

## Cooperative Learning

Many teaching strategies and activities call for students to work together in small groups. This is often referred to as “cooperative learning.” In cooperative learning, the teacher acts as a facilitator rather than a presenter. Students learn as they interact with and teach each other.

Outlined below are instructions for a simplified version of cooperative learning developed by Dr. Carolyn Andrews-Beck.

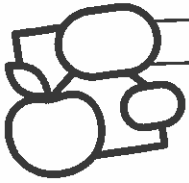
1. Group students. Have students count off or form groups based on the seating arrangement. Do not let students self-select groups. Keep the groups small, usually between two and five students per group.
2. State the objective and instructions for the group work, then have students do the following:
  - A. Circle—Arrange themselves in a small compact group so that they can all see everyone else’s face.
  - B. Introductions—Have students state their name to be sure everyone in the group knows each other.
  - C. State the assigned task—The job is . . . .  
We will know we have finished when . . . .
3. Set a time limit for the activity.
4. Have students begin working together toward accomplishing the objective outlined in step two.

Assigning roles to students is also helpful in facilitating learning. Giving each member of the group a specific assignment guarantees their involvement. Students who are actively involved are more likely to learn.



### Notes for the Teacher

Successful implementation of the cooperative learning teaching strategy will be challenging if the permanent teacher has not already used it in the regular teaching routine.



### Common Role Assignments

- **Director, Captain, Leader, or Manager:** The group leader responsible for keeping the group members on-task and working toward the objective.
- **Recorder:** Records information for the group's activities, fills out worksheets, or prepares written material from information provided by the group.
- **Materials Manager:** Responsible for obtaining and returning equipment, materials, and supplies necessary for the activity.
- **Procedure Director:** Reads instructions, explains procedures, makes sure the activity is being carried out correctly.
- **Cleanup Leader:** Supervises the cleanup of the group's area at the end of the activity or project.

## Setting Up a Cooperative Learning Activity in the Classroom

1	Group Students	<p>Teacher: Starting with Cherie and going up and down the rows please count off one through five.</p> <p>Cherie: One</p> <p>Next Student: Two</p> <p>Next Student: Three, Etc.</p> <p>Teacher: I would like all of the "ones" to bring a pencil and paper and form a circle by the door. I would like all of the "twos" to bring a pencil and paper and form a circle by the bulletin board in the back of the room. I would like all of the "threes"... Please move to your assigned location and form a circle now.</p>
2	State the Objective and Instructions for the Group	<p>Teacher: In your groups you are going to make up a two minute skit about one of the reasons we have listed on the board why young people should not start smoking. After you have made up the skit and had a chance to practice it, each group will present their skit for the rest of the class. Who can tell me what the assignment is? Noah?</p> <p>Noah: Use one of the reasons for not smoking on the board to make up a skit for the class.</p> <p>Teacher: How will you know when your group has finished? Trish?</p> <p>Trish: After we have practiced our play and are ready to present it to the class.</p>
3	Set a Time Limit	<p>Teacher: You will have 15 minutes to make up and practice your skit before we begin the class presentations.</p>
4	Establish Roles and Have Students Begin Working	<p>Teacher: Identify the person in your group who is wearing the most blue. This person will be the skit director, they are responsible for selecting a reason from the board and making sure everyone has a part in the skit. The person sitting to the right of the director will be the time monitor who makes sure your skit isn't more than 2 minutes long and that your group is ready to present in 15 minutes. Everyone else will help develop the play and be actors. Are there any questions? . . . . OK, you may begin.</p>