

Human progress (activity)

'If you had to choose one moment in history in which to be born, and you didn't know in advance whether you were going to be male or female, which country you were going to be from, what your status was, **you'd choose right now.**'

Barack Obama, former President of the USA



Questions

1) Do you agree? Would *you* choose now? Is now the best time to live? Why or why not?

2) Do you think you would choose now if you were...?

- a) female/male
- b) black/white
- c) gay/straight
- d) religious/non-religious
- e) disabled

Consider whether we have made progress or not:

- i) Has our quality of life improved? If so, how?
- ii) Has our understanding of the world improved?
- iii) What achievements have we made in science, technology, medicine, and social justice?
- iv) Has anything got worse?

You might want to think about the following:

- Medicine, transport, technology, the internet
- Democracy, human rights (including women's rights, LGBT rights, and children's rights)
- Social welfare, education, health, work, life expectancy
- War, crime and punishment, terrorism, slavery, racism
- Privacy, alcohol and drugs, pornography

Several of the above could appear on both sides of the debate.

Activity: Create a collage of symbols and pictures of human progress, or the absence of it, using images from newspapers and magazines.

For a humanist perspective, see the [Progress: a humanist perspective information sheet](#).