Resources for Collaboration in the Common Core Classroom

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Collaborative Learning Guide

Collaborative learning gives the responsibility of the learning to the students by using groups and pairs of students to fulfill a task or assignment within the classroom. The Common Core Math Practice Standard 3 calls for students at all grades to listen or read the arguments of others, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to clarify or improve the arguments.

Creating Effective Collaborative Activities

♦ Is the activity highly structured physically, spatially and temporally?

♦ Do students know the rationale for the activity?

♦ What are the teacher's academic and behavioral expectations of the students?

♦ How will the learning activity affect motivation?

♦ Does the activity accommodate various group speeds?

♦ How long will the activity take?

♦ Is there an opportunity for students to process how the group functioned and the learning that occurred during the activity?

♦ Does the structure of the activity give students time to process the new information before they are asked to respond?

Within a Collaborative Group......

♦ Students are invested in their own learning.

♦ Learners actively participate.

♦ Teachers become learners at times, and learners sometimes teach.

♦ Respect is given to every member.

♦ The project / question should be of interest and challenging to the students.

♦ Diversity is celebrated and all contributions are valued.

♦ Students learn skills for resolving conflicts when they arise.

♦ Members draw upon their past experience and knowledge.

♦ Goals are clearly identified and used as a guide.

♦ Research tools such as internet access are made available.

Size

Smallest group is 2.

Largest recommended group is 6.

Smaller groups will require fewer social skills and will work more quickly.

Larger groups generally generate more ideas, deal better with complex ideas and create fewer group reports for the teacher to process.

Formation

Heterogeneous grouping with regards to academic achievement, task orientation, ability and learning style can be used depending on the subject matter or collaboration technique used. If the project is long or detailed then the support of a stronger academic student in each group will help complete the project.

Student self selection is generally not successful, although students can provide input for the teacher to consider.

Random assignment promotes the idea that everyone is expected to work with everyone else at some point. Random is best used if the task is of short duration.

Duration

Groups created for longer projects should be structured carefully. Groups that stay together for long periods (4-6 weeks) are more likely to form stronger bonds, develop more complex collaborative skills and can tackle more complex tasks.

Groups should stay together long enough to feel successful, but not so that they become counter-productive.

Avoid breaking groups up because they are having trouble functioning since the group will feel unsuccessful and transfer that to the next group. They need to persevere.

Possible Student Roles Within the Group

Facilitator
Keeps group on task and verifies that all contribute.

Recorder
Takes notes on important thoughts expressed in the group. Writes final summary.

Reporter
Shares summary of group with large group. Speaks for the group, not just personal view.

Materials Manager
Picks up, distributes, collects, turns in, or puts away materials.

Time Keeper
Keeps track of time and reminds group how much time is left.

Checker
Checks for accuracy and clarity of thinking during discussions. Checks written work and tracks points.

Group Management Tips

Noise
Develop and practice a "QUIET or Zero-noise" signal. Brainstorm what that would be with the students. Practice appropriate internal and external voices.

Deadlines and Task Structure
Give students specific tasks to finish within a predetermined time limit. Use a timer.

Instructions
Show, don't tell, instructions (have a group model the steps). Have students tell each other the instructions to make sure they understand prior to starting the task.

Questions
Answer team questions only. Individual questions should be handled within the team. Use the "3 Then Me" technique.

Circulate
Use proximity. Monitor discussions to check for understanding and to be aware of collaborative skills that may need to be addressed.

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Collegial Discussion

Common Core State Standards for Speaking and Listening item 1 (CCS– SL.1) calls for students to initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborating discussions with diverse partners. They are to work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussion and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed. CCS– SL.1 also calls for students to follow rules for collegial discussions. Collegial discussions are mutually respectful conversations between student colleagues in a group or classroom environment.

Discussion Guidelines and Skills

When speaking, participants strive to …..

- sustain a main idea
- be original with interesting, thought-provoking ideas.
- have quality in their comments.
- include textual references– the more specific the quotation, with reference to page and paragraph numbers, the better.
- make reference to other works.
- maintain the accuracy of their comments.
- question for greater understanding.

When listening, participants strive to …..

- listen to other students and not be "checked out".
- see how the comments fit…follow the flow of the discussion.
- be able to reference previous comments.
- listen for greater understanding.
- wait patiently for the speaker to finish before sharing ideas.

In a collegial conversation, participants …..

- are consistent in participation.
- show leadership–– students help others to enter the discussion.
- show empathy.
- have the ability to learn and adjust to the dynamics of the class.
- incorporate politeness and respect for all members of the class.
- maintain eye contact and call others by their names.
- show patience with the process. (It takes some time to develop a group dynamic where everyone feels at ease.)
- demonstrate preparedness— books and articles are marked, responses are written, questions are prepared.
- students are willing to state own ideas even if different from those of other students or the teacher.

Discussion Sentence Stems......

Sentence starters for students to facilitate a safe and cooperative classroom or group discussion.

Agreement

- "I agree with _____ because_____."
- "I like what _____ said because_____."
- "I agree with _____because ___;then on the other hand_____."

Disagreement

- "I disagree with _____ because _____."
- "I'm not sure I agree with that because_____ ."
- "I can see that _____; however, I disagree with (or can't see) _____."

Clarifications

- "Could you please repeat that for me?"
- Paraphrase what you heard and ask, "Could you explain a bit more, please?"
- "I'm not sure I understood you when you said_____. Could you say more about that?"
- "Is there evidence for the position?"
- "How does that support our work/mission at ___?"

Confirmation

- "I hear_____."
- "I believe____."
- "I discovered _____."
- "I learned that ____."

Confusion

- "I don't' understand_____."
- "I am confused about_____."
- "Can you explain that another way?"
- "I have a question about _____."

Extension

- "I was thinking about what _____ said, and I was wondering what if_____."
- "This makes me think_____."
- "I want to know more about _____."
- "Now I am wondering_____."
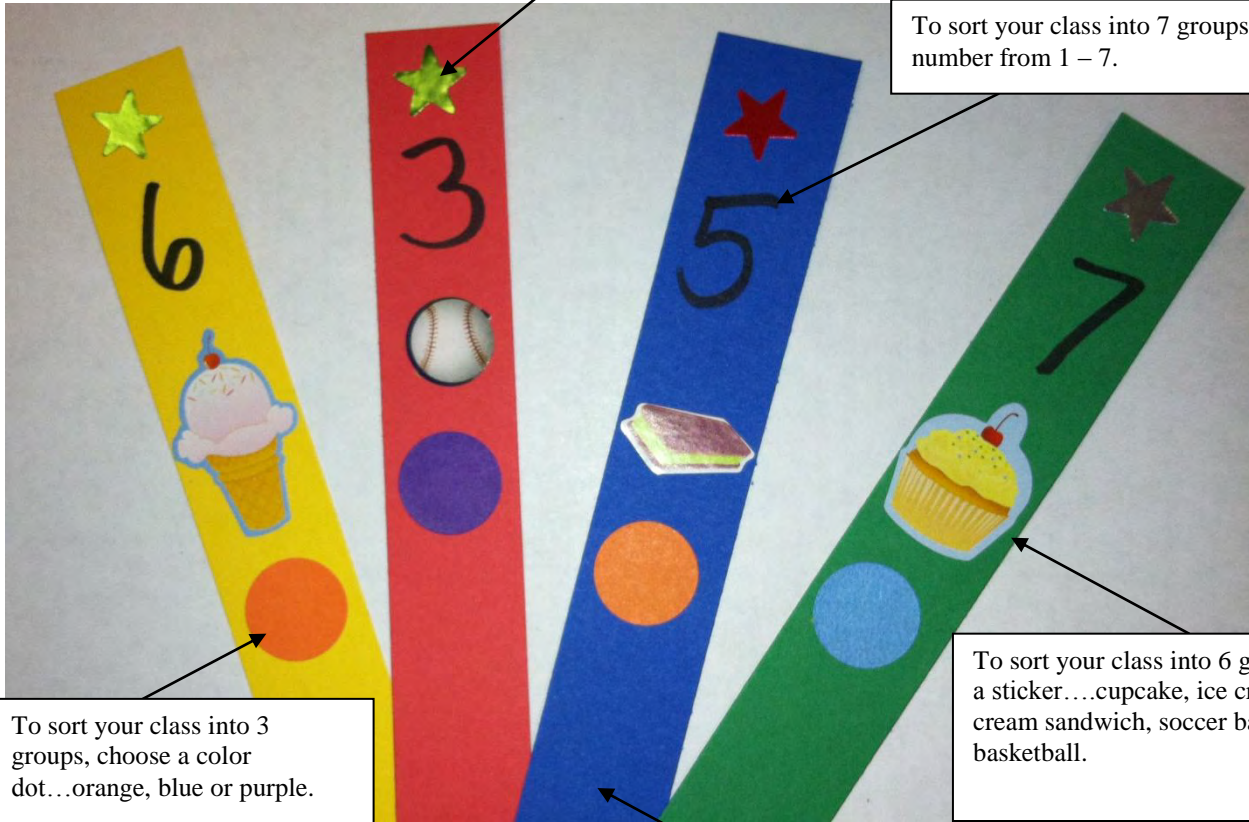- "Can you tell me more about _____."

Review

- "I want to go back to what _____ said."
- "I like _____."
- "I noticed that _____."

The anatomy of the sorting stick:

To sort your class into 5 groups choose the color of the star…gold, blue, green, red or silver.

To sort your class into 7 groups choose a number from 1 – 7.

To sort your class into 3 groups, choose a color dot…orange, blue or purple.

To sort your class into 6 groups, choose a sticker….cupcake, ice cream cone, ice cream sandwich, soccer ball, baseball or basketball.

To sort your class into 4 groups, choose the color of the stick….yellow, red, blue or green.

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Random group selection choices:

Playing Cards	This grouping strategy is extremely versatile and the deck can be stacked to meet specific needs. For example, for 6 groups of 4 only face cards, Aces and 10's would be used. If more than 4 students to a group are needed, the deck would be doubled. Students can also be separated by suite, evens, odds, factors of a number (factors of 6), the same number (four 9's), card-runs (2,3,4,5 or 6,7,8 depending on the desired group size.), divisible by, etc.
Number Pops	The teacher or student helper writes numbers on the craft or popsicle sticks. The numbers should correlate to the number of groups and the number of people in each group. Example: If six groups of four students are required, then there would be four 1's, four 2's, and so on.
Synonyms	Each word/synonym is written on an individual index card. Students are asked to find their partners by matching the word with its synonym. Note: For groups larger than 2, additional synonyms would be included. This activity is best with older students. For younger students, it may be beneficial for the teacher to facilitate a class activity in which all of the words are matched prior to the grouping activity
Group of the Day	This strategy should be setup during the first few days of school, while classroom routines are established. Different groups are identified for different days of the week (e.g., groups of 4, 5, and 6 for Mondays, groups of 4, 5, and 6 for Tuesdays, etc.). The various groupings for each day are posted for all students to easily view from their seats throughout the year. By doing this, the students will know immediately what is expected of them and who they should pair up with.
Colored Pencils	This strategy requires the teacher to prepare a can of colored pencils in which there are at least four or five of the same color and as many colors as the number of desired groups. Note: This activity is most suitable for younger students.
Syllable words	Multi-syllabic words are chosen depending on the desired number of students in each group. For groups of four, words with four syllables would be chosen and each of the syllables would be written on an index card. The teacher would give each student a card and let them formulate a word with their classmates. The students with the syllables that form the word become a team.
Animal	This strategy requires the teacher to find pictures of various animals. The number of categories should correspond to the desired number of students in each group. For example, for groups of four, the teacher might provide pictures of amphibians, reptiles, prehistoric animals, and crustaceans and then instruct students to form groups so that each group has at least one of those categories represented. This can be based on the current curriculum being studied or a review of previous species groups.
Famous	For partner activities, the teacher prepares a set of index cards with famous

Pairs	pairs on them. The teacher passes the cards out to the students and has them find their match. The teacher can use names of pairs from popular television shows, history, literature, etc. Also, the teacher should prepare for a threesome in case there are an odd number of pupils participating in the activity.
Puzzle Pieces	For each group, the teacher creates a puzzle. The number of pieces corresponds to the desired number of students in each group. To create a puzzle, the teacher could paste a picture on a sheet of tag board and laminate it. Then, the teacher would cut the pieces apart, use a permanent marker to mark the number of students in the group on the back of the pieces, and store them in a Ziploc baggie. When it is time for a group activity, the teacher would give each student a puzzle piece and have them find the students with the rest of the pieces to their puzzle.
Stickers on a Nametag	The teacher places different stickers on nametags prior to the class starting. The number of different stickers corresponds to the desired number of groups. The teacher needs to ensure that the different stickers are evenly distributed throughout the class. The teacher instructs students to form groups with other students who have matching stickers.

Improve Academic Outcomes-

1. How can teachers effectively use cooperative learning strategies to align and support instruction to improve academic outcomes?

2. What are some other cooperative learning strategies (e.g., student discussions, team building) that can be used to achieve learning targets?

Lesson Planning-

1. How can teachers reduce the time it takes to plan lessons involving collaborative learning?

2. How can cooperative learning connect to real-life applications?

Management –

1. How does a teacher establish the necessary conditions for learning within the classroom so that collaborative work will be more successful?

2. What are some strategies a teacher could use to manage group work and address noise control, transitions, student absences, etc.

Assessment/Evaluation –

1. How can teachers utilize collaborative grouping as a tool for formative assessment?

2. When evaluating group work what might be included on a rubric?

Engagement/Re-engagement-

1. What are some ways to engage students in collaborative learning groups?

2. What are some ways to re-engage students who are not fully participating in collaborative learning groups?

Adjustments-

1. What are some adjustments (e.g., grade-level, developmental-level? That teachers need to consider when preparing for collaborative work?

2. What are some things teachers need to consider when including special education students in collaborative work?

Differentiation–

1. How does collaborative learning support differentiation?

2. How does collaborative learning support the multiple ways in which students learn.

Comprehensive System Of Learning

Collaboration in the Common Core Classroom

Resources from the notebook at each station can be found at the following website under the level 2 section:

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/common_core/pls

or scan the TAG below….

ISBE Professional Learning Series website

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Which seminar did you attend? ____K-5 ____6-12

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	N/A	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Presenters were knowledgeable about topic.	O	O	O	O	O
2. Presenters communicated clearly.	O	O	O	O	O
3. Presenters engaged me as a participant.	O	O	O	O	O
4. Presentation materials were clear and informative.	O	O	O	O	O
5. Presenters allowed for questions and answer time.	O	O	O	O	O
6. Presenters and presentation encouraged professional growth.	O	O	O	O	O
7. My understanding of the steps and stages for creating a collaborative learning environment increased.	O	O	O	O	O
8. Presenters provided strategies that I plan to incorporate into my instructional practices.	O	O	O	O	O

Presentation was…   ___too short   ___too long   ___just right

Steps to Collaboration in the Common Core Classroom

Preparation

1. Determine target for group activity.
   - How does the target connect with CCSS?
     - □ ELA S/L Standard 1— Collaborate effectively with peers (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led), collegial conversations in many settings, follow agreed-upon rules for discussion and carry out assigned roles.
     - □ Math Practice Standard 3 — Constructing arguments, justify their conclusions, listen and read arguments of others, and ask useful questions to clarify the arguments.
   - How does the target connect with IL Social and Emotional Learning Standard 2 (Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.)?

2. Determine how many students in each group.

3. Choose a grouping method:
   - Random (utilizing strategies such as: sorting sticks, playing cards, etc.)
   - By design (heterogeneous or homogenous)

4. Create role identifiers for students to have with them (e.g., lanyards, buttons).
   - Define roles for students within groups.
   - Use poster and group identifiers to visually remind students and teacher of each role.

5. Organize the physical space.
   - Determine table/desk arrangement.
   - Identify areas within the room where groups can go and sit.
   - Consider different locations within school settings.

www.isbe.net/learningsupports

Facilitative Teaching

1. Establish "norms" for the classroom early and follow consistently.
   - Discuss/review the requirements for a collegial discussion prior to each collaborative activity.

2. Clearly outlined objectives.

3. Define steps or processes the group must complete.

4. Check for understanding prior to beginning the activity.

5. Coach students within the group.
   - Ask question to build critical thinking. For example, the teacher may ask:

     - □ What should come next?
     - □ Is there another way to get to the answer?
     - □ Could that work with another problem?
     - □ How did the group come to that answer?
     - □ Can you look at it in a different way? Will that give you a different answer?

Presentation

1. Shout Out– groups review their results or opinions with the whole class.

2. Group to Group Discussion—two groups share their results and discuss the differences or similarities.

3. Gallery Walk— groups post their notes and all other groups "walk" around to review and discuss.

4. Group Products—groups develop and share Power Points, posters or displays.

Assessment/ Feedback

1. Students self reflect within their group or individually.

2. Peers review process and/or products.

3. Teacher makes formative observations during the group process.

4. Teacher conducts evaluative reviews of individuals and groups.

Assessment— Participant Feedback

To help us access our presentation and seminar content, please choose one of the following feedback options:

1. Text a feedback response (Up to 250 characters)

2. Online input form via QR code (TAG)

3. Paper form—in conference room box.

TEXT Instructions:
1. Start the text option on your phone.
2. Enter 37607 into the phone number space.
3. Enter code "233581(space) and your feedback" in the "TEXT" space of your phone's app.

*You can also use codes: 517948 or 517975. Standard text message rates do apply.

Online Input:
1. Scan the QR code below from your phone, iPad or tablet with a QR reader app.

2. Complete the form and submit.

Presentation Rubric
(for grades K-2)

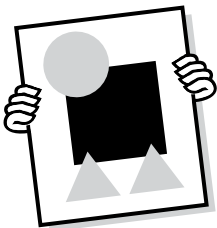**I plan a beginning, middle, and end.**

1. still learning　　2. sometimes　　3. almost always

I use pictures, drawings, and props.

1. still learning　　2. sometimes　　3. almost always

I look at my audience.

1. still learning　　2. sometimes　　3. almost always

I speak loudly and clearly.

1. still learning　　2. sometimes　　3. almost always

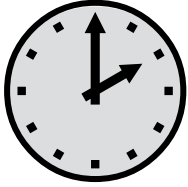**I answer questions from the audience.**

1. still learning　　2. sometimes　　3. almost always

Teamwork Rubric
(for grades K-2)

I do my work for the team on time.

| 1. still learning | 2. sometimes | 3. almost always |

I help my team.

| 1. still learning | 2. sometimes | 3. almost always |

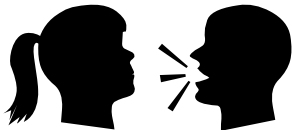**I listen to the ideas of my teammates.**

| 1. still learning | 2. sometimes | 3. almost always |

I share my ideas with my team.

| 1. still learning | 2. sometimes | 3. almost always |

I treat my teammates with respect.

| 1. still learning | 2. sometimes | 3. almost always |

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PROJECT TEAM CONTRACT	
Project Name:	
Team Members:	

Our Agreement

- We all promise to listen to each other's ideas with respect.

- We all promise to do our work as best as we can.

- We all promise to do our work on time.

- We all promise to ask for help if we need it.

- We all promise to _____

If someone on our team breaks one or more of our rules, the team may have a meeting and ask the person to follow our agreement. If the person still breaks the rules, we will ask our teacher to help find a solution.

Date: _____

Team Member Signatures:

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Project Team Work Plan

Project Name:	
Team Members:	

Product:	Due:

What needs to be done?	Who will do this part?	By when?	✓Done
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

My Thoughts About the Project

Think about what you did in this project, and how well the project went.
Write your comments in the right column.

Student Name:	
Project Name:	
Driving Question:	
About Yourself:	
What is the most important thing you learned in this project:	
What do you wish you had spent more time on or done differently:	
What part of the project did you do your best work on:	
About the Project:	
What was the most enjoyable part of this project:	
What was the least enjoyable part of this project:	
How could your teacher(s) change this project to make it better next time:	

Collaborative Resources for the Classroom

Edutopia

Project-Based Learning Research Review
http://www.edutopia.org/pbl-research-learning-outcomes#definition
Edutopia reviews and explores research for PBL through articles that address learning outcomes and recommendations of evidence-based strategies for the successful implementation of PBL. They provide best practices for all subject areas, in addition to providing step by step research based strategies for project learning activities. Edutopia also discusses the power of collaborative learning, and downloadable resources for teachers.

Buck Institute for Education

Project Based Learning for the 21st Century
http://www.bie.org/tools/freebies
The Buck Institute for Education (BIE) provides tools to improve 21st Century teaching and learning in the classroom by creating and offering products and practices for effective Project Based Learning (PBL). BIE's contribution to Project Based Learning is through research, services, and online learning. They support K-14 teachers by publishing books and articles for implementing PBL. In addition to books and articles, BIE offers workshops, instructional coaching, and research based projects that are proven to be effective in the classroom. They also offer online resources such as "how to" videos and sample projects, and lastly, BIE has created free materials (FreeBies) for teachers to access to assist in designing, managing, and implementing collaborative projects.

The Project Approach

http://www.projectapproach.org/
The Project Approach is a site managed by educator and author Sylvia Chard. The Project Approach is a type of PBL that offers numerous advantages and best practices to any 21st Century classroom. It provides resources and tools for teachers whose students have a strong interest in exploring and discovering new concepts. The Project Approach also enables students to interact, question, problem-solve, and communicate in a collaborative learning environment. This site also assists with developing and implementing collaborative projects, as well as provides examples of classroom projects. They provide information about professional development and offer a study guide that helps teachers in understanding the applications of The Project Approach.

The National Education Association

http://www.nea.org/tools/16963.htm
The National Education Association (NEA), is the nation's largest professional organization for educators, and is consistently working to advance public education in the United States. The NEA has reviewed research on PBL, and has provided links of articles and resources that K-12 teachers can utilize in the collaborative classroom.

Classroom Aid: Connecting the Dots for Digital Learning
http://classroom-aid.com/technology-resources/collaboration/
Classroom Aid is a site that is focused on providing insightful online ideas and links that educators can utilize for collaboration in the classroom. The main goal for Classroom Aid is to enable K-12 teachers to connect, collaborate, and create.

Thirteen Ed Online: Concept to Classroom:
http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/coopcollab/
Concept to Classroom is a Thirteen Ed Online resource that concentrates on how collaboration is a useful tool for engaging students within a group setting. The concepts and techniques discussed in this article open up the opportunity to improve learning in the classroom, as well as increase student engagement.

Cooperative learning: Effective teamwork for Engineering Classrooms
http://fie-conference.org/fie95/2b5/2b54/2b54.htm
This site discusses how teaching and working in small groups help to promote learning amongst peers, and increases a student's ability to become more critical thinkers. It expounds upon collaborative groups working cohesively to accomplish specific goals or tasks, and offers strategies to assist in accomplishing those goals. It further discusses the accountability of students within groups, and taking ownership of the roles they have been assigned in an activity.

Prince George's County Public Schools Guide to Cooperative learning:
http://www.pgcps.pg.k12.md.us/~elc/learning1.html
Prince George's County Public Schools have a resource web page that discusses cooperative learning and how it can benefit students in the classroom. They further elaborate on the elements of collaborative learning, in addition to offering various strategies and techniques that can be utilized in the classroom.