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INTRODUCTION

Teaching cooperative learning skills is a process that takes time, patience, and practice. But it's worth it because students working collaboratively in small groups improve content area learning, enjoy increased interpersonal skills, and become less defensive and more comfortable with one another.

All About Cooperative Learning contains a series of activities designed to encourage student interaction and interdependence in a positive classroom atmosphere. Skills in communication, problem solving, decision making, and social awareness will be sharpened. In addition, the lessons provide opportunities for integrating material from different disciplines such as maths, social studies, and language arts.

There are three sections in *All About Cooperative Learning*. The first is a series of introductory lessons that teach students about cooperative learning and the skills involved. The activities in the next section help students get to know one another. Finally, the book contains several group activities that will enable students to apply their newly-acquired skills and see the benefits of cooperative learning. They will solve a mystery, create an invention, design a TV Guide just for kids, fingerprint one another, and plan a party.

Cooperative learning should be used when teachers want students to work together to accomplish shared goals, learn more, like each other better, and improve their social skills.

NOTES TO TEACHER

Before beginning the group projects a teacher should explain that he/she is to be used as a guide or a resource. The Group Worksheet and Evaluation Form should be distributed and discussed. Students should know that they are responsible for organizing and completing projects. It is suggested that group rewards, or separate acknowledgement for achievement and the use of cooperative learning skills be given. This will help to ensure that interdependence takes place among group members.



B-E-E SPELLS BEE

There are many ways in which we learn and understand information in school. We learn by:

1. listening to the teacher
2. working by ourselves
3. competing in contests
4. cooperating with each other.

When we are working in small groups to accomplish the same goal, we are practising cooperative learning. There's much more to cooperative learning as you will soon see.

Do you learn best by yourself or with others?

Pretend that there is going to be a school-wide spelling contest. How can your class work together to be the best spelling class in the school?

The Best Spelling Class

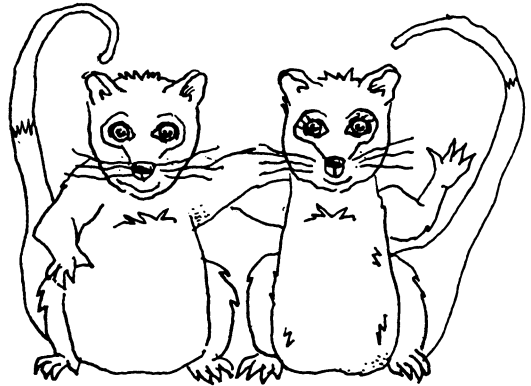


(Cooperative Learning)

I BET YOU DO!

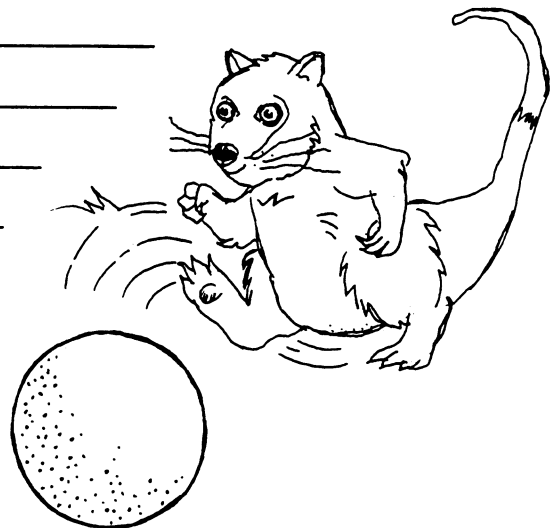
Do you know what cooperative learning is?

Write what you think it means on the lines below.



COOPERATIVE LEARNING has many meanings depending on the situation. We see cooperative learning in action when people work together for a common purpose or goal. A goal is the end product you are working toward.

Pretend that you and some of your friends play soccer for the Possum Team. They will play a total of 20 games during the school year. The Possum Team won 15 games last year. They would like to win a few more games this year. The team captain told the team members that this year their goal, or end product, is to win 18 of those 20 games. How can the team work together to make that goal?



IS IT COOPERATIVE?

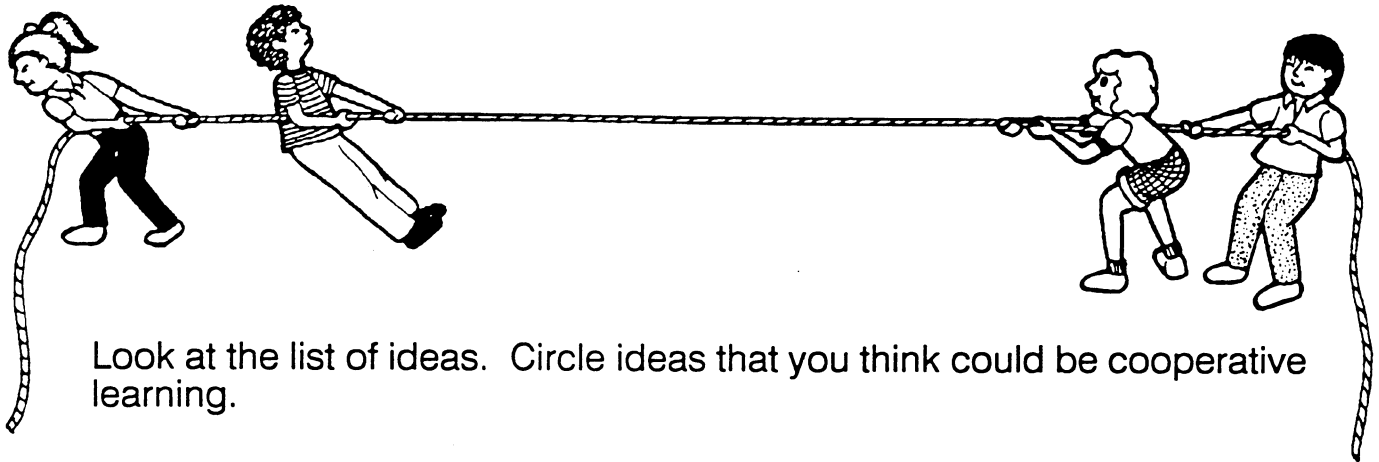
When we speak of cooperative learning in a classroom, we think of these things:

**making
decisions**

**discussing
things**

**teaching each
other**

**working
together on a
project**



Look at the list of ideas. Circle ideas that you think could be cooperative learning.

1. Someone helping you with your homework.
2. Playing tug of war.
3. Sitting alone reading a funny book.
4. Working with a group of people on an art project.
5. Playing a group game.
6. Working together on a science project.
7. Studying your spelling words with a friend.

Write how you use cooperative learning at home.
