Britain Talks Climate

'Golden Questions' for segmenting audiences

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In the original survey, 45 questions were used to 'segment' respondents. The so-called 'golden questions' are 16 questions within this larger set that most strongly predict segment membership. (A technical summary of the segmentation and golden questions is available in the Methodology appendix.) YouGov has created a 'calculator' that lets you classify people into segments based on their answers to the golden questions. There are two versions of the calculator in the same Excel document: a 'single response' version, and a 'bulk' version, download both here.

The golden questions can be used to segment an existing database, so you can discover which segments you're currently talking to. They can be included in a public survey if you want to understand more about how different segments see a particular issue. And they can be used to identify and target mass audiences online.

Using the golden questions

It is not possible to easily and accurately classify respondents into segments with fewer questions than this. In order for them to work, respondents must answer all 16 in exactly the order they are set out below. We recommend you design your survey in such a way that respondents have to answer all questions.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1 Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

2 People who break the law should be given harsher/stiffer sentences.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

3 Ordinary working people get their fair share of the nation's wealth.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

4 There is one law for the rich and one for the poor.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Please read the following sentences and indicate your agreement or disagreement.

5 **Compassion for those who are suffering is the most important virtue in a person.**

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree

6 **I would call some acts wrong on the grounds that they are unnatural.**

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree

7 **Please say how well the following statements reflect your views using the scale below, where 1 means you agree completely with the first statement, and 4 means you agree completely with the second statement:**

1	2	3	4
People's outcomes in life are determined largely by forces outside of their control			People are largely responsible for their own outcomes in life

8 **How much control do you feel most people have over the way their life turns out?**

1	2	3	4
Some people's situations are so challenging that no amount of work will allow them to find success			People who work hard can find success no matter what situation they were born into

9 **For the following pair of traits, which one do you think is more important for a child to have using the scale below, where 1 means it is much more important for them to have the first trait, and 4 means it is much more important for them to have the second trait.**

1	2	3	4
Independence			Respect for elders

10 **For the following pair of traits, which one do you think is more important for a child to have using the scale below, where 1 means it is much more important for them to have the first trait, and 4 means it is much more important for them to have the second trait.**

1	2	3	4
Curiosity			Good manners

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

11 The world is becoming a more and more dangerous place.

1	2	3	4
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

12 Muslims are often unfairly treated with suspicion due to prejudice.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

13 Here is a list of activities that some people get a chance to participate in and others don't. Which of the following have you taken part in in the past year? (1=Yes, 2= No)

a   Attended a protest, rally, or march

b   Donated to charity

c   Volunteered in my local community

d   Shared political content on social media

Using the Excel calculator

Single response

The single response version is intended to be used interactively – you input an answer to each of the 16 golden questions. In Excel, click on the small triangle to the right of each survey answer to select a response. At the bottom of the screen, you will see a 'segment name'. This tells you which segment you are in based on your answers to the questions.

Bulk response

The bulk calculator uses the same maths, but lets you compute segments for up to 1,000 respondents at a time. Instead of having drop-down menus, it is intended to be used as a copy-and-paste tool. You can conduct your own survey, ask the golden questions of respondents, and then copy and paste survey answers from Excel or SPSS into the calculator. Paste answers into Column C through to Column R, and the predicted segment will appear in Column BC.

When you paste answers, be careful: they must match the calculator text exactly. For example, if you paste '4 –– Good manners' (with a double dash), this will not match with '4 – Good manners' (with a single dash), and there will be an error in the calculation. You can view the correct text in the single response calculator's drop-down menus. If your text does not match exactly, you can use 'find and replace' to correct it.

On the far-right-hand side of this sheet, there is a summary of the number of cases in each segment (Columns BE through to BH). This may be helpful in checking the representativity of your data. Data from non-nationally representative sources, such as surveys conducted on Facebook pages or mailing lists, may vary from the original sample.

The first column in the bulk calculator ('identity') is intended to be a respondent ID number, so that you can keep track of your respondents. You can leave it blank if you prefer.