

## KEY COMPONENTS FOR ORGANIZING COLLABORATIVE WORK IN THE CLASSROOM

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### Annotation

Group work is a student -centered way teaching that emphasizes collaboration, cooperation and teamwork. It can be described as a classroom practice where students work in teams to construct knowledge and accomplish tasks through collaborative interaction. Group work is a fantastic opportunity for students to draw on the strengths and experience of their peers. Group work is more productive when the participants perceive that they need each other to accomplish the assigned task. In other words they “sink or swim together”.

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Researches have found that social support is important for learners to be successful in the classroom. Working in groups allows students to be in an interactive and learning environment. This interaction can help learners to develop language and social skills. During the group work students are engaging with task, increasing their confidence and becoming responsible for their own learning. Working together is both beneficial and effective because students interact meaningfully in the target language and get helpful feedback from peers which could help them to use for their further development. In many cases, group work can help teachers manage their classroom successfully regardless of class size or content. Group work can create an atmosphere that encourages successful behaviors. Working in groups engages students with others who may have different sets of language and social skills. Using smaller groups to meet classroom goals allows learners to develop or improve their skills that are valuable in life and work. Thoughtful use of group work brings a few benefits to learners such as talking about ideas, interpersonal communication, group problem solving and decision making, higher self -esteem, individual empowerment, justifying opinions, handling conflicts and disagreeing politely. Besides most students find learning from each other enhances their problem- solving abilities. Similarly, students who work on group projects learn team -working skills that are highly valued in the professional workforce.

Working in groups can be challenging. Despite all the benefits of it mentioned above sometimes group work fails. The most common reasons groups fail are conflict “social loafing”( not putting in work, lack of leadership. Moreover, groups lack interest and motivation during the task; groups are dominated by one person; pupils don’t cooperate during the assignment and they are sometimes off task.

Besides students who are focused, engaged and working collaboratively an seem noisy or arguing at times. In addition, some groups will experience conflict and disagreement with their members. In this

case teachers/instructors are those who can find suitable solution to these problems above. In order to work effectively as a group assigning group roles and division of labour is critical. Teachers should set assigning roles and division of labour is critical. Teachers should set assigning roles to suit group members' needs, such as leader who encourages all groups all group members, helps guide conversation and focuses on positive statements and facilitates brainstorming by summarizing and clarifying group comments, an organizer who schedules meetings, takes notes at meetings to send to every one afterwards and thinks about the "big picture", an editor who edits completed work and compiles different pieces of reports and presentations from different group members to create "flow" and consistency; a researcher who researches topics for the project and provides the group members with sources and information; a writer who writes the project/presentation; a trouble-shooter/barnstormer who thinks about positive solutions to problems; a presenter who works with group members to compile and create presentation and presents information to class.

Another drawback of group work is to assess it. Here SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) can help to allocate tasks. During the SWOT analysis of the group work, teachers should discuss and note their groups' answers to these questions:

What are my groups' strengths?

What are my groups' weaknesses?

What opportunities are there for me in group work?

What are my groups' threats?

The answers to these questions can help instructors/teachers to understand their group members and how they fit in to the group and help to decide on the best approach for the work their group has to do.

As a conclusion, I'd like to add organization in one of the most important features of effective group work. For group work to run smoothly, the teacher must plan carefully. Teachers should structure an early lesson to help students understand the elements of group work. The lesson should have four key components: a respectful and safe community of learners, communication skills four group work, strategies for dealing with conflict and classroom expectations for working in groups. For group work to effective, students need to understand task and the criteria for success.

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