positive or only negative points about nuclear power? Explain.
3. In your opinion, which speaker thought about nuclear power more carefully?
4. Have the speakers' ideas changed your opinion about nuclear power? Explain.



Part 2

A. Read about how to analyze a controversial issue. In pairs, discuss the questions.

Questioning Our Opinions

Think of a controversial issue that you feel strongly about. Do you usually talk about the issue only with people who have the same opinion as you? If you talk to someone who disagrees with you, how do you feel? When you disagree with someone about an important issue, are your conversations usually a discussion of both sides of the issue? Or are they more like an argument, with each person strongly defending his or her point of view?

People often make friends and join groups on social media with people who have similar opinions as theirs on important issues. This means that many people are in groups where everyone repeats the same opinions, and they do not question their points of view. If they talk to people whose behavior or ideas they disagree with, they either don't really listen to them because they already believe that they are wrong, or they only listen to them to find problems with their arguments. They want to prove that their ideas are right and the other person's ideas are wrong. This perspective is very black-and-white and typically the truth is in a gray area.

In a traditional debate, the debaters take opposite points of view and look for facts and statistics in defense of their ideas. They consider the possible arguments on the other side but only to prepare to argue against them. In real life, all relationships would work better if people questioned their own opinions and tried to see issues from the opposite point of view. If people imagine why others might have a different opinion from theirs, they can try to find points in their arguments that they agree with. They may not completely change their opinions, but they may find enough things that they agree on to reach solutions that they are both happy with.



behavior  
gray  
defense



behaviour  
grey  
defence

1. Who do you feel comfortable discussing controversial issues with? Is there anyone you wouldn't do that with?
2. Do your friends or people in your groups usually have the same opinion as you about controversial issues? Explain.
3. What do you do when someone states a different opinion from you about a controversial issue?

B. Work in groups. Read the two people's opinions. Then discuss the questions.



I believe that it is sometimes necessary to break a law.



I don't believe that it is ever right to break a law.

1. Why might the woman think it is sometimes necessary to break the law? Think of examples of breaking past or present laws that this person might agree with.
2. Why might the man think it is never right to break a law? Think of reasons why he might think everybody should follow the same laws.
3. Which examples supporting the woman's point of view do you agree with? Which reasons supporting the man's point of view do you agree with?



### **Part 3**

**A. As a class, choose one of the debate topics about controversial issues. Divide into two teams and decide which team will be for or against each side of the issue. In your group, prepare arguments to support your side of the issue.**

1. Should your country stop using all fossil fuels by 2030?
2. Should scientists use animals in their research?
3. Should every citizen of a country have to vote in elections?
4. Should the legal voting age be 15?
5. Should all young people get a college degree?
6. Should there be a high tax on junk food and fast food?
7. Should we allow violence in movies and video games?
8. Should people be able to say anything they want on social media?

**B. As a class, takes turns in your groups to present arguments on each side of the issue. Make notes on both sides' arguments.**

**C. As a class, discuss the questions.**

1. Which points from each side of the debate did you agree with?
2. What solution to the issue might both sides agree on?



### Extension

**A. Work in pairs. Choose a controversial issue in your country. Research different points of view on the issue. Prepare a short presentation that includes:**

- the history of the issue
- arguments for one side of the issue
- arguments for the other side of the issue
- a solution for the issue that both sides might agree with

**B. Present your research to the class.**