

Teaching For Learning



Cooperative Learning

Think about effective teaching. Based on your knowledge of and/or experience with cooperative learning, identify its benefits. Record your answers below.

Benefits of Cooperative Learning	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Reflection Exercise



Review this example and then respond to the questions below:

An instructor invites students to get into groups of four. He explains that they will be required to compare two articles on opposing political views. He assigns roles that must be carried out by a different member of the group.

- Person #1 will be responsible for recording the group's ideas on chart paper.
- Person #2 will be responsible for presenting the group's ideas to the class.
- Person #3 will be responsible for ensuring all ideas are considered and recorded.
- Person #4 will respond to questions from the class.

Elements of Cooperative Learning



1. Individual Accountability
2. Positive Interdependence
3. Face-to-Face Interaction
4. Collaborative Skills Development
5. Group Processing

5 Reasons for using Cooperative Learning with adults



1. Higher achievement in learning outcomes
2. Offers variety
3. Builds community
4. Increases odds for meaningful and production learning experiences
5. Enhances instructor assessment

(Dr. Carol Rolheiser)



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1. Suggest why this strategy may be engaging for students.

2. How can this strategy be implemented in your coursework?

Individual Accountability

Here are two examples of small group learning in a political science tutorial. Review each example and answer the questions that follow.

Example #1

The instructor invites students to get into groups of three. He explains that they will be required to compare two articles on opposing political views and present their findings to the class. Students work on their presentations and then share them with the class.


Example #2

The instructor invites students to get into groups of three. He explains that they will be required to compare two articles on opposing political views. He assigns roles that must be carried out by different members of the group. One person will be responsible for recording the group's ideas on chart paper, one person will be responsible for presenting the group's ideas to the class, and one person will be responsible for ensuring all ideas are considered and recorded. All group members need to be prepared to respond to questions from the class.

Which of these examples builds in individual accountability? _____

How is this done?

Apply what
you've learned.

 The goal of individual accountability is to enable each student within the group to increase his/her own competency.

Apply what
you've learned.

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What is the difference between the two examples?

Check with Thoughts from the Experts



Example 2 is more likely to build individual accountability.

In example 2, each member of the group has a particular role to play in the learning process. In order to participate, group members have to confer and collaborate to ensure that their presentation is coherent and consistent.

In example 1, group members have the assignment but are not required to work towards a common goal. Each student could do his/her own work, and present it to the class. In example 2, students must work together to present a common presentation that represents the collaborative input of all three. When each is given a specific role within the group, individuals must cooperate to share ideas and tasks leading to the final presentation, in which **all** group members have mastered the material in order to answer class questions. In other words, each must be accountable to the other for the quality of the process and product.

There are many ways to structure cooperative groups in order to ensure that individual accountability takes place. For instance, instructors can assign different roles to each member of the group. This helps to ensure that all members have something to contribute to process or product.



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Explore Achieving Positive Interdependence using Shared Materials

To explore the concept of shared materials further, consider these two examples. Students in a large environmental science class (over 300 students) have been asked to read an article on water conservation.

Example #1

The instructor has assigned an article of eight pages to be read in preparation for the next class. At the beginning of the next class, she spends 40 minutes highlighting and elaborating on aspects of the article. Some students did not bother reading the article since it was going to be recapped in class anyway; they listened and took some notes. Others had read the articles in preparation for the class and were questioning their efforts since the instructor provided a detailed summary of it. They will reconsider their homework strategy for future similar tasks.

Example #2

The instructor has students pick up copies of an eight-page article on the way into the lecture hall. Students are instructed to break into groups of four. Each student in the group selects one two-page section of the article. The student reads his/her section, summarizes the content into 5-8 main points, and then presents these points to the other three members of the group who are taking notes on the summary. In this way, every group of four learns about the material, accumulates notes on the entire article but has not had to read the complete article. Having read, listened, taken notes and discussed the articles, the students are able to internalize the ideas. After thirty minutes, the instructor provides an opportunity for clarifying questions, and elaborates briefly on the main points and provides illustrations not contained in the article. Students have access to the article online after the class.

Positive Interdependence



“Positive interdependence is successfully structured when group members perceive that they are linked with each other in a way that one cannot succeed unless everyone succeeds.”

Taken from Johnson, R. T. & Johnson, D. W. (1994). An overview of cooperative learning. In . Thousand, A. Villa and A. Nevin (Eds.), *Creativity and collaborative*



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1. How does example #2 use shared materials to strengthen group positive interdependence?

2. What preparation would the instructor in example #2 have to do in planning for this lesson?

Apply what you've learned.

Instructors can strengthen positive interdependence is to have students work with common materials when engaged in group assignments - readings, articles, films, laboratory or media equipment, art supplies, and so on.



Check with Thoughts from the Experts



1. **Shared materials as a means of strengthening positive interdependence:** In example 2, the instructor ensures that all students have read the article by devoting class time to the reading. Students are actively engaged in a cooperative learning activity where each is dependent on the others in the group to provide the essential points of one section of the article. By the end of the activity, each group member has read a section, made notes, explained the main points of his/her section to the other group members, and listened and taken notes from the others. As students explain their sections to others, they are internalizing the information, and others are free to ask clarifying questions and to see how the material fits with their section of the article. Students also have access to the complete articles for further reading or review.
2. **Instructor preparation:** The instructor would need to select an article that is appropriate for the topic, long enough to engage four people in reading and note-taking, and short enough to complete within a specified length of time. To check for understanding, instructors may plan to randomly ask groups to present key points to the entire class.

Learning how to work effectively to share the materials is part of cooperative learning.



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Reflection Exercise: Think-Pair-Share



Consider the following questions based on a course recently taught, or currently being taught:

How might the think-pair-share strategy be incorporated?

What questions could be posed to the students?

Write out a plan for a think-pair-share that you could try in that course.

Co-operative Learning Structures

1. Think-Pair-Share
2. Place Mat
3. One Stray, Others Stay
4. Jigsaw
5. Four Corners

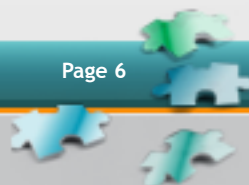
Advantages of Think-Pair-Share



- Easy to implement
- Works in large and small classes
- Enables all students to share ideas
- Clarifies understanding

Disadvantages of Think-Pair-Share

- Staying on task
- Room may need to be reconfigured to allow discussion
- Student disengagement



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Reflection Exercise: 'Place Mat'



Consider the following questions based on a course recently taught, or currently being taught:

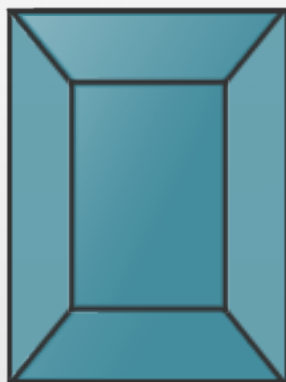
How might the Place Mat strategy be incorporated?

What questions could be posed to the students?

Write out a plan for a Place Mat that you could try in that course.

"The placemat activity takes about 20 minutes. In this activity, students will reflect, write, discuss and summarize."

Rick Chambers, 2009



Place Mat Structure



The Place Mat engages groups of students as they record their ideas individually and collaboratively on a piece of paper that is divided into sections.

Advantages of Place Mat



- Everyone has a chance to provide their input
- Provides individual and group insights
- May be displayed

Disadvantages of Place Mat

- Adequate space required
- Materials required (pens, paper, etc.)
- Displays require wall space

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Reflection Exercise: Jigsaw



Are there articles, DVDs or web sites that students could explore in depth and then share in jigsaw groups?

Consider the following questions based on a course recently taught, or currently being taught:

How might the Jigsaw strategy be incorporated?

Take one section or unit of a course, and design a jigsaw activity using a series of articles or visual texts.

Jigsaw Structure



In the Jigsaw model, material is divided or chunked into discrete sections. Each home group member is assigned the task of understanding one section. Each home group member joins an expert group involved in learning the same section

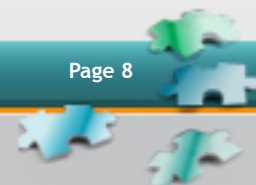
Advantages of Jigsaw



- Enables learning consolidation
- Encourages listening, engagement and empathy

Disadvantages of Jigsaw

- Assumes good reading and analytical skills
- Assumes good communication skills
- Students may not deeply learn all topics



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Reflection Exercise: Four Corners



Consider the following questions based on a course recently taught, or currently being taught.

1. Think of a question or statement that can be posed for which there are four possible reactions (e.g. Agree, Strongly Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

2. Is the question/statement broad enough so that there can be different perspectives on the issue?

3. How much time is needed to allow students to share their answers once they arrive at the sign in their corner?

4. What insights are anticipated by the students?

5. After the Four Corners activity, what assignment would you give to the class?

Four Corners Structure



In a Four Corners exercise, an instructor will pose a question with four possible reactions (i.e. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree), which are represented by each corner of the room. Participants are posed the question, and then asked to go to the corner of the room that best reflects their response. the same section

Advantages of Four Corners



- Clear to discern how the class is positioned on a particular issue
- Students can share and further develop opinions

Disadvantages of Four Corners

- Physical movement of class may be difficult or time consuming
- Shy students may be overshadowed by more vocal members of their group

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Reflection Exercise: Implementation



1. Identify a teaching strategy that you can implement immediately.

2. Focus on one course that you are teaching. Design two or three sample lessons that include some of the new strategies.

3. Make a plan of how you might infuse some of the new elements into your teaching practice. Set yourself a deadline to try at least two new elements in this term.

4. If you already are using some of these strategies, consider how you might expand on their implementation.

Five Collaborative Learning Structures



1. Think-Pair-Share
2. Place Mat
3. One Stray, Others Stay
4. Jigsaw
5. Four Corners



“Cooperative learning helps students to use their talents to contribute to a project that will be of higher quality that they could have done alone.”

- Dr. Garfield Gini-Newman

