

## **Incorporating Cooperative Learning Structures for Effective Learning**

Karlena Leal, Dove Mountain CSTEM K-8, [k.l.leal@maranausd.org](mailto:k.l.leal@maranausd.org)

Shelly Cooper, University of Nebraska at Omaha, [scoper@unomaha.edu](mailto:scoper@unomaha.edu)

Laura Dunbar, University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, [dunbarll@uwec.edu](mailto:dunbarll@uwec.edu)

### **What is Cooperative Learning?**

Cooperative Learning is an instructional method in which students work in small groups to accomplish a common learning goal under the guidance of the teacher.

“Cooperative learning provides a tool [for] educators to incorporate values in providing quality education. To achieve the full benefit of this tool, the teacher should be in tune with the learning needs of students.” (Iyer, 2013)

### **Elements of Cooperative Learning**

According to Iyer, there are five elements critical to the success of cooperative learning: Positive Interdependence, Individual Accountability, Face-To-Face Promotive Interaction, Social Skills, and Group Processing (Iyer, 2013, p. 22).

- **Positive Interdependence:** We need contributions from each team member to succeed
- **Individual Accountability:** Although team members can help me, I also need to contribute ideas.
- **Face-To-Face Promotive Interaction:** How I think, talk, and act toward my team members affects our progress.
- **Social Skills:** Working as a team means I need to improve my interpersonal skills.
- **Group Processing:** Our team has to reflect on our work and think about how we might improve.

### **Student Benefits**

- Enhances engagement
- Promotes the ability to ask questions
- Increases interpersonal and social skills
- Opportunities to manage conflict
- Increased student achievement
- Increased productivity
- Promotes transfer of knowledge
- Heightens self-confidence

### Structured Intervention through Questioning

- What if you/we/they...
- I wonder (how/when/if)...
- What happens if...
- Could you...
- I notice...
- I value...
- I appreciate...

### Challenges

- Increased Time Lesson Planning
- Managing/Navigating Group Conflicts
- Increased Classroom Volume
- Individual Assessment vs. Group Assessment
- Preplanning for Groups

### The WHY of Cooperative Learning

The interactive and interdependent components of cooperative learning offer the emotional and interpersonal experiences that **boost emotional awareness, judgment, critical analysis, perspective taking, creative problem-solving, innovation, and goal-directed behavior.**

### Works Cited

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