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What Is the *Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom* Program?

Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom is a complete staff development program designed to meet the needs of the individual teacher or entire school staff. This program helps educators acquire the skills to effectively use cooperative learning and curriculum integration in their classrooms. It includes eight video lessons, three *Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom* textbooks, three Team Study Guides, and this Staff Development Guide. Participants will watch actual teachers in real classrooms utilize the same methods that they will acquire and apply to their own classrooms. Experienced teacher-demonstrators show your staff how to incorporate social skills, graphic organizers, thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and academic content into every lesson at every grade level.

The *Blueprints* Video Lessons

The *Blueprints* videos were produced by an award-winning video studio to ensure the highest quality of sound, color, and editing. They will give your staff a sense of what the methods taught in the course look like and sound like when used in real classrooms. Each of the eight video segments is keyed to a lesson in the Team Study Guide. The teacher-demonstrators are not novices in the use of *Blueprints*, nor are they perfect teachers. Each was selected because he or she is a regular user of the *Blueprints* strategies and values the addition of these methods to his or her instructional repertoires. Urban, rural, and suburban schools with diverse student populations are featured in the video lessons. This allows participants to appreciate the commonalties of highly cognitive cooperative learning as well as its applicability to diverse situations.

The following video summaries will provide you with a better understanding of what each lesson contains:

❑ *Video Part I — A Blueprint for Success – An overview for integrating the best instructional practices into thoughtful and cooperative lessons across the curriculum.*

❑ *Video Part II — A Blueprint for Getting Started: Informal Strategies – Multiple classroom samples of key strategies for jump-starting thoughtful student interactions in the curriculum.*

❑ *Video Part III — A Blueprint for Academic Success: Formal Cooperative Groups The critical elements involved in making cooperative learning a powerful tool that raises achievement and builds skillful thinking.*

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❑ *Video Part IV — A Blueprint for Teamwork: Base Groups* – How to use group strategies for long-term effects in building a cooperative classroom.

❑ *Video Part V — A Blueprint for Responsibility: Social Skills* – How to help students take greater responsibility for their own behavior. A five-step model for integrating positive social skills into every lesson.

❑ *Video Part VI — A Blueprint for Thinking* – Powerful tools for thoughtful study of course content in a cooperative learning environment. Integrates graphic organizers and thoughtful discussions.

❑ *Video Part VII — A Blueprint for Problem Solving* – Problem solving across the curriculum and beyond the classroom.

❑ *Video Part VIII — A Blueprint for Assessing Student Thinking and Cooperation* How to use artifacts of student thought and cooperation to build portfolios, hold conferences, and increase each student's accountability.

The Team Study Guide and the *Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom* Textbook

The Team Study Guide is designed to help participants maximize their learning from the *Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom Video Package*. Teachers will experience firsthand the integral aspects of highly cognitive cooperative learning as they work with a team to complete their study guides. Lessons in the study guide help your staff to acquire and apply the skills of cooperative learning and offer them ways to accurately assess their cooperative classrooms. The Team Study Guide also contains strategies for increasing student problem-solving skills and improving social skills. Participants will utilize the *Blueprints for Thinking in the Cooperative Classroom* textbook in conjunction with the Team Study Guide and video lessons. Teachers will read the material in the textbook, observe the methods and strategies performed in the video, and use the study guide lesson to apply what they have learned from the text and video.

Each lesson presented in the Team Study Guide contains several sections. (See the model lesson, page 5.) Participants are asked to read text and review the video segments to complete questions, activities, and exercises. Learners will also be asked to apply the methods they are learning to their own classrooms, and some assignments require student artifacts from these applications. In addition, team members will be asked to reflect on their knowledge and teamwork by completing journal pages incorporated into the study guide. Each study guide lesson is organized with these major components:

❶ *Lesson Overview: offers a brief summary to introduce what the lesson will cover*

❷ *Materials Needed: lists the required materials for each particular lesson*

❸ *Reading: tells participants which sections of the* Blueprints *text to read in order to complete the lesson*

❹ *Video Summary & Video: the video summaries give learners an overview of what they will observe by watching the video segment; the video section provides questions and activities for study team members to complete in order to maximize their knowledge from both the* **text** *and the* **video**

❺ *Applying Your Knowledge: gives learners exercises for putting their knowledge into practice in their classrooms; teachers will benefit from applying the strategies they are learning*

❻ *Reviewing Your Knowledge: provides direction for participants to review the lesson content*

❼ *Assessing Your Team's Cooperation: encourages participants to reflect on and evaluate how well their team is cooperating*

❽ *Closure: draws the lesson to an end, primarily with a journal entry or reflection*

❾ *Application/Grade Requirements: outlines further requirements for applying the lesson in the classroom; also provides grading requirements for graduate course credit*

❿ *Suggested Resources: gives learners additional information and reference materials that are related to the topic*

⓫ *Portfolio Checklist: helps participants keep track of their completed application assignments and check that they are included in the team portfolio*

The Staff Development Guide

This Staff Development Guide was created to help you implement the *Blueprints* program in your school and make your responsibilities easier. In this guide, we suggest various uses of the *Blueprints* program that you can tailor to your individual needs and those of your institution. The *Blueprints* program is extremely flexible and can be used in small or large groups, for inservices with or without a facilitator, or for graduate credit.
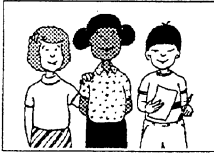
Sample Lesson

BLUEPRINTS FOR THINKING IN THE COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM

LESSON

4

BASE GROUPS

LESSON
OVERVIEW

1

The focus of this lesson is *base* groups. Base groups are differentiated from task groups in that students work together for longer periods of time, often several times a week, and for as long as six months to a year. You will learn how to form and appropriately use base groups in your classroom. Since base groups require that students work together for an extended amount of time, it is very important that the students work well together. This lesson will provide you with strategies to strengthen cooperation within base groups. Remember, however, that the misbehaviors that occur at the

"We get an answer by group consensus.... However, it does not reflect or represent individual responses and no liability is implied or assumed."

start are what you intend to change over the year as the students learn *how* to work together.

MATERIALS NEEDED

2

Blueprints, pp. 35-37 (Base Groups)
Video Part IV — *A Blueprint for Teamwork: Base Groups*

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TEAM STUDY GUIDE   LESSON 4

Jigsaw the text material on base groups from *Blueprints*, pp. 35-37. Be sure you follow your study team's fair-share criteria. Be sure each member of your study team can distinguish between a task group and a base group before you start this section. Use the first two questions in Figure 4.1 below to record the responses.

ReadiNg

3

VIDEO SUMMARY
The main focus of this video presentation is the construction and implementation of base groups, the glue which holds the class together. Teacher-demonstrators from elementary, middle, and secondary school levels will exhibit how they utilize base groups in their classroom. When watching this segment, notice the similarities and differences between the grade levels when using base groups. Observe the techniques and types of activities the teacher-demonstrators use with their students.

4

After you have read the material, agree on answers to the Base Group Worksheet questions in Figure 4.1 below. All team members should sign and date the completed work.

Figure 4.1

BASE GROUP WORKSHEET

In what ways are base groups and task groups alike?

In what ways are they different?

For your students, what might be the importance of the statement "there are no strangers here, only friends who have not met?"

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LESSON 4   BLUEPRINTS FOR THINKING IN THE COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM

Figure 4.1 (continued)

For each member of your study team, what is one use of the base group that might benefit students (*Blueprints*, pp. 35-37)? Indicate when in a week you might make time for the base groups.

Member	Use	Sample	Strategy	When
1				
2				
3				

Signatures: Date:

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TEAM STUDY GUIDE   LESSON 4

VIDEO PART IV — *A Blueprint for Teamwork: Base Groups*
After you watch the video, complete the Base Group Observation Chart (Figure 4.2) as a team for inclusion in the team portfolio.

VidEO

4

Figure 4.2

BASE GROUP OBSERVATION CHART

TEACHER	WHY DOES SHE USE BASE GROUPS?	WHAT COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES DOES SHE USE?
primary (blocks)		
middle (decisions)		
secondary (fact and opinion)		

Next, complete the following tasks with your study team as if you yourselves were a base group.

1. Create a logo. Draw it on a large sheet of newsprint. The logo should contain at least two symbols that represent a characteristic or quality you all share and at least one unique symbol for each member. Give a name to your team and construct a motto that exemplifies your study team's cooperation. Include a copy in your team portfolio.

2. Review the pluses and minuses of your study group's cooperation. Complete a PMG chart (see Figure 4.3, p. 54) to list the pluses of your study group's cooperation, the minuses, and goals for improvement. Be sure to review your team's use of roles, guidelines, end-of-task assessment of cooperation, and use of structures.

3. Complete figures 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 on the following pages. Be sure to sign and date your work.

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Sample Lesson (continued)

LESSON 4   BLUEPRINTS FOR THINKING IN THE COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM

Figure 4.3

P M G

P

M

G

Signatures: Date:

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TEAM STUDY GUIDE   LESSON 4

APPLYING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

As a team, help each other complete a lesson plan for use with base groups. Use the Guide Sheet for Planning Base Group Strategies (Figure 4.4). Next, implement your lesson in the classroom. Finally, use the Student Artifact Assessment form (Figure 4.5, p. 57) and put it into the team portfolio.

5

Figure 4.4

GUIDE SHEET FOR PLANNING BASE GROUP STRATEGIES

Complete this worksheet as a team to create a lesson using base groups. Be sure to consider all factors that can help or hinder the plan's success in the classroom. Remember to sign and date your work.

Name: _____ Review: _____ Class: _____

1. Method for assigning students to base groups:

2. Rationale for explaining base groups to your students:

3. Roles to use:

4. When base groups will meet (plan at least once weekly):
   Length of meeting (minutes):

5. Strategies to use:

6. Strategies for students to assess base groups:

55

LESSON 4   BLUEPRINTS FOR THINKING IN THE COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM

Figure 4.4 (continued)

7. Strategy for teacher to assess base groups:

Note to upper grade teachers who may see students fifty minutes or less per day: Your base groups may meet one period per week. We suggest that you combine bonding activities with content tasks such as goal setting or review.

Assess your first base group activity by assessing one team's artifact. Place the selected artifact and your assessment of it in the team portfolio. Make sure it is signed, labeled, and dated. Use the Student Artifact Assessment form (Figure 4.5, p. 57).

Signatures: Date:

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TEAM STUDY GUIDE   LESSON 4

Figure 4.5

STUDENT ARTIFACT ASSESSMENT

Name _____ Date _____
Site _____ Course _____
Instructor _____ Lesson _____

Describe the specific assignment and how it fits with the lesson.

Why did you select this artifact?

What are the pluses of this artifact?

What are the minuses?

In what ways does it compare in quality to other artifacts from the same assignment?

Give an overall rating for this assignment as the result of the cooperative and/or thoughtful lesson.

What will you do differently the next time you teach this lesson to ensure an improvement of the outcomes and products?

Signatures of review (we have discussed the lesson and its artifacts):

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Sample Lesson (continued)

LESSON [4]   BLUEPRINTS FOR THINKING IN THE COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM

REVIEWING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

6 As a team, complete the questions provided regarding base groups (see Figure 4.6). Remember to sign and date your work.

Figure 4.6

BASE GROUP REVIEW QUESTIONS

Agree on a definition of a base group.

If you were asked by a colleague to justify base group time taken from your established schedule, what would you answer? (Use the Three-to-One Technique, which includes one answer from each member and a synthesis of the team's response.)

1.

2.

3.

Best Synthesis:

Signatures: Date:

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TEAM STUDY GUIDE   LESSON [4]

ASSESSING YOUR TEAM'S COOPERATION

7 Complete an assessment of your team's cooperation using the space provided below.

Figure 4.7

COOPERATION ASSESSMENT

What are the strongest features of your study team's working together?

How do you think your study team can improve its cooperation?

Signatures: Date:

CLOSURE

8 Take this time to reflect on the strategies you have read about in Blueprints, observed in the videos, or implemented in class. Add these strategies to your BUILD and Group Strategies matrices (pp. 15 and 16).

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LESSON [4]   BLUEPRINTS FOR THINKING IN THE COOPERATIVE CLASSROOM

APPLICATION/GRADE REQUIREMENTS

9 BASIC APPLICATION (C): Complete each of the assignments given in this lesson.

ADVANCED APPLICATION (B): In addition to the Basic Application requirements, in the classrooms of each study team member, plan, carry out, and assess a sequence of three to five base group tasks. Select one purpose for the use of the base groups in each classroom (e.g., team building, review, goal setting). Allot some time each week to the activities that fit the selected purpose. You may all complete the same sequence if you wish. At the end of each week, summarize the common effects base groups are having in your classrooms. Include student artifacts with your summaries to illustrate the effects of working in base groups in the study team portfolio. Organize the base group data in a special section of the team portfolio.

QUALITY APPLICATION (A): In addition to the Basic and Advanced Application requirements, during the remainder of this course, preferably at least once a week, keep an account of a different base group activity by each member of your study team. This should include sample artifacts of base group work with base group self-assessment samples. At the end of the course, each person who elects the Quality Application work should attach a response to these questions as a cover sheet.

• What improvements did you note in base group bonding among your students?

• What carry-overs did base group work have on student cooperation in your classroom?

• What did you do to refine and improve the quality of base groups in your classroom?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

10 Fogarty, R. (1990). Designs for cooperative interactions. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylight Publishing, Inc.

Scearce, C. (1992). 100 ways to build teams. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylight Publishing, Inc.

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TEAM STUDY GUIDE   LESSON [4]

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Use this list to ensure that you completed all assignments.

□ Add to your BUILD and Group Strategies matrices   **11**
□ Base Group Worksheet
□ Base Group Observation Chart
□ Team logo activity
□ PMG chart
□ Applying Your Knowledge
□ Reviewing Your Knowledge
□ Assessing Your Team's Cooperation

Advanced Application Level
□ Base group lesson plans, summaries, evaluations, and student artifacts

Quality Application Level
□ Base group artifacts, self-assessments, and your assessment

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