

Where do you teach?

How did you learn about EFA?

YOUR NAME (in big letters)

What English level/ skills do you teach?

Name a favorite video clip/ movie/ instructional series  
you have used in the classroom

Where do you teach?

Arlington Public Schools  
Adult ESL Program

How did you learn about EFA?

co-worker

EXAMPLE

KAREN

EXAMPLE

Intermediate  
Oral Communication

What English level/ skills do you teach?

Mr. Bean

Name a favorite video clip/ movie/ instructional series  
you have used in the classroom

General notes for implementing this

## Ice Breaker Activity: “Four Corners”

### For use with English language learners

**Level:** This activity works with all levels, though low-literacy students will need help.

**Number:** This activity works best with at least 8 participants, and can be used with 60 or more.

**Preparation:**

- Cut pieces of 8.5x11 paper in half, one half per person in the activity.
- On the blackboard in the room where this activity is to happen, draw a large-scale example of what a student’s paper should look like, using yourself as an example— see Classroom Sample.
- Choose four questions that are appropriate for your audience; pose questions will elicit 1-2 word answers
- Examples: What is... your country, your favorite food, your favorite holiday, your favorite movie star, your hobby, your favorite animal.

**Procedure:**

- Wait until at least 6 or approximately half of your expected audience arrives before explaining what to do. When you have enough people, get everyone’s attention.
- Talk about how it is sometimes difficult to talk with people you don’t know. With your co-presenter, role play an awkward conversation between two strangers in a social setting.

Example:     A: (After standing silently in front of the person) ... Hi, how are you?  
                  B: Fine. (Pause, thinking of what to say) How are you?  
                  A: I am fine, thank you... (awkward pause)

- Explain that conversation is easier when we have some topics to talk about. Point to the board and review the topics you have identified (e.g. home country, favorite holiday, etc.)
- With your co-presenter, model another conversation, this time with each of you holding your completed “four corners” paper so that the other person can see the information.

Example:     A: Hi, Susanna. You like to swim? (noticing Susanna’s hobby)  
                  B: Yes, I like swimming. I swim every day.  
                  A: Oh, where do you swim?  
                  B: At the community center. Do you like swimming?

- Distribute a half sheet of paper to each person in the room. Explain that they must write using big letters so that other people can read their information during conversation. (Hint: distribute black-line pens for this activity)
- When students are ready, have everyone stand up and mingle. Tell students they can talk with one, two, or more students at a time.
- As students continue to arrive, have your co-facilitator stand at the door to hand newcomer a half sheet of paper.
- As facilitator, you should watch for newcomers and explain what to do, using the model on the board.
- This activity can continue for 10-20 minutes, depending on how much time you have.