

Agora

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Cooperative learning - workshop for teachers

Learning is a social process. Great schools and great teachers know how to harvest the advantages of learning in the classroom. Cooperative learning might be the key to the positive societal changes that are long-lasting. Some of the benefits include:

- building a collaborative society
- increased academic achievement,
- improved social skills and social relations,
- improved thinking skills,
- reduced discipline problems
- acquisition of leadership and employability skills,
- improved self-esteem,
- liking for school and content,
- reduction of the gap between high and low achieving students (not by bringing the high achievers down, but by bringing the low achievers up)

Resources and supplies

- Kagan's structures articles;
- Team learning rubrics;
- Team contracts;
- Gallery walk for formative assessment;
- Students team roles;
- Teacher teams assignments
- Big classroom;
- Laptop with internet connection per group (6);
- 6 chart papers

Workshop objectives

- To explore **benefits** of collaborative learning
- To explore **formats** of collaborative learning
- To explore **assessment** in collaborative learning
- To brainstorm the ways to **apply** cooperative learning in our existing classes

Skills

In this workshop session, teachers will have the opportunity to:

- communicate
- analyze
- identify
- reflect
- research
- make connections
- generate solutions

Assessment

- group responses
- video responses
- group presentations



Flow of activities and learning engagements

Welcome and introduction – 3 min.

Quick explanation of Learning as a Social Activity by psychologist – 3 min.

Presentation – 10 min.

Activity 1: Teachers will share their current practices that can be connected to cooperative learning and benefits, on a chart paper, by group – 10 + 5 min.

Presentation about selected types of cooperative learning with videos and project coordinators – 20 min.

Activity 2: Teachers create teams with team topics for exploration and presentation to the whole classroom – 15 min. for work and 5 x 5 min. per group presentation and questions. + After each group presentation and questions, the facilitator adds the extension with examples, videos and additional ideas. – 5 x 5 min.

Thanks and closing – 1 min.

Sneak peek into the resources

Collective intelligence and individual expertise, the story

- 9/11 hijackers and CIA collective intelligence
- Does diversity matters if you choose the best of the best?
- Complex problems
- Geography of Thought
- The blind spots of homogeneous groups
- Biggest disadvantage of homogeneous groups is missing questions, opportunities and data

(from Rebel Ideas by Matthew Syed)

Managing teams and the classroom b) Team contracts

Why creating contracts instead of setting the rules?

Why cocreating contract among students instead of using teacher created contracts?

Step 1: Low-stake cooperative challenge

Step 2: Reflection on successes/challenges

- What worked well for your team in this activity?
- What challenges did you encounter as a team?
- How did you approach these challenges?
- What agreements could you make as a team to prevent challenges like this from arising in the future?

Step 3: Individual reflection –

- What helps you listen respectfully when others are talking?
- How do you work best when given a task that requires you to read?

Step 4: Walk through and signing the contracts

All can be done in a Talking Circles activity (“What makes for successful collaboration?”, “What are common team challenges during project collaboration?”, “Why is collaborating in groups important?”)

Sneak peek into the resources

Managing teams and the classroom d) Managing activities and scaffolding

Project management tools :

- standards,
- checklists,
- calendars,
- timers,
- contracts,
- visible thinking routines,
- feedbacks and reflections,
- clarifying vocabulary (supercalifragilisticexpialidocious)
- learning how to ask questions (e.g. What makes a revolution effective?),
- explicit skills teaching (e.g. root cause analysis in problem solving),
- comparing answers and making conclusions...

Managing teams and the classroom e) Assessment in cooperative learning

CLEAR LEARNING
OUTCOMES

Assessment maps

Formative:

- Exit tickets
- Peer-assessment
- Self-evaluation
- Experts feedback
- Summaries and reflections
- Charts with individual progress scale

Summative:

- Rubrics
- Portfolios
- Individual
- Group assessment
- Synthesis and arguments
- (handouts of exit tickets and quick formative assessment strategies)
- Includes not only content accuracy, but process skills as well