

One approach you can use is introducing an effective *icebreaker* exercise. An icebreaker is an interactive exercise that can help you and your students get introduced, establish a safe learning environment, begin to get a sense of how your students learn, and how they feel about the class. Exhibits 7-1 and 7-2 provide examples of icebreaker exercises.

In the following exercise, students “interview” each other and then introduce their partner to the larger class. The exercise can be tailored to reflect the specific course you teach. (Exhibit 7-2)

General Icebreaker Exercise “Introductions”

1. What is the name of the person to whom you are talking?
2. Have them tell you a little about themselves. Where were they born? How many children do they have? What school did they last attend?
3. Do they have a hobby? If so, what?
4. What is their favorite ice cream? If they don't like ice cream, what is their favorite food?
5. How would they describe their learning style? How do they learn best? Writing/taking notes? Reading? Doing? Listening? Drawing charts?
6. If they could take a trip anyplace in the world, where would they like to go?
7. Do they have any concerns or fears about the class? Is there anything the class can do to help them overcome it?
8. What do they hope to get out of the class? What are their learning goals?

Enjoy the class everyone!