

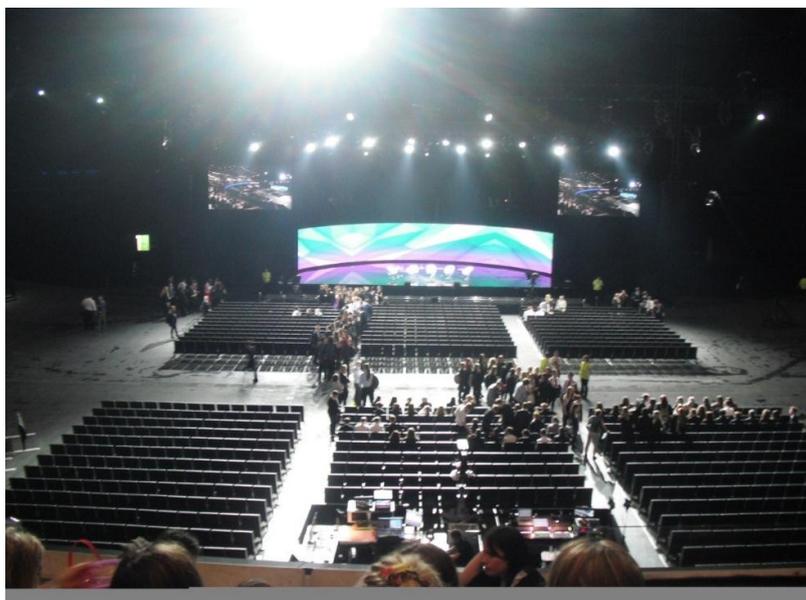
Broughton High School pupils attend BBC #bigdebate at Glasgow Hydro

On Thursday 11 September a coach load of S5 and S6 Broughton High School pupils arrived at the SSE Hydro in Glasgow.

I was one of over 7,000 pupils from all over Scotland. The size of the crowd and the heat inside the impressive venue was overwhelming.

Having arrived at 12pm, we had a very long wait as the debate didn't start until 4pm. Later on in the afternoon there was Independence-Referendum-related comedy entertainment on the TV and from Dez Clark but nevertheless many of us had had enough by the time it got to 3.55pm.

When 4 o'clock finally came there was an undeniable sense of excitement in the air. Would it be worth all the waiting?



Yes Scotland were represented by Nicola Sturgeon, the Depute First Minister of Scotland and Patrick Harvey, the co-convenor of the Scottish Greens, whereas **Better Together** were represented by Ruth Davidson, Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, and George Galloway, Respect Party MP.

A selected group of 500 pupils, sitting on the floor, were divided into equal sizes of groups; those voting Yes, those voting No and those Undecided. Many of them asked questions directly to the panel. Across the board the issues of tuition fees and public spending seemed to be most important. All panel members spoke well but, in particular, Nicola Sturgeon put across her point of view very effectively and got a great reaction from the crowd.

Overall, I think it was a great experience for us as it was a unique opportunity to make sure that we were well informed about the massive historic decision we would have to take on Thursday 18 September. Everyone was very engaged and inspired during the debate, despite how it was reported in the media.

Jo Stapleton, 5N2

