



Ballot Box Activity

Read out a question surrounding a controversial topic, for example:

Many people think that the idea of producing saviour siblings is wrong because it creates 'designer babies' who are only created to provide 'spare parts' for their ill brother or sister. Is this wrong? What do you think?

Cut out and distribute a ballot paper to each participant. These ballot papers can be found below but can be adjusted to suit your discussion.

Ask each participant to fill in the statements on the card.

When they have finished, ask them to fold the paper up and place it into a ballot box.

Pull out ballot papers at random and read them aloud to the group.

Use the statements written on the ballot papers as a means for stimulating discussion about their opinions and ideas.

Once this is done, pull out another ballot sheet and repeat the process.

You may wish to write their ideas/statements on a flipchart.

Teachers' notes:

- Some topics can be controversial, in which people may not wish to publicly air their views because either it is something they feel strongly about, or because it is a bit too close to home for example. The ballot box activity allows you to get the views from your participants anonymously.
- In order to keep this activity anonymous, make sure more than one participant has the same ballot paper.
- To help the group take part in this activity, provide the group with background information. This can be through their own research, or something you have prepared in advance.
- You can find an example of an information card and the associated ballot papers below. These compliment the theme of Saviour Siblings, but can be adapted to suit your chosen topic.

<p style="text-align: center;">Ballot box Sheet</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ballot box Sheet</p>
<p>If my parents told me that I was a saviour sibling, I would feel...</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>If my parents told me that my brother/sister was a saviour sibling for me, I would feel...</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ballot box Sheet</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ballot box Sheet</p>
<p>If I was a saviour sibling, I would/would not want to know because...</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>If I was the parent of a saviour sibling, I would/would not tell them they were a saviour sibling because...</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ballot box Sheet</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ballot box Sheet</p>
<p>If I had a child with a disease that could be helped by creating a saviour sibling, I would/would not create one because...</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>If a friend/family member was considering creating a saviour sibling, I would advise them....</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



**“Saviour Siblings” or “Spare Part Babies”?
YOU decide!**

A “saviour sibling” is a brother or sister capable of donating life-saving tissue (such as blood, bone marrow or stem cells) to an existing child who is ill. A saviour sibling has the same type of tissue and is genetically very similar to his/her sibling.

How does it work?

A woman’s eggs are fertilized with a man’s sperm in a Petri dish in the lab.

Embryos are produced

One or two cells are taken from an embryo when it is two or three days old and genetic and tissue typing tests are run.

When an embryo is found that has the same type of tissue and similar genetics as the sick sibling, it is implanted in the mother’s womb.

Once the baby is born, stem cells are removed from the umbilical cord and stored for four to six months when a transplant to the sick child can take place.

An example of why this process might be used: Thalassaemia:

A genetic condition that affects red blood cells. People with Thalassaemia have very vulnerable red blood cells that die easily. In order to cope with the disease, regular blood transfusions are needed. In this situation, the saviour sibling is used to provide the blood required for transfusion.

Why might this be a problem?

Many people think that this process is wrong because it creates ‘designer babies’ who are only created to provide ‘spare parts’ for their ill brother or sister. Is this wrong? What do YOU think?