

Four Corners Activity

Strategy Description:

The four corners teaching strategy can be easily adapted to any grade level and subject. It takes little teacher preparation yet results in motivated, engaged students. The strategy can be designed to take only several minutes of class up to almost an entire session. Memorable and valuable class discussions are often the result of the four corners strategy.

When to Use It:

- In preparation for any type of group discussion, debate, Socratic Seminar so students can think through and answer questions prior to engaging. This increases the likelihood of success for individual students, and the group.
- When introducing guiding questions for a unit of study.

Instructions and Preparation:

1. To prepare, write questions or statements in a definitive manner.
2. Before class, record the statements on an interactive white board or overhead so students will be able to view them.
3. Clear the four corners of the room.
4. Label each corner of the room with a sign stating strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.
5. Share the first question/statement.
6. While in their seats, students must write a short response explaining their positions on the topic (5-10 min).
7. Students report to the corner of the room that best matches their personal viewpoint.
8. Once in the corner, students have a 5 minute share out (for all corner-mates) with like-minded peers.
9. After the share out time, students select a speaker to summarize the thinking of the entire corner in order to present to those with opposing viewpoints.
10. After each corner speaker presents, peers spend 5 min/per corner to debate or question opposing viewpoints.

Modifications to the Strategy:

1. **Multiple Choice Questions:** Use the four corners strategy for multiple choice questions in any content.
 - a. With this option, label each corner A, B, C or
 - b. Ask a question and give four options. (options can be placed on the corner cards)
 - c. Students report to the option they believe is correct.

- d. All students who chose the right answer continue to play while others take their seats.
2. **Games:** The four corners teaching strategy also can be adapted into a simple game format.
 - a. Label the four corners of the room one, two, three and four.
 - b. Make four slips of paper that are labeled with the corresponding numbers.
 - c. All students go to a corner of the classroom.
 - d. Teacher draws a numbered slip of paper and asks a question to the given corner.
 - e. If the students in the corner are able to answer the question correctly, students move around the room to another corner.
 - f. If the students answered incorrectly, all students in that corner must return to their seats.
 - g. Play continues until one student wins the game.

Sharing Out Options:

Randomly call on students in each corner to share why they chose the given position.

1. Each corner's group can discuss the statement and develop a collective response to be shared.
2. The teacher can assign different groups to *orally debate* each other or *write a persuasive speech*.
3. The “agree” and “disagree” students can debate while the “strongly agree” and “strongly disagree” students do the same.
4. Have each group research their position and present a persuasive speech to the rest of the class supporting their position

Wrapping Up (Optional, 10 min):

Have students reflect on their position post discussion, and write a brief reflection about whether they changed positions. If not, explain why. If so, explain why and provide the argument that prompted the change.

*Repeat the process for at least 2 questions.

Fill in Controversial Statement/Topic:

Strongly Agree (Reasons for this choice):

Agree (Reasons for this choice):

Disagree (Reasons for this choice):

Strongly Disagree (Reasons for this choice):

Additional information gathered from the group that supports my choice:
