

Activity 11: The Poll Table [JFA Exhibit Outreach]

A Better Survey Experience: People Get to Explain What They Really Think!

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ANALYZE

The first day we're on campus, we ask students, ***"Should Abortion Remain Legal?"*** Even though many people fall somewhere in between a YES or NO answer, this question compels many to sign one side or the other. Once they do we can ask a question to find out more about what they think and help lead us back to the question of what the unborn is. So the poll table gets people to stop to do something they want to do: give their opinions. It's makes starting a conversation a little easier.

"Where Should I Stand?"

To use this tool, you want to position yourself nearby in a way that will allow people to feel comfortable signing but will also allow you to introduce yourself once they've finished signing. After you start a conversation, try to move your conversation to the side so others can sign the poll. You might say, "Let's step over here so we're not blocking other people's opportunity." Before, during, and after conversations, be careful not to block any of the signs. People will be more likely to sign the poll if they can read it!



Best Follow-Up Question – "Yes" Side

If someone signs the YES side, a good follow-up question to ask is,

"Do you think abortion should remain legal through all nine months?"

This question helps find common ground immediately because most people are opposed to late term abortion. It's also helpful in immediately getting back to talking about the unborn child. We'll demonstrate how this would happen on campus.

IMITATE: "YES" SIDE

Volunteer: [After watching "poll signer" sign the YES side] Hello, I noticed you signed the YES side to the poll table. I'm volunteering here today and I was wondering, do you think abortion should remain legal throughout all nine months of pregnancy?

Poll Signer: Uh, oh no. I'm against late-term abortion. I just think that early in the pregnancy, while its still just cells, she should have a choice.

Volunteer: (using JFA Exhibit Brochure) So up until what point do you think abortion should be legal?

Poll Signer: Umm...I'd say somewhere between the 7-week picture and that 18-week picture.

Volunteer: Oh, okay. So why do you think that?

Poll Signer: Well, it's just not that developed in those stages....

[Continue the conversation using the ideas from Activities 3 (Biology) and 4 (Equal Rights Argument).]

Notes about the “Yes” Side

The poll question made it easy to start this conversation in terms of getting a person interested and stopping her. It’s also easy because you know what topic you’re going to start with, you know a bit about what the person thinks, and you just have to remember one question for each side in order to start a dialogue.

But it takes courage to step out and introduce yourself, especially when the person disagrees with you (at least somewhat). Sometimes he or she is also moving quickly, so you have to introduce yourself quickly too. I suggest just practicing getting the words out of your mouth. The conversation will be amazing once you start it.

Best Follow-Up Question – “No” Side

If a person signs the NO side, saying that she thinks abortion should be illegal, do we want to talk to her? Of course! Ask the following question to get the dialogue started:

“Why do you think abortion should be illegal?”

We want to help her clarify what her view is and then give her reasons for the pro-life view that she can share with others. Make sure she knows about the on-campus pro-life club and encourage her to fill out a **response card** to get connected with JFA and the club. Then, we want to encourage her to do something specific to protect the unborn, namely, **share the brochure** with a friend. You can give her a tour of the Exhibit using the Brochure (see “2-Minute Outreach”) as a model.

Some Questions to Get Pro-Life Advocates Thinking (“No” Side)

- I’m curious...would you share your view on abortion in a discussion with classmates if you had opportunity?
- If you were asked why you’re pro-life, how would you explain your views to them?
- I’m curious...what are you doing to stop abortion in this community?
- Have you wanted to do something, but just don’t know what to do?
- Have you considered joining the pro-life club?

IMITATE: “NO” SIDE

Volunteer: [After watching “poll signer” sign the no side] Hi there! I noticed you signed the NO side of the poll table. I’m a volunteer with the Exhibit and I was wondering, “Why do you think abortion should be illegal?”

Poll Signer: Well, I’m a Christian and I just think that abortion is killing a baby. So it should be illegal.

Volunteer: I agree that abortion kills a baby and it should be illegal. What do you think that we should be doing about it?

Poll Signer: I don’t really know, I think what you guys are doing here is great.

Volunteer: Thanks. You could do the same thing really easily. We have copies of the Exhibit in brochure form that we give away to students like you who want to share this information with their friends. May I show you how you can easily give someone else an explanation of the Exhibit?

IMPROVISE

Without referencing the Imitate scripts above, approach a person (your partner) signing either side of the poll. Begin by breaking the ice and then ask a question to get the dialogue started. Let the dialogue run a few exchanges back and forth. Then freeze the action, debrief, and switch roles so both people get to practice.