

Role of the Teacher

Make Pre-instructional Decisions

Specify Academic and Social Skills Objectives: Every lesson has both (a) academic and (b) interpersonal and small group skills objectives

Decide on Group Size: Learning groups should be small (groups of two or three members, four at the most)

Decide on Group Composition (Assign Students to Groups): Assign students to groups randomly or select groups yourself. Usually you will wish to maximize the heterogeneity in each group.

Assign Roles: Structure student-student interaction by assigning roles such as Reader, Recorder, Encourager of Participation and Checker for Understanding

Arrange the Room: Group members should be "knee to knee and eye to eye" but arranged so they all can see the instructor at the front of the room.

Plan Materials: Arrange materials to give a "sink or swim together" message. Give only one paper to the group or give each member part of the material to be learned.

Explain Task and Cooperative Structure

Explain the Academic Task: Explain the task, the objectives of the lesson, the concepts and principles students need to know to complete the assignment, and the procedures they are to follow.

Explain the Criteria for Success: Student work should be evaluated on a criteria-referenced basis. Make clear your criteria for evaluating students' work.

Structure Positive Interdependence: Students must believe they "sink or swim together." Always establish mutual goals (students are responsible for their own learning and the learning of all other group members). Supplement, goal interdependence with celebration/reward, resource, role, and identity interdependence.

Structure Intergroup Cooperation: Have groups check with and help other groups. Extend the benefits of cooperation to the whole class.

Structure Individual Accountability: Each student must feel responsible for doing his or her share of the work and helping the other group members. Ways to ensure accountability are frequent oral quizzes of group members picked at random, individual tests, and assigning a member the role of Checker for Understanding.

Specify Expected Behaviors: The more specific you are about the behaviors you want to see in the groups, the more likely students will do them. Social skills may be classified as forming (staying with the group, using quiet voices), functioning (contributing, encouraging others to participate), formulating (summarizing, elaborating), and fermenting (criticizing ideas, asking for justification). Regularly

teach the interpersonal and small group skills you wish to see used in the learning groups.

Monitor and Intervene

Arrange Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction: Conduct the lesson in ways that ensure that students promote each other's success face-to-face.

Monitor Students' Behavior: This is the fun part! While students are working, you circulate to see whether they understand the assignment and the material, give immediate feedback and reinforcement, and praise good use of group skills. Collect observation data on each group and student.

Intervene to Improve Taskwork and Teamwork: Provide taskwork assistance (clarify, reteach) if students do not understand the assignment. Provide teamwork assistance if students are having difficulties in working together productively.

Provide closure: to enhance student learning have students summarise the major points in the lesson or review important facts.

Access and Process

Evaluate Student Learning: Assess and evaluate the quality and quantity of student learning. Involve students in the assessment process.

Process Group Functioning: Ensure each student receives feedback, analyzes the data on group functioning, sets an improvement goal, and participates in a team celebration. Have groups routinely list three things they did well in working together and one thing they will do better tomorrow. Summarize as a whole class. Have groups celebrate their success and hard work.

Teacher's Role in Cooperation

Working with a team mate, consider each aspect of the teacher's role in using formal cooperative learning groups. Decide whether it involves academic learning (A), positive interdependence (PI), individual accountability (IA), social skills (SS), or monitoring- Intervening-processing (MIP). Write a "Y" in the appropriate box if the element is involved, place a "N" if it is not. If you answer "Y," give an example.

| A | PI | IA | SS | MIP | Step 1: Making Pre-instructional Decisions |
|---|----|----|----|-----|--|
| | | | | | 1. Specific Objectives |
| | | | | | a. Academic |
| | | | | | b. Social |
| | | | | | 2. Decide on Group Size |
| | | | | | 3. Assign Students to Groups |
| | | | | | 4. Decide on Roles |
| | | | | | 5. Plan Materials |
| | | | | | 6. Arrange Room |
| | | | | | 7. Plan Monitoring Procedures and Forms |
| | | | | | Step 2: Setting the Lesson |
| | | | | | 1. Explain Academic Task & Procedure |
| | | | | | 2. Explain Criteria for Success |
| | | | | | 3. Structure Positive Interdependence |
| | | | | | 4. Structure Individual Accountability |
| | | | | | 5. Specify Expected Social Skills |
| | | | | | 6. Structure Intergroup Cooperation |
| | | | | | Step 3: Monitoring & Intervening |
| | | | | | 1. Arrange Face-to-face Intervention |
| | | | | | 2. Monitor Students Behaviour |
| | | | | | 3. Provide Task Assistance |
| | | | | | 4. Provide Social Skills Prompting, Encouragement |
| | | | | | 5. Provide Closure |
| | | | | | Step 4: Assessing & Processing |
| | | | | | 1. Assess & Evaluate student learning |
| | | | | | 2. Process Group Functioning Set Improvement Goals |
| | | | | | 3. Set Improvement Goals |
| | | | | | 4. Group Celebrate Hard Work and Success |

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