

EF2 UNIT 11

For and against

Background information – English Firsthand is most popular in Asia. Students from a number of Asian countries sometimes find expressing their own opinions challenging because they have been taught culturally not to say anything that disturb group harmony. This puts them at a disadvantage when speaking English, especially with native speakers or people from cultures where stating one’s opinion is more valued. Preparation: none but it is useful to review/preview the phrases and in the language map on page 104.

Procedure: As a full class, brainstorm at least 5 controversial issues. These can be from news and current events, from changes in youth culture or anything else. It is important that they be things that one can agree/disagree about. (For example, “Smoking is bad for your health.” is not a good topic because it is almost impossible to disagree. Even smokers know it is true. So if you want smoking as a topic, consider something like “Restaurant should have to provide a non-smoking section” or “Prices of cigarettes should be doubled.” Once you have at least 5 issues, students work in groups of 2-3. They choose one topic. They must think of at least 3 arguments or examples for BOTH sides of the issue -- more than 3 if possible. The key is to be looking at argument from both sides. When they finish, they can go on to another issue. You may want them to join a team who worked on the same topic and compare their arguments. Return to Activity Menu