

FOUR CORNERS

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Used to stimulate student learning through movement and discussion, as well as formative assessment. The teacher provides a question or a controversial statement. A response is posted on each of the four corners of the room. Students decide which response they agree with and stand in front of it. In either partners or the whole small group, students share why they chose that response. Four Corners promotes, listening, verbal communication, critical thinking and decision-making.

PREPARE:

Teacher generates a question or statement related to the topic of study. Develop four different responses/opinions (e.g., Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). Post these on chart paper in different areas of the classroom or on overhead/computer screen, while each corner of the room is labeled A, B, C, or D.

STEPS:

1. Read the statement or problem to the class, without providing any choices. Allow time for students to independently think about an answer to the statement/question.
2. Ask them to write down their response and the rationale for their choice
3. Provide the four choices and ask them to walk to the “corner” that comes closest to their original answer.
4. In their groups, students pair up to discuss the reason for their choice. (2-3 minutes for discussion)
5. Partner A shares with the small group what Partner B shared until everyone in the group has shared.
6. Each group decides on a brief summary of their discussion.
7. A student from each group shares their summary with the rest of the class.
8. Optional: Each student writes an individual summary of her/his group’s discussion.

When to use Four Corners:

- As a getting-to-know-you activity at the beginning of the year with corner topics that help students learn about each other.
- Before introducing new material to tap into prior knowledge
- After watching a debatable film clip to gauge a reaction
- After reading a short text to begin a discussion
- In the middle of direct instruction to help students process information.
- When students need movement
- As a test review

VARIATIONS:

ABCD - for review, place A, B, C, or D in each corner. Ask multiple-choice questions, and have students move to the corner with the answer of their choice. Pairs discuss their reason for choosing their answer. Partners, share their perspective and then groups share out with the class. Students are allowed to change their corner after hearing the rationale of each corner.