

LINE UPS

An introductory activity to encourage students to think about how sustainability issues are embedded in many day-to-day activities throughout a product's life cycle.

Age:	11-18
Group size:	Approx. 10 at a time
National Curriculum:	Citizenship, Design & technology, Geography



Activity:

- 1 Choose an everyday activity that brings out the existence of environmental, social and economic issues, e.g. making a cup of tea or coffee.
- 2 Ask students to think about the process of making tea or coffee in their household – what usually happens, from sourcing the ingredients to the end of their life.
- 3 Ask them to think about how far the choice of ingredients normally takes account of the following things
 - Where the tea or coffee came from and who was involved in its production – has it come a long distance, was it fair-traded, who picked the tea, coffee?
 - Where the milk came from –milkman, supermarket, local farm, a central depot
 - Where the sugar came from – distance travelled, amount of processing involved

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

- 4 Now ask them to get up and to stand at different points from one end of the room to the other depending on how they assess themselves. For example, if they buy fair-traded tea, buy local milk and unprocessed sugar, they stand at far end of room. If they never consider any of those points they go to the other end of the room. If they buy fair-traded tea but don't consider milk or sugar they stand somewhere between.
- 5 Repeat the line-up activity but now thinking about the making phase:
 - Do they measure the amount of water according to the number of cups that are to be made?
 - Do they leave the kettle and have to re-boil it again because the water has cooled?
- 6 Complete a third line-up using the end of life-cycle, asking students to assess
 - What they do with any leftover water
 - What they do with coffee filters or tea bags/leaves
 - What they do with the packets the tea or coffee came in.
- 7 Review the activity to bring out the point that there are sustainability issues in most everyday choices we make.