



Cooperative Learning

Try the following strategies to help facilitate cooperative learning in your class.

Learn by Interview

It's good to start small when building your cooperative classroom. Have students pair up and interview each other. Have each student represent a person/thing relating to the current topic and create interview questions. For example, what questions would a mitochondria ask the nucleus of a cell? Then, have them summarize and share their partner's answers with the rest of the class.

Jigsaw

Working interdependently is at the heart of cooperative learning! Place students in their "home" groups and have each student choose a different task to complete (i.e. reading an article, completing an investigation, etc.) After completing their task, each student will join a new "expert" group consisting of students who completed the same activity. That activity is discussed and then students re-form into their home groups and share what they learned.

Chart Talk

Have students respond in groups to a topic or prompt on chart paper. Give each student a different colored marker. Then, have them respond directly to the prompt, as well as the ideas written by their group members. The challenge is that the students don't get to talk at all.

Collaborative Brain Sketch

Provide each student with a sheet of plain white paper and a pencil. Ask each team member to do a quick sketch about the topic being studied. After a designated time, have the students pass their sketches to the person on the right. This person may add to the sketch by drawing more, adding labels, or adding descriptions. Rotate the drawings until each student has an opportunity to contribute to each drawing. Then, allow the groups time to share their finished drawings in their groups and discuss what they learned.

Cooperative Learning Norms

When starting cooperative teams, have students create the rules of engagement. Give them 2 minutes to discuss what the rules should be for cooperative learning. Then make a class list from the discussion. When students create the norms/agreements, they have more ownership and are more inclined to follow them.

Anchor Y-Charts

Try using an anchor chart to intentionally teach non-cognitive skills. If you are focusing on perseverance, place that term in the center of a paper or whiteboard and divide the paper into 3 sections: What does it look like? What does it sound like? What does it feel like? Place the anchor charts around the room as you are building those non-cognitive skills.

To see a Cooperative Learning strategy in action, check out this Blue Apple project:

MOMENTS TO Remember

Older generations have so much to teach us—if we take the time to listen. Every community has people who have lived long, full lives with valuable stories, knowledge, and skills to share. In this project, students will make friends with a resident of a retirement home. They will listen to the story of their new friend's life, and craft a biography capturing the moments that made their life meaningful!



To explore this project and others, visit BlueAppleTeacher.org