

Lessons for Little Ones
English
Cooperative Learning Lessons



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In consultation with Dr Spencer Kagan



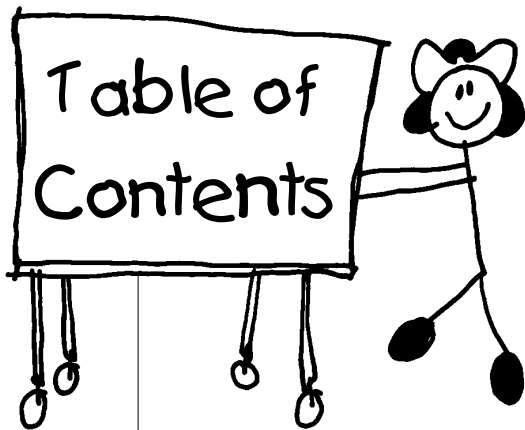


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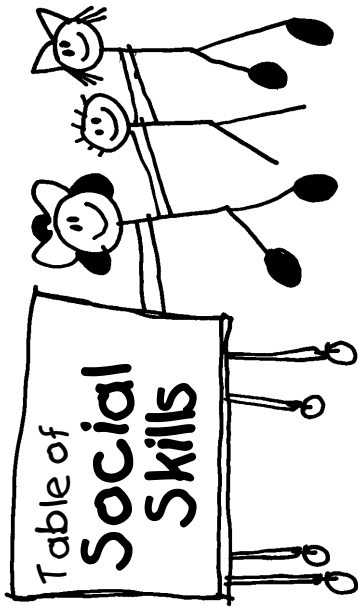
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Community Circle	●	●	●	●																																			
Cooperative Projects								●	●	●	●	●	●	●																									
Corners	●		●	●																																			
Formations																		●																					
Group Discussion				●				●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Inside-Outside Circle					●						●																												
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Rotating Reporters																																							
Roundtable								●																															
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Lesson Number

<i>Social Skill</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36				
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Cooperative Learning in the Primary Classroom

A Picture of Primary Cooperative Learning

The room is humming with excitement. Students are leaning in, almost nose to nose. Everyone is anxious to hear what is said and have a chance to contribute their own ideas. As you listen, you hear pairs of students contributing many ideas about places where they could go in their shoes. You hear other pairs deciding which place would be the best for the two of them. Still other partners are sharing their papers to draw a picture that shows the two of them in the new place. But hear something that is even more wonderful than that. “Terrific idea!” “You made a great tree.” “You’re doing a great job on that building.” These are some of the warm and wonderful comments that are being shared in the groups as they work. You look again at the students in the class and realise these are very small sized students who are doing large sized jobs like gathering ideas, coming to consensus on which ideas to use for their team project, and complimenting and encouraging each other as they work. These prep students are working together as well as any adult group would as they solve problems in group situations.

Primary students can be very successful with cooperative learning. The emphasis on social skills, along with the structure

of the lesson, teaches all students the things they need to say and do to work well together. By focusing on one social skill at a time, students find that learning how to work together becomes an enjoyable experience.

The Need for Cooperative Learning in English

Students of all ages need to have many opportunities to listen to language and then to practise using language orally. But young students especially need many opportunities to listen and speak so they will develop good communication skills and become familiar with the vocabulary and syntax of language. As students share ideas in groups, they will increase their vocabularies, learning from each other synonyms for objects, feelings and events. Children who have had little experience using language and those who are learning to use a new language will hear the patterns and rhythm of language as they listen to and participate in groups discussions. Developing this familiarity with language will help make it easy for all students to become fluent readers and writers.

Prep students use the illustrations in books to retell stories, they will also use pictures to help them remember important information they would like to share

about the stories. By working in groups, they can record a great deal of information about a story by having each person in the groups make a picture record of just one portion of the story. Their combined efforts will produce a booklet that tells the complete story. Few prep children would have the time and patience to record the whole story, but by working together they are successful.

As students learn to read, they can become experts who assist each other in remembering the vocabulary of the stories they want to read. They feel comfortable helping each other remember words and ideas from the stories. They enjoy taking turns reading in groups so they have a small audience to hear them read and they only have a short wait to get their turn to read.

As students go through the stages of the writing process, group work can result in better quality writing. In the prewriting stage they can gather many more ideas if they brainstorm and cluster ideas with other students. In the writing stage, it builds the students' self-confidence if they can do a practice writing with a group before they have to do an independent writing assignments. Also many students like to have a writing partner or group who they can turn to for advice while they are writing. Revision is easier when the student is comfortable working with her partner or group. Members of this group can share what is best about the writing and also can tell what things would make the writing even better.

The Need for Cooperative Learning for Young Students

Young students are very egocentric. They think of the world as revolving around them. Our job as primary teachers is to broaden the "I" perspective into a "We" perspective. The classroom functions so much better when we are working together as a unit or family. Cooperative learning helps the students focus on one social skill at a time. This makes caring about and working with others a manageable and enjoyable task.

Another difference in primary students is that they cannot read and write fluently. The lessons in the book are built around activities that can be done orally, with pictures or with few written words.

Managing Cooperative Learning for Young Students

The lessons also include special management tips that help young students be successful. There are suggestions for developing comprehensible directions, for modelling the lesson, deciding on group size, for developing the social skills, and for using praise and rewards to increase use of social skills. There ideas on how to form teams and how long teams should stay together.

There are many signals that students and teachers can give during cooperative learning lessons that help the lessons flow smoothly with minimal interruptions. There are suggestions for interruptions that can focus students on the social skills and increase the learning they acquire from the lesson.

Finally there are ideas on how to help those students who have a difficult time working with others. Ideas on how to help them acquire the necessary social skills. Ideas on what to do when they can't use the social skill. Ideas on how the teams can help these students.

Use of Literature

The lessons in this book capture the students' interest because they are based on ideas of characters from stories they love. The students enjoy doing lessons that hone their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, when the materials they are working with are about their favourite story characters. They think they are just doing a fun game or activity about a favourite story.

Using ideas from literature also helps the students make connections with other content areas. *Reliving Repunzel, A Good Friend For Me* and *Beary Good and Beary Bad* connect to humanities by having the students discuss values as they try to decide if ideas and actions in the stories are appropriate or inappropriate. *Favourite Farm Fauna, Colourful Chameleons* and *Talking Trees* are lessons that add interest and motivation to science lessons.

Lesson Format Makes Cooperative Learning Easy

The lessons in this book are easy for students because the lessons provide the students with an overview of the lesson and then break the lesson down into short, easy-to-understand sections. The students are also provided with samples of what to say and do.

The lessons make cooperative learning easy for the teacher because everything the students need to do is listed, step-by-step, in the lessons. Much of the dialogue the teacher can use with the students is also included. A box, Curran's Comments, provides rationale or suggestions that apply to that lesson.

Suggestions on how to extend the lessons or do more lessons using the same unit or theme are included in some lessons. Variations tell how to adapt the lessons to different year or ability levels. Some of the variations refer to use of different materials.



Who Did It?



• Literature

The Three Little Pigs

• Year Level

P-2

• Type of Lesson

Ready Skills: Recall Story Events

• Cognitive Objective

Students think together to recall the actions of characters in a story.

• Social Skills Objective

Quiet Voices

• Materials

Character cards — one set per team.

- *Group Discussion*
- *Numbered Heads*

Structures

Background Information

Students have heard a story many times so they are familiar with what the characters do in the story. This lesson is done after the students have heard the story *The Three Little Pigs* by Paul Galdone. The students have used quiet voices as they have done other lessons so they only need a reminder to use them in this lesson.

Lesson Overview

“We have heard the story *The Three Little Pigs* several times. When you get in teams today, I am going to ask you a question about something that happened in the story. You will need to talk it over and decide which character did or said the thing I am asking you about. You will

then find that character’s name on your team’s answer cards and have it ready to show to the class.”

Lesson Sequence

Numbered Heads:

Remember Story Events

A. Preparation for Numbered Heads

Students meet in teams of four. Each team is given a set of character cards with the names of a story characters on them. Team members number off from one to four.

B. Numbered Heads Together: Decide on Team Answer

“Listen to my question. Discuss the answer until everyone agrees on an answer. Find the character card that shows the right answer. Remember to use quiet voices so the other groups don’t

hear you discussing the answers. ‘What character in the story built a house of twigs?’ Talk it over.”

C. Appropriate Team Member Show Answer

“Person #2 on each team share your answer by holding the correct character card above your head. Good, I see that all teams are holding up the correct card that says, ‘second pig’. Teams you did a good job of talking over the answer.”

D. Team Points for Correct Answers

Each time the answers are shared, give points for the teams that have the correct answer. Tally the points at the end to see if the class could recall the characters who did certain actions in the story.

Repeat Numbered Heads Together

Continue asking questions about The Three Little Pigs such as:

- What character built a house of sticks?
- What character liked to trick people?
- Which character put a pot of water on to boil?
- What character was the safest in his house?

Each time choose a different person number for sharing the answers.

Group Discussion/ Finger Evaluation:

Use of Quiet Voices

Give the teams a minute to review how they did in using Quiet Voices. “Signal how well the team did when I say, ‘One, Two, Three, Show’. Signal five fingers to

show, ‘Yes we used quiet voices’. Signal three fingers to show, ‘We used quiet voices most of the time’. Signal one finger to show, ‘Oops, we used quiet voices just some of the time.’”

Numbered Heads Together:

Debrief the Lesson

Find out how the teams felt about doing the lesson together by discussing some of the following questions.

What things did your team do that made it easy to:

- “Find out which character was the right answer?”
- “Show the answer card for your team?”
- “Use a quiet voice while the team made its decisions?”

Variations:

- All the students can have character cards and show them at the same time when it is time to answer. Numbered Heads Together can still be used to select someone to give the answer but everyone would have their own cards to manipulate.
- Response cards can be used with any story that has several characters, events and/or places.
- The answer cards could be titles of books. Events from the different stories would be told and the team would have to decide in which story the events happened.



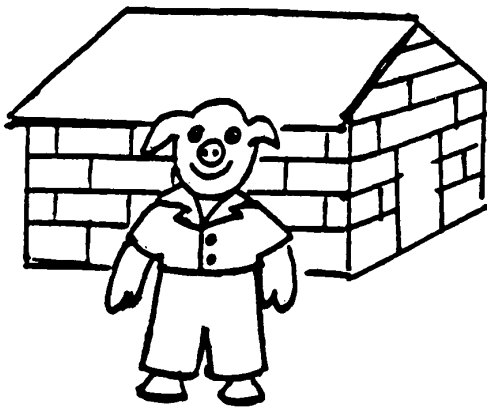
Student Response Cards



1ST PIG



2ND PIG



3RD PIG



WOLF