

The challenges and opportunities of an ageing society

Consequences of Britain's ageing population – Lesson 2 fact sheet

The consequences of an ageing population can be divided into challenges (often negative) and opportunities (often positive).

The class will be divided into 4 groups and each group will be given a role. Your group must produce a piece of propaganda on the A3 sheet which reflects how your group feels. Propaganda is a piece of communication designed to influence the audience receiving it. For example it will often have one strong message and will be designed to change the way people act. It must be eye-catching, simple and contain factual information.

The groups

Members of Parliament (MPs)

Your group will have a strong political agenda. You will be mainly concerned with being re-elected and will therefore want your audience to feel positive after reading your propaganda. You may therefore decide to leave out certain information that may have negative messages. You can choose to focus your propaganda on housing, healthcare or pensions as you are responsible for all these areas.

Old Aged Pensioners (OAPs)

Your group will have strong personal feelings. You were all forced to retire at the age of 65 and are receiving both a state pension from the government and a private pension from your work. You will have strong opinions about the social consequences including costs of living and the importance of family. You will therefore focus your propaganda on housing and the issues of retirement villages causing segregation.

Students

Your group will feel that this issue has nothing to do with you. You will have strong opinions about not increasing taxes and about needing to keep the retirement age at 65 because you are worried that if people continue working beyond 65 you will struggle to find work. You will focus your propaganda on pensions.

Company Directors

You all work for large companies whose main aim is to make a profit. Your group's opinions are divided into those who believe that the way to ensure economic growth is to allow people to work longer and you think we should encourage people to work for longer; and those who believe that people should stop work at 65 and contribute to the economy by spending their pension money and savings on holidays and consumer goods (TVs etc). You will focus your propaganda on pensions.