



Activity Title:

"Step Up for the Planet: Debate Dash!"

Purpose:

To explore facts and myths about shoes, waste, recycling, and sustainability while encouraging critical thinking, teamwork, and active movement.

Learning Areas:

Citizenship • Environmental Science • Physical Education •
Literacy (Speaking and Listening)

Time:

30–40 minutes



Set-up:

Mark three areas of the classroom, hall, or playground:



AGREE



DON'T KNOW / UNSURE



DISAGREE

Teacher reads out each statement (20 total).

Learners move to the area that matches their opinion.

After everyone has chosen, the teacher reveals the correct fact and awards:



1 point to learners (or teams) who were correct.



Encourage a short discussion after each round.

Learners can play individually, in pairs, or in small teams.



🏁 The 20 Debate Dash Rounds:

Statement Correct Answer Teaching Moment



1 Most shoes can be recycled easily in your household bin.

✗ Disagree Shoes need special recycling due to mixed materials.

2 Old trainers can sometimes be turned into playground surfaces.

✓ Agree Nike Grind and others do this!

3 Leather shoes are fully biodegradable within one year.

✗ Disagree Leather takes decades to break down.

4 Around 24 billion pairs of shoes are made each year worldwide

. ✓ Agree True — that's about 3 pairs per person on Earth.

5 Shoe soles are mostly made from natural rubber only.

✗ Disagree Most use synthetic rubber or plastic blends.

6 Some shoes are made from recycled ocean plastics.

✓ Agree Adidas and others create shoes from ocean waste.

7 It's better for the environment to repair shoes than buy new ones.

✓ Agree Repairs extend product life and save resources.

8 Throwing away one pair of shoes has almost no environmental impact.

✗ Disagree Manufacturing, transport, and landfill add large impacts.

9 Trainers can take over 1,000 years to decompose in landfill.

✓ Agree Especially if made with plastics and foams.





10 Second-hand shoes can't be donated for hygiene reasons.

✗ Disagree Many charities clean and reuse them safely.

11 "Circular economy" means using shoes made in a perfect circle shape.

✗ Disagree It means designing products to be reused, not wasted.

12 Shoe recycling always uses less energy than making new shoes.

✓ Agree (mostly) Reusing materials saves energy overall.

13 The first recycled trainers were made in the 1980s.

✓ Agree Early eco-shoe experiments began around then.

14 Soles4Souls is a company that sells new shoes only.

✗ Disagree They collect and reuse old shoes to help others.

15 Biodegradable shoes can be made from mushrooms and cork.

✓ Agree Mycelium leather and cork are sustainable materials.

16 The UK has no shoe recycling schemes at all.

✗ Disagree Many councils and stores have drop-off points.

17 Every pair of shoes has a carbon footprint.

✓ Agree Energy is used in materials, transport, and disposal.

18 Trainers are made from only one material, so they're easy to recycle.

✗ Disagree They use mixed materials — that's why it's hard!

19 Some companies collect old shoes and turn them into building materials.

✓ Agree Rubber soles can be reused for sports floors and tiles.

20 You can help the planet by donating shoes instead of binning them.

✓ Agree Extends use, reduces waste, and helps others.





Scoring Options:

Individual play: Learners keep a personal score sheet.

Team play: Each correct team answer earns 1 point; tally at the end.

Optional bonus: 2 extra points for best reasoned explanation in a debate moment.



Reflection Prompts:

After Round 20, gather in a circle and ask:

What surprised you the most?

Which facts made you change your mind?

How can we take “sustainable steps” every day?



Extension Option:

Have learners create their own 3 new agree/disagree statements about shoe recycling or clothing waste to quiz the class next time.

