

Britain by Numbers

How do you compare to the population?

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Teachers' Instructions

Overview of the exercise

The purpose of this data challenge is to get students to think about how representative their views on certain topics are compared with the views of society in general.

This resource provides the basis for learning about a variety of social science and statistics topics. Students can learn about surveys and survey questions, representative samples and bias in research, large scale social survey programmes and data, as well as how these data can show opinions and attitudes across different population groups and how they compare to each other.

How does it work?

Students need to answer some questions from a nationally representative survey. One way to collect survey answers from students is to use online survey software such as Google Forms (you can find some instructions for using Google Forms below). Students then compare their answers to the answers of the representative sample from the selected survey. The questions used in this exercises are from the British Social Attitudes survey related to interest in politics and media consumption.

There are two possible options to run this resource

Option A: Students compare their answers to the population responses using an answer sheet with the population data included. Here, students can see how much their attitudes and opinions differ from the population as a whole. The answer sheet with the questions and population data included is available as part of this exercise

Option B: Students compare their answers to the population by finding population data using NESSTAR, which is a software system for data publishing and online analysis that allow users to search, browse and analyse the data online.

The answer sheet with the questions is included. Students need to record their answers and the population's answers obtained through NESSTAR.

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Setting a student survey using google forms

This section provides basic instructions to create a survey using google forms. Google forms are free and easy to share and can be set after a set of relatively easy steps.

Before you start:

First, you need to have a google account. If you don't have an account, go to google drive and create a new account.

Once the survey has been set, you can share the link to the survey with your students and they can answer the questions anonymously.

You can get a report of the answer of the group by clicking on the tab "Responses".

More instructions can be found in the following link: [How to use Google Forms](#).

Setting the survey

1. Go to Google Drive and login (or create a new account)
2. On Google Drive, click on the top left button "NEW", hover down to "MORE" and select "Google Form"
3. Now, you can start customising and editing the Google Form
4. Under the tab Questions edit the form as follows:

Untitled form	➡ A few short questions
Form description ➡ Please answer the following questions. Later we will use the information to compare you as a group to the general population. We won't know your individual responses.	

5. Under Untitled Question, select multiple choices and set the questions as the example below:

Untitled question ➡ How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics... a great deal, quite a lot, some, not very much, or, none at all?

6. Set the response options, click on "ADD OTHERS" to add more options. Make sure to select the option "Required" on the bottom right side of the screen.

Option 1 ➡ A great deal
Option 2 ➡ Quite a lot
Option 3 ➡ Some
Option 4 ➡ Not very much
Option 5 ➡ Not at all

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7. Use the options available on the top right side of the screen to customise the survey, you can see a preview of your survey
8. You can send the survey by email or share a hyperlink to the survey at your convenience. These options are available by clicking the bottom “SEND” on the top-right corner of the screen
9. Add the following question repeating step 5 and 6

Q2. Do you normally read any daily morning newspaper at least 3 times a week?

Yes

No

Q3. How often, if at all, do you look online at a news or newspaper website?

Several times a day

Every day

Several times a week

At least once a week

A couple of times a month

Once a month

Less often than once a month

Never

Q4. Here are some items of government spending. Which of them, if any, would be your highest priority for extra spending? Please read through the whole list before deciding.

Education

Defence

Health

Housing

Public transport

Roads

Police and prisons

Social security benefits

Help for industry

Overseas aid