

Cooperative structures

Structures are used in cooperation in order to encourage the sharing of ideas among students, to develop concepts, ensure individual accountability and inter-dependence. Here are some examples:

Puzzle

Sharing of information between participants.

Specialized Skills Puzzle (or Expert Groups)

The students are split up into their home groups.

Each student receives different material or is appointed a task that is different from everyone else's.

Individually, the student explores the material or accomplishes the task.

The members of groups who received the same material or who accomplished the same task meet in expert groups in order to continue their work and to help each other out.

Once they are finished, they go back to their home groups and participate in the completion of a common task.

Each student communicates the information or shares the material that only he or she possesses or understands.

Round Robin (or Take a Turn)⁽¹²⁾

One at a time, each student explains his or her idea out loud. The group then chooses one.

The teacher assigns one student from each group to announce the idea of the group in front of the class and to justify it.

Find Someone Who

Each student has a sheet of paper with squares on it.

Each square contains a question that includes a statement.

Each student asks another student the question to find out if it is his or her question

If it is, the student writes his or her initials in the square on the question sheet belonging to the person who asked the question.

Constructive Controversy

The students sit in two rows facing each other: those who are for and those who are against an issue.

The teacher facilitates the debate.

Students have the right to change opinions during the debate, and to signify this they switch sides and continue the discussion.

Each student speaks one at a time.

The debate alternates between one opinion for and one against.

Once the debate is finished, the teacher counts the number of students for and the number of students against.

12- Claudette Évangéliste-Perron, Martine Sabourin and Cynthia Sinagra, *Apprendre la démocratie : guide de sensibilisation et de formation à la démocratie selon l'apprentissage coopératif*, Montreal, Les Éditions de la Chenelière, 1996, pp. 308-311.
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Discussion⁽¹³⁾

In small groups, the students discuss a topic.
Each student expresses his or her idea.
Each student listens to the ideas of others.
Each student participates in choosing the best or in creating new ideas.

Cooperative Graffiti

Using a large sheet of paper divided into four, each group member answers the question written in the space located in front of him or her using a different coloured marker.

After a short amount of time, the sheet is rotated.

Each team member reads the answers and thinks of his or her own and whether their idea is different from those already written.

If students agree with the existing answer, they put their initials beside it.

Participation Tokens

Each student has three tokens.

The student lays one token in the center of the table each time he or she speaks (except for a yes or no);

Once individuals have used up their tokens, they can no longer speak. All the tokens must be in the center of the table before starting over.

Equal Sharing of Materials

Each student in the home group must have the same material.

TPS (Think, Pair, Share)⁽¹⁴⁾

Each student spends some time thinking about a topic given by the teacher.

Each student communicates the conclusion of his or her reflection to another student.

The partners share their ideas in larger groups.

Variation: Think, share, pair, share.

Brainstorming

The students brainstorm, during which time they express as many ideas as possible in a given amount of time, without pausing to judge them. All the ideas are kept, without being censored or debated.

13- Claudette Évangéliste-Perron, Martine Sabourin and Cynthia Sinagra, *Apprendre la démocratie : guide de sensibilisation et de formation à la démocratie selon l'apprentissage coopératif*, Montreal, Les Éditions de la Chenelière, 1996, pp. 308-311.

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14- *Ibid.*

Cooperative roles

In order to encourage cooperation, delegating roles is sometimes recommended. With defined roles, each student holds a specific place in the group and has tasks to accomplish during the activity. This encourages the participation of each student and prevents non-participation or problems of monopolization. Roles allow teachers to delegate more responsibilities to the students.

As mentioned in the book *Learning Democracy*:

The teacher alone assigns the roles, avoiding students' assigning themselves roles, according to their status or which they see as most important or attractive.

(...) The teacher must also properly define and teach them.

(...) It is important to alternate roles in order to avoid the harmful consequences of the monopolization of a role by one person¹⁵.

There are two main types of roles: those related to the accomplishment of the task and those related to operations or the quality of interaction.

Often, students undertake more than one role in the same work group, having one role related to the group interaction (operations) and one role related to the task. These roles require various cognitive, interpersonal, motor or other skills. A student can either fulfill a role which he or she has mastered or, on the other hand, a role that allows the student to develop a skill that he or she has not yet mastered but could eventually.

In the cooperative activities proposed in *Together Towards Success*, the roles that are used are:

Roles related to the accomplishment of the task:

Displayer: The student who posts the results of the group.

Spokesperson: The student who presents the summary to the class or who exposes and justifies the idea of the group. The student must be able to synthesize, clarify and accurately transmit the words of the members of his or her group.

Material Manager: The student who distributes the materials to the members of the team, is careful when handling the material and neatly puts away the material at the end of the activity.

Secretary: The student who takes notes.

15- Claudette Évangéliste-Perron, Martine Sabourin and Cynthia Sinagra, *Apprendre la démocratie: guide de sensibilisation et de formation à la démocratie selon l'apprentissage coopératif*, Montreal, Les Éditions de la Chenelière, 1996, pp. 25.
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Roles related to the operations or to the quality of the interactions:

Facilitator: The student who ensures that everyone's attention remains on the task to be accomplished. S/he gives the right of speech and makes sure that everyone participates in the task.

Time Keeper: The student who ensures proper time management. S/he suggests a time limit for each part of the task and updates the others on how their time is spent.

Intermediary: The student who acts as link between the group and the teacher. S/he informs the teacher about the group activities and brings any suggestions from the teacher back to the group.

Observer: The student who observes, compiles and adds up observable facts. S/he shares his or her observations with the team members or with the class during feedback sessions.

Token Manager: The student who makes sure that everyone participates equally.

See the role cards on page 134.

ROLE CARDS (printed on both sides)**Displayer**

I post the results
of the work done in groups.

Spokesperson

I reveal the summary
of our work to the class.
I justify my group's ideas.
I communicate clearly.

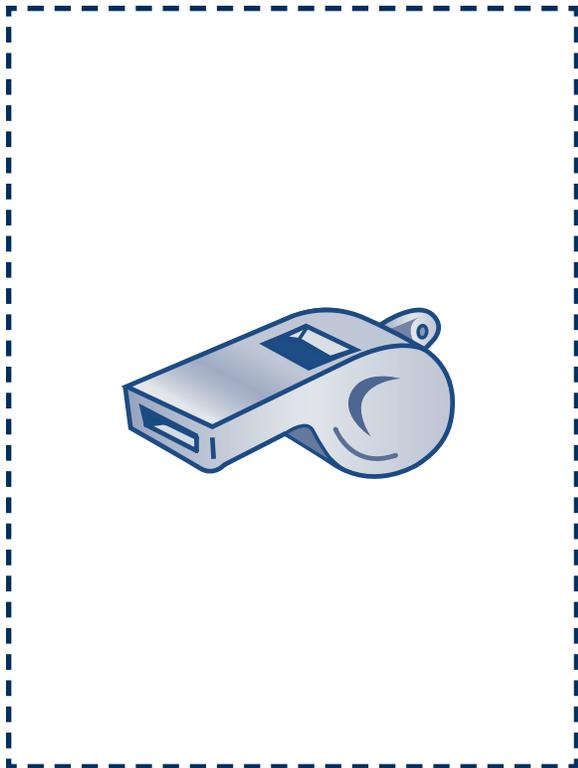
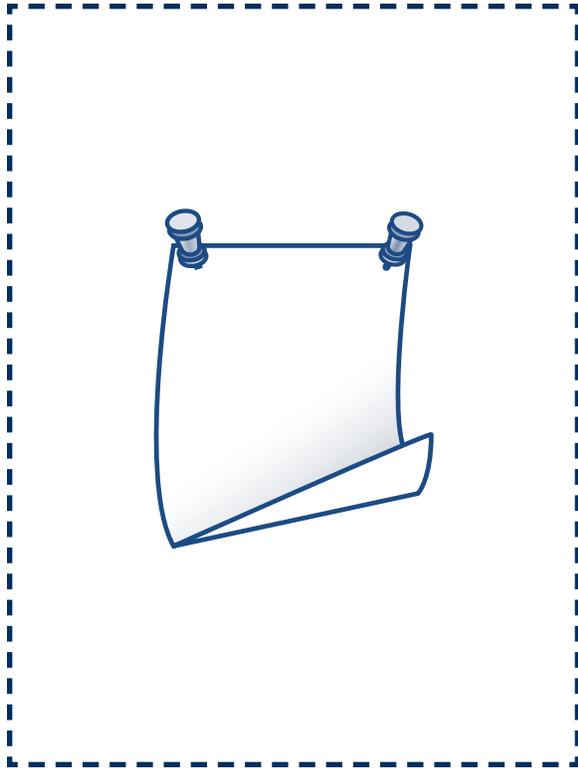
Material Manager

I pay attention to
the guidelines given.
I distribute the material
to the members of the team.
I handle the
material with care.
I put away
the material once the
work is done.

Facilitator

I read the guidelines and, if
necessary, explain them.
I encourage each member to
fulfill the role s/he is given.
I give the right to speak.
I intervene in order to
make the work run more
efficiently.
I make sure that the team
remains focused
on the task.

ROLE CARDS



ROLE CARDS (printed on both sides)**Time Keeper**

I manage the time allowed for a task. I recommend the duration of each step of the activity.

I point out to the other members when we are wasting time.

I remind the group how much time has passed.

I time the interventions of the team members when necessary.

I make sure that the work is completed on time.

Intermediary

I am responsible for requesting help from the teacher when needed.

I consult each member before I ask for help.

I present the problem to the teacher.

I explain to the team members the suggestions of the teacher.

Observer

I write down and compile the facts related to cooperative skills.

I present my observations and describe the improvements my team shows.

Token Manager

I am in charge of ensuring equal participation.

I make sure that the right to speak tokens are used properly .

ROLE CARDS (both sides)

