

Lesson 2: 'The great biofuels debate'

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Understand that there are many different groups and individuals who may be affected by the production of biofuels.
- Present arguments from both sides of the biofuels debate.
- Come to a reasoned and informed conclusion as to whether the UK Government should significantly increase the amount of biofuel it imports from other countries, e.g. Brazil, Malaysia, and the USA.
- Propose some ethical rules or principles that should be used to guide and control biofuels production in these countries.

Starter (*All students*)

- Show a short clip of a 'select committee' for example <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5g-p7bIVO4>
- Question and answer as to how it works, what its purpose is, etc

Plenary (*Split class into small groups*)

Resources

- 2:1 - Sort cards
- 2:2 - Character cards
- 2:3 - Speech scaffold
- 2:4 - Presenter aid
- 2:5 - Panel aid
- 2:6 - Score card

- Students will act out a Select Committee inquiry looking into the question of "Should the UK increase the amount of biofuels it imports and if so what should be the rules for biofuels production?"
- You will need to divide the class into witnesses, who will be called to the inquiry to answer questions, and the panellists who will do the questioning and come to a final vote.

The witnesses

- In groups, students sort the cards (2:1) into two piles - positives and negatives about biofuels.
- Give each group a character card (2:2).
- Next, ask them to divide the cards again into those that their character groups would use and those that they wouldn't.
- Using the scaffold (2:3), and presenter aid (2.4), students put together their point of view on biofuels, including their hopes and concerns about them.

The panel

- Their role is to listen to the different presentations, to ask questions, and to make the final decision as to whether or not more biofuels should be imported into the UK.
- First sort the cards into the positives and negatives about biofuels (2:1).
- Using the panel aid sheet the panel should get together and think up some questions to ask each group (2:5).
- It might also be helpful to give them the characters so they know who to target their questions at (2:2).

Presentations

- Set up the room as a 'select committee'.
- Each witness group has one minute to present their case.
- The panel can then question the witness group for up to one minute.
- All should listen carefully and fill in a score card for each group (2:6).

The vote

- Free vote with a ballot box or do a body vote.
- The panel confer and then give their final verdict on the question:
Should the UK increase the amount of biofuels it imports?
- If time this could be extended, another option is to create a panel with a selection of experts for a 'Question Time' style debate.

To conclude

- If the decision is 'yes', what five requirements or conditions would you want to insist upon for all the biofuels that are imported into the UK?