INTERNATIONAL HUMANITIES CHALLENGE

When Populations Change

Is population change a problem to solve — or a change to adapt to?

Exploring ideas. Challenging thinking. Connecting the humanities.

Population Mystery

COUNTRY A

The population is ageing and could shrink dramatically.

COUNTRY B

Millions of citizens live and work overseas.

COUNTRY C

Millions of children have experienced growing up while one or both parents work elsewhere.

What's going on?

Different problems — or connected?

The Reveal

Japan

Falling birth rates and an ageing population.

Philippines

Large-scale overseas migration for work.

China

Internal migration and 'left-behind children'.

Why do people and populations change?

Jobs • Money • Housing • Family • Education • Policy • Culture • Opportunity

The Empty Town

WELCOME TO TOWN X

Population: 10,000 **20 years later: 7,000**

Young people are leaving. Births are falling. The population is getting older.

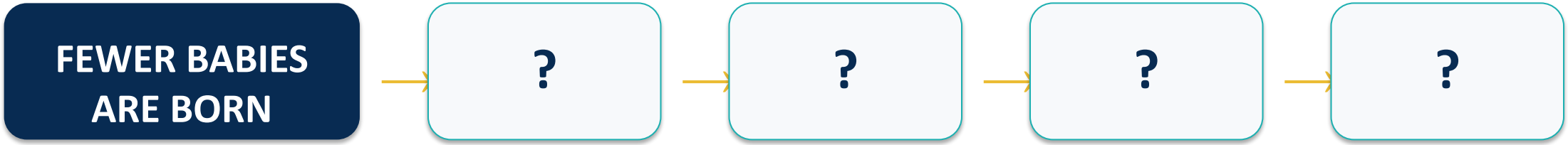
Schools **Healthcare** **Businesses** **Jobs**

Housing **Taxes** **Older People**

What changes next?

The Population Dominoes

Build a chain of consequences.



Now try something harder:

Can population decline create any POSITIVE consequences?

Don't assume that every change is automatically a crisis.

One Solution: Migration?

Your country needs workers.



Healthcare



Construction



Education



Elderly Care

Should immigration be part of the solution?

When one country gains a worker, another country may lose one.

One Family, Two Perspectives

THE OPPORTUNITY

Higher wages
Money sent home
Better opportunities for children
Skills and experience

THE COST

Family separation
Children growing up without a parent nearby
Skilled workers leaving
Emotional and social consequences

Is migration a success story?

Change Perspective

A parent moves hundreds of kilometres away for a better job.

CHILD	MIGRANT WORKER	EMPLOYER	GOVERNMENT

“This change is good / bad / complicated because…”

Now swap perspective. Can you make the opposite argument?

Population Control Room — 2050

Your population is shrinking, ageing rapidly, short of workers and increasingly concentrated in major cities.

- Support families to have children
- Encourage immigration
- Invest in automation & robots
- Raise the retirement age
- Make housing cheaper
- Invest in struggling towns

Choose TWO.

For EACH policy, identify one possible unintended consequence.

The Connection Challenge



Make as many meaningful connections as you can.

Which connection is strongest?

Big Question Thinking

Is population change a problem to solve — or a change to adapt to?

SOLVE IT

Governments should actively try to change population trends.

ADAPT TO IT

Population change is inevitable; societies should change around it.

BOTH

Some consequences need intervention while others require adaptation.

Use evidence from at least TWO places.

What would someone who disagrees with you say?

The Final Connection

A Changing World

Technology changes economies.

Economies move people.

People change cultures.

Population changes societies.

Environmental change influences all of them.

Can we understand any major change on its own?

Keep exploring! Use the online resources.

A Changing World is connected.

Keep looking for the links between people, places, decisions and change.